BEYOND PHILOSOPHY

Reconciliation and Rejection

Three Essays on Aristotle and Hegel

by

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UT

Universal Texts

List of Abbreviations

Works by Aristotle

AnPr	Analytica Priora
AnPost	Analytica Posteriora
Cat	Categories
Eth	Ethics
Met	Metaphysics
Phys	Physics
Pol	Politics

I have referred to the translations found in The Complete Works, edited by Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, 1984), as well as to the English version of the Metaphysics by Richard Hope (Ann Arbor, 1960), and of the Ethics by JAK Thomson (Penguin, 1955).

Works by Hegel

Aesth	Aesthetics, I (TM Knox, Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1975)
Diff	The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy (HS Harris and W Cerf, State University of New York Press, 1977)
Enc	Encyclopedia, I (TF Geraets, WA Suchting, HS Harris, Hackett Publishing Company, 1991)
Hph	Lectures on the History of Philosophy, I and II (ES Haldane and FH Simson, University of Nebraska Press, 1995, reprinted from the 1892 edition)
PhH	Philosophy of History (J Sibree, Dover Publications, 1956)
Phen	Phenomenology (AV Miller, Oxford University Press, 1977)
PhR	Philosophy of Right (HB Nisbet, Cambridge University Press, 1991)
SL	Science of Logic, I and II (AV Miller, Allen & Unwin, 1969)

For the convenience of the reader who might wish to study quoted passages in their context, I indicate their location in the translations stated above. However, in many instances the reader will find that I do not exactly quote from those translations. Whenever I found them not quite accurate, introducing misleading terms, or not close enough to the original, I provide my own amended version.

Preface

This book is about philosophy, without, however, being a philosophy book. I did not even wish to continue the line of traditional philosophy. Indeed, I am convinced that it is impossible for anyone to do so today.

The meaning of philosophy is deeply linked to reconciliation. And reconciliation to the world as it is today is no longer possible. Living unreconciled opens the way for rejection. Yet, rejection can never carry out what it implicitly requests: a thorough transformation of life. Without the element of the general, rejection is doomed to certain failure. Only philosophy has been able to develop that generality. On the other hand, mere philosophical knowledge of how to grasp the whole, dies the moment it is faced with a world to which reconciliation is impossible. Today, then, we can neither reject the way we live, nor reconcile ourselves to it. In this book, I confront the two so that they mutually illuminate each other with the hope that, in their combined light we can see our path into the future.

The Introduction to the book highlights the contradictoriness of our life, out of which spring both reconciliation and rejection. Then comes the body of the book, consisting of three essays. Although these might be read independently, they do form a whole and have been conceived as such. The basic structure, which derives from the confrontation between reconciliation and rejection, is the same in each essay. Section I is rather preparatory, while the main exposition of the matter of each part takes place in sections II and III, section II depicting the topic from the point of view of rejection, counterposed in section III by that of philosophy. Sections IV and V, presupposing the knowledge of the two previous sections, sharpen the argument. Finally, section VI is of a more summarising nature. The exposition of rejection in section II will in each case be by far the easiest to read, and section III, the investigation of the matter from the viewpoint of philosophy, the hardest. However, this book cannot be understood without these investigations of philosophy, for they contain the core of the argument by which philosophy proves that truth must be absent in life. Only when we grasp this will we appreciate the full value of the story of living rejection, given in section II, which smashes this deadly necessity explained by philosophy. And only if we understand what philosophy is telling us about our reality and life, can we conceive the sad truth that rejection as such is not enough.

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INTRODUCTION

REFERRING TO somebody as 'German', for example, what does that convey? She might be one of the finest of contemporary musicians; she might be a caring mother, offering her children the freedom and trust to become themselves; she might be a pitiful wreck, unable to step out of her own past, beating her children to make them cringe before her petty whims of the day. She might be old, in her seventies or eighties; she might be Jewish, or what they once called Jewish. She might have been a Nazi, and, perhaps, always remained one. Or she might have risked, or given, her life and health during those years mad with despair, testifying that, despite everything, humanity had not been entirely suffocated.

When a seed grows into a plant, the kind of grass, flower, or shrub which will unfold its leaves and life out of it is fixed and given. In its becoming, there is nothing for the little grain to decide. And its becoming is a kind of life that has no room for consciousness, self-consciousness and will. Related to such a being, devoid of consciousness, is the fact that what it is to become, may already be gauged by its ancestors; and what it is, may be recognised in one sapling of the family just as well as in any other. Suppose I am talking about a rose: nothing that matters to its being a rose lies beyond this genus. Only an action performed out of freedom may go beyond the natural genus. If you give me a bunch of roses as a present, they have already become something different from what grew on the bush.

Nature engenders nature, and nature only, in its reproduction and in its life. The rose brings forth more roses, never anything 'unnatural' or 'unrose-like'. The human being creates humanity, but with this difference: what is human can at the same time be either '*human*' or '*inhuman*'. The results of human action range from creations which fill our hearts and souls with lasting strength and delight, to crimes whose shame no atonement can wipe off the face of the earth.

The human being — and *only* the human being — can create something inhuman. Thus, insofar as the inhuman deed has been done by a human being, it is a *human* deed, an *inhuman human* deed. 'An inhuman human action' or 'an inhuman human life', may sound illogical, but these utterances describe a certain reality with perfect accuracy. If we want to call their meaning 'contradictory', then this con-

tradiction expresses the truth of a contradictory reality, a contradictory life. And it is because they convey a truth of life, that we are compelled to look at them, even if logic can't cope with them. Let us attempt to disentangle their complex underlying content.

1. By expressing what seems to be a contradiction, such utterances also make the uncontradictory statement that we simply possess two different kinds of knowledge.
2. One of these two kinds of knowledge is a presupposed, shared knowledge of what 'the human being' might mean, or what it is for a human being to be. This might be called 'human essence' or 'essential humanity'.
3. The other kind of knowledge that the contradiction contains, arises from an experience in real life which is opposed to, or contradicts, that essence.
4. Those contradictory statements tell us that a judgement has been reached, a sentence passed. This judgement is the result of a comparison between the two kinds of knowledge. A given, concrete reality of our experience has been compared with our invisible knowledge of the essence of the human being. In this case, reality has been found guilty.
5. 'An inhuman human deed' also states something more. It is the *essence* that has to be the measure against which reality must be matched, and not the other way round. The phrase says that a certain reality we know does not live up to the essence which we know. For, if the essence is contradicted in reality, does not contain what we know from experience, then we say that the experience is deficient, not the essence. Essence is stronger than reality.
6. Such judgements imply that the essence and the reality of life *ought* to coincide; that there should be no such divergence between the essence of something as we know it and the reality that we find in the circumstances of its life; that there should be no abyss between the *essence* of humanity, residing in the spiritual realm, and its *reality* down here on earth, as lived by you and me. Without the implication of this *ought*, such judgements would not only be meaningless, they could not even be made at all.

No other being can contradict its own essence in its active life, neither in general, nor even in a single action. The reason why this possibility is given to humanity lies precisely in its essence. The human being is free. In contrast to the seed, there is absolutely nothing that the human being can do which is *only* a response to a natural urge. Nothing about the human being can be *only* natural. Every single act carries the ingredient of the will, which is free. The will is not a corset, to be taken off, letting nature hang loose. Nor can we quickly slip it on again, so as to impose a deliberately civilised form upon our behaviour. However, the free will even eludes this picture, for the decision whether or not to wear that civilising garment, would itself be an act

of free will. *Whatever* the human being does, it does as a conscious being. And the human being is a conscious being, precisely because it is endowed with a free will. The will, freedom, belong to our essence. And we can't rid ourselves of our essence — we can only contradict it. But even by contradicting it, we still realise our essence. We are able to think and act in a way that does not accord with our essential nature. That is how we can create a contradictory reality.

This freedom means that our lives are not just given to us, but that we *create* them. Every action is part of the continuous process of *self-formation* of the individual, taking place within the larger frame of the self-formation of society and human history. That is, no action is preformed, as it is in unconscious nature. A human action is freedom, through and through; it can only be carried out wilfully. It might, therefore — and only therefore — be called a *creation*. This holds true also for the most brutal atrocities. Indeed, *only because* it holds true, are they *crimes*.

We talk about *'the* human being' out of habit rather than as a result of good reasoning. The problem is that with our general manner of thinking, we are quick to individualise such a conception, and then to understand by the expression 'human being', particular, separately-existing individuals. But this will never allow us to grasp the meaning of freedom, the real essence of 'the human being'. For the individual never lives detached from others. This is true, even in an artificial and accidental state like the one in which Robinson Crusoe found himself. The only survivor of a shipwreck, he still remains a child of his times, carrying them within him, as it were; he only acts according to the thinking, morals and values of his times, as he had learnt them back home.

Whatever an individual human being is or does, it can only be or do because humanity *in general* has acquired those powers and those possibilities. The freedom and the will we talked about just now are themselves acquisitions of the history of humanity. They belong to the species as well as to the individual, to humankind as well as to each single human being. In fact, they *only* belong to the individual *because* they belong to the species. And they only belong to the species, because it is possible for them to belong to any particular individual. From our earliest days, whatever people might think, when we learn about a 'thing', this is never just a relation between us and that 'thing'. It is only given to us through the meaning that it possesses in the world in which we grow up. Thinking in terms of individualism has itself been historically produced.

The individual exists only as a social being; what the individual does, is only the shared deed of the community. Consider a conversation. One partner exposes part of her so-called inner world to the so-called outer one. Being confronted with this proposed meaning, the other lets it enter and pass through his own inner being, where it calls

forth a response from the experience and memory which belongs to him. This response lays bare another side of the content, adds to it and refines its contours. The now-transformed meaning is returned to the person it issued from in the first place, who receives her own as somebody else's, whether in the form of look, gesture, action or word. In this spiralling process, each depends on the view thus offered about themselves and the world, through the mirror of the other. And as well as being a conversation, this is the formation of meaning. It is a common, or shared work on their relation to each other, and through that, to the world and to themselves.

This is the process in which all feeling and thought is shaped. Only through such a *shared* process are perception and comprehension of the content, of the world and of oneself, confirmed and established. This formation includes, presupposes and rests on the community, the giving and taking between people living together. It had been presupposed by the one who began the conversation, who assumed and needed the response. We can only understand ourselves and the world in which we live, as they are seen in the mirror of the other's face, heard in the voice of the other person's soul, and recognised in the other's action. There is no beginning and no end to this process, and there is nothing in us which we can say was only our own. A conscious, free, wilful being can exist only as an individual being, which is *at the same time* entirely social.

Language is a vital component of this freedom. Freedom permeates it, is intrinsic to it; and language permeates and is intrinsic to freedom. Humanity has created language as part of its own self-making. In the form of spontaneity, freedom is present even within every single utterance. Without it, language cannot function. And freedom, as that process of self-making through reflection in the other person, would never be possible without language.

Such self-formation is also the process by which we bring our human essence into our own biological nature and the whole of nature external to us. Language and music, for instance, are only possible because their practice has gradually shaped the organs for their execution and perception. As natural, yet conscious, free and wilful beings, our nature loses much of its deterministic side, and, instead, turns into a 'human nature'. The freedom that humanity enjoys means that, instead of being entirely shaped by nature, we shape *it*, and thereby *ourselves*. Human nature is nature freed. Our history is the history of humanising nature. We can only make ourselves by humanising nature. And this bringing together of freedom and nature through human creativity gives birth to beauty and joy, engenders what is humanly true and good.

The world given to us, the one into which we are born, has been made by all the people who preceded us. It is their legacy to us. It confronts us from the outside, like the meaning that somebody puts

forward to us in a conversation. Although it has been set in front of us, without our having directly contributed to it, this is where freedom begins. Freedom can't be given to us from the outside. Freedom is in the way we deal with what is given to us. For it all depends on how we, as free and conscious beings, respond to what has been said, how we live in the world which is around us and given to us, how we transform it, put ourselves into it. It is neither interesting nor challenging to talk about how 'nature' restricts the freedom of the human being. It is far more important to observe how, in society, freedom is transformed into necessity and necessity into freedom. This should be our only concern. The freedom our predecessors enjoyed in making their own lives, has become a necessity for us. It has formed what is now *given* to us. This given necessity is the condition of our freedom. And we, in turn, bring our freedom to bear, in the way we now deal with that 'necessity'.

It is perhaps only in relation to a work of art that a creation from the past is not, and can never be, a necessity for us. Every re-encounter with a work of art makes us re-live its creation, makes us encounter the freedom of humanity in it. Art might therefore seem to be the fulfilment of human self-formation. However, what is meant by a 'work of art' remains to be seen.

But turn your head away from the realm of pure, clean thinking, and face reality! What a dirty mess have we made of it! We are always lying to each other and to ourselves. If somebody questions our lies, we take out a whip and flog them into accepting what we know is wrong. Our need to maintain the constant process of shaping our consciousness and knowledge about ourselves and the world, through and with others in free exchange, is humiliated, perverted. We look into a cracked mirror and see a cracked image. Society in general, this world of our creation, which should be the human world and our self-created home, turns out to be not too different for us from what the natural world is for animals: a power that determines them through and through, that does not leave any room for freedom, will and creativity. We might therefore call society our 'second nature' and it has been so called.

To have a 'second nature' is against our essence. It hinders and destroys our flourishing at every turn. For example, on the most banal, outward level, our first nature might have determined that the natural death of a certain person was to occur at the age of 83. 'Second nature', though, might bring about this event a great deal faster, in early childhood maybe, on account of a famine, caused by a sudden rise in the price for the local staple food, in turn determined by the world market. As simple and straightforward as that: no money, no life. Such a drastic result of the well-known 'vagaries of the market', what they call 'the economic climate', is one of the very few features of our

second nature that might stir our conscience because we feel that there is something wrong.

Such examples are always valuable to visualise the absolute and remorseless power of second nature. However, the great danger of such pictures is that they make second nature appear as something that can be more or less easily rectified. With a bit of development and aid, with a more 'equitable' taxation or with an increase in productivity, such hardship can be made a thing of the past. But second nature is much bigger than this example suggests. It is deeply rooted in all our thinking and acting. It is even part of that thinking which endeavours to ameliorate some of the unfortunate effects of second nature itself. It determines our ordinary daily lives. We are so proud of our talent for stringent logical thinking, but its rules, which cannot grasp contradiction, are part of that second nature too. Second nature distorts the freedom of our essence by forcing it into sterile categories, and squeezing it into ready-made, fixed definitions. These ensure that the necessity of the past is continued in a necessity of the present, so that we can't bring our essence or freedom to bear on the given. Instead of creating our own lives, we are ruled by abstractions. Instead of giving to others what they need, we seek to satisfy our self-interest. Instead of friendship there is war. We all create this system out of our own free will, and it turns out to govern us from the outside, as an order against us, to which we have to submit, and to which we give our lives.

The contradiction, whose intricate content we have investigated above, is now all-encompassing. An 'inhuman human deed' is a judgement about only one event singled out from the rest. But now we know that *whatever* we do, we do as participants in our common and continuous shaping of our world. The whole of our life is a contradictory process. Freedom, essential humanity, our very selves, with all our powers and capacities, create the opposite: un-freedom, inhumanity, a world which constantly tramples underfoot our dignity, crushing our capacity for true community and beauty. The general *reality* in which we all live, which we perceive and experience, and the continuance of which we assure by our own actions, contradicts the *essence* of the human being.

If we live in a reality which is not worthy of our essence, if our lived reality determines each of us from the outside, encarcerates us, we cannot say that we *are* free, leading a free conscious life. But that does not imply that reality is as it ought to be, or that it is the only one possible. It means that the human essence has no possibility of pouring itself into an adequate living shape, which would openly display this essence for everybody to see and enjoy. Freedom is an intrinsic part of the essence of the human being. But the life that we live, reality, is ruled by un-freedom. Our way of life is contradictory because it denies our essence and affirms what stands in its way. Our

essence, which is free, is contradicted in un-free reality, the creation of which is *our* doing. *We* are, potentially, or according to our essence, free; but we use this potentiality blindly. Our use of it is a mis-use, ab-use.

Contradiction demands resolution. Its two sides indicate two directions in which this might occur. We might assert our essence and deny our ordinary ways; or we could confirm the given reality and deny our true essence. The first is what this book discusses as *rejection.* It is a moment when the confidence in our essence gathers enough strength to burst into the open, in spite of the power of the given, which is inimical to it. The other response to our contradiction is *reconciliation.* This gives in to the overweening weight of what is, which claims not just to be, but to be rule and necessity.

Rejection and reconciliation are not two proposals to solve a given problem, the problem of our contradictory life. For neither of them is fully self-conscious, neither fully realises where it comes from, or why. They ignore their origin in the contradiction of our real life. Thus, neither can know that it is but one side of an opposition. This leaves us, in the void of our everyday lives, confined to the passive state of playing the role imposed by second nature, keeping our essential powers and the longing for a beautiful life hidden away under the required mask. The mask has grown fast to our face, has become our second face, so that we can neither recognise it for what it is, nor peel it off.

However, reconciliation is not only about giving in to self-created emptiness and denial. In the form of art, religion and philosophy, reconciliation has also brought forth the highest achievements in the history of humankind. These three are responses to the contradiction of life within second nature, to a view of the world through the mask of our second face; but they are answers which leave the contradiction unresolved. Nevertheless, the greatness of their creations is that they give the feeling of fullness, overcoming the grey of the everyday. By making sense of life without touching any of those of its features which deny our essence, art, religion and philosophy reconcile us to it. On the other hand, looked at from a higher standpoint, they give us a glimpse — only a glimpse — of a free humanity, one whose essence is not denied, a humanity which really creates itself.

To reconcile means 'to restore or bring back to friendship or union', from the Latin *conciliare*, 'to call together'. The word is used in nearly all modern translations of the Bible. Its meaning is the same as, or overlaps with, the etymologically beautiful English word *atonement* (at-one-ness, or at-one-ment), *to atone*, 'to make at one', used in older translations. Signifying the restoration of the community between God and the human being, reconciliation is one of the most important theological terms. A world that has its origin in God, can only be understood through Him. And life only makes sense if peo-

ple keep to His institutions. But community with the Creator is always threatened with disruption through sinful behaviour. Then, God, in His mercy, may grant reconciliation by taking the people's sin away.

For Hegel, art, religion and philosophy are the three highest forms of consciousness. For, taken in that order, they attain an increasingly better grasp of the truth of what is. The full grasp, he said, is only possible in philosophy, which is therefore also the only form in which reconciliation is fully developed. However, if we look again at art and religion, we find that they also contain an element of rejection. For they only succeed in making sense of the world by *moving away* from it. Religion knows of powers beyond our world, and beyond our grasp; and the creation of art is secluded from the mundane, judging it to be unsuited for freedom. In philosophy, reconciliation overcomes this apparent movement *away* from the world, bending it back right into the heart of the world.

Religion and philosophy stand in a special historical relation to each other; as the one declines, the other rises. The emergence of philosophy in Ancient Greece, for example, occurred when the old Gods retreated. Then, in the Christian era, until a few centuries ago, religion was again the most powerful of way of holding the West European community together. But with the new light in which the world appeared in modernity, religion was no longer able to do that. Natural science and philosophy put paid to the supremacy of religion, despite the many attempts to make peace between them. (Modern fanaticism is a different story.)

Art gives us the opportunity to look more closely at the intertwining of rejection and reconciliation, and to see how a given surface appearance may be contradicted by the meaning that it contains. This might help us face some questions. If we generally live in a way which denies our essence, how can this essence nonetheless exist in the face of its denial? How can something assert itself, when it is being denied? How can the unworthy life-experience contain its opposite, the notion of a worthy life? How can two opposites be true at the same time?

As an example, I am going to look at the work of the German artist Käthe Kollwitz (1867-1945). In her work, she shows us that the given is not straightforward and that it appears different from what it really is. We might separate three levels of this. First, there is the material she uses: all her two-dimensional work — posters, woodcuts, charcoal drawings — is in black and white. The unartistic world that our eye perceives is 'black and white' only metaphorically, but in reality even shadows appear coloured to us. Yet the abounding blackness of her work *adds to the reality* depicted and to its accessibility. It guides the viewer to the meaning of the work, in a way which 'realistic' colouring may not be able to do. The black and white of the

picture turns into all colours and shades of our individual experience and feeling which the figures evoke. The material blackness of the charcoal turns into vivid colours in your inner eye.

Then, there is another way in which we find the apparent uniformity turn into a manifest richness. Kollwitz is only interested in representing the human figure. But instead of being a confinement, her work opens the doors to a whole world. In her pictures, nothing can tell us more about the world in which we live and its conditions than the human body. In its shape and posture, and in the face is reflected the history of more than one generation.

This leads over to the main, and third, respect in which Kollwitz shows that the 'given' is at the same time not simply to be taken as 'given'. This is her theme of suffering, despair, the downtrodden. In her pictures, you can see that the forms and lines of a face are moulded by a suffering that has steadily and relentlessly accompanied the person all their life. You may see the eye fixed on something distant, outside the frame of the picture, while the head, the body, the muscles, contain the memory of all that passed. They show in flesh and blood that the past is present, and that some radical change is needed if the suffering of the past is to be overcome. But through this, much more than any picture of a sunny spring-day and awakening buds, the work confers timeless strength, courage, power and hope, a breath that will outlast any hardship. The portrayed wretchedness of the people is turned into the knowledge of the value and dignity of humanity. And thus the picture contains the demand of the people that the lived reality should be other than it is. The suffering contains a judgement: what is should not be.

In the course of this book, we shall come to see that the contradiction between the true human essence and the reality in which we live is most difficult to grasp. However, this contradiction is not a matter for specialised thinkers to discover and spell out to us. On the contrary, the highest forms of thinking that humankind has developed, are also the most sophisticated way of covering and hiding the real problem. This is quite a feat. For the problem, the contradiction, exists *for everyone*. In the form of *suffering*, it is directly present in everybody's life. The suffering we have in mind here is a form of our essential contradiction. As such, it is characterised by those six points that we have disentangled above; and as such, it demands a resolution. Suffering in itself proves three things: the human essence, its denial in our reality, and the demand that this contradiction should not be. And this 'should' of suffering expresses something more: against all appearance, and against any experience to the contrary, the essence is stronger than reality.

This kind of contradiction totally differs from opposites like 'day and night', 'land and sea', 'female and male'. These are part of nature, just like the fact that the human being has got two legs rather than

three or five. According to our use of the word, such pairs can never be called 'contradictions' at all, and it would be silly to worry about them. It is impossible for nature itself to know about any 'should' or 'good' and 'bad'. Nature cannot deny or oppose itself. Those pairs are features of nature which don't contain the indication that they should not be. They can't change in the sense of working towards the realisation of their freedom. What concerns us is a human-made contradiction, one which carries a demand, and points in the direction of its own overcoming.

When we say that something 'should not be', we deal with two kinds of knowledge. The knowledge about the given situation is gained in the light of a world that is not the one in which we live. The whole point of the meaning of 'should' is the difference between two worlds, that of our experience, and that of our innermost conviction. The 'should not' is more than a mere mechanical or formal negation. It is not at all empty. But so far, its fullness and concreteness are shown only through the form of denial. The denial shows the strength of the essence which no inhumanity can eliminate. And, ready to answer any particular given form of inhumanity, the denial shows the richness of essence. But some, always in a hurry, always fearing to miss the train, rush forward crying: 'Tell us, then, what your 'essence' really is! Tell us what the world *should be* like! Tell us what your promised land is like or else we won't move!' Those have already lost. They are deceived by the given world and its presumption of the material fact, against which denial must be the beginning of a freedom that can be lived and the life of which is beauty.

What *is*, may not be seen. Appearance, and its close relative, self-interest, get in the way. The gloss of the surface blinds us. The contradiction is part of the world we inhabit. And yet, how this contradiction is going to appear in our heads is neither obvious nor given. For example, it was inevitable that the Kaiser himself, quite in accordance with his stance in society, would disapprove of Kollwitz' work. Quoting Roman wisdom, the monarch pronounced that 'art should elevate and instruct ... it should not make the misery that exists appear even more miserable than it is'. His idea about the 'should", is rather different from ours.

In her work, Kollwitz consciously expresses that opposition between our essence and its denial in the reality of life. We might get hold of some of her intentions by contemplating the pictures, by letting them make an impression on us. But does that bring any nearer that other world that they indicate? On the contrary, the better the work of art, the more effectively it upholds reconciliation and actually confirms that given world against which it perhaps intends to speak. Art soothes us rather than spurring us to change the world into a better place. By helping to keep us going, reconciling our ordinary consciousness to our daily round, it merely adorns the bare walls

of our invisible prison.

Philosophy considers itself the highest form of thinking. This position is confirmed if we look at the relation between philosophy and its offspring, the sciences. (For the English-speaking reader, it is important to note that 'science' here is used to include all branches of systematic knowledge, not just natural science.) Philosophy is one and only *one*; it is one subject, one tradition, but with many different interpretations. The sciences are *many*. Each of them has its own neatly restricted circle of objects, those things it investigates. Each of the sciences takes its objects as given, and does not have to worry about where they come from. And each takes for granted its own way of thinking about these objects, and dealing with them. Because a science never gets beyond its own restricted circle, the fact that it shares everything that makes it a science with all the other sciences, is hidden from it. Each science must have the 'knowledge' of what an 'object' is, how to get hold of one, and how to look at it so that a science can be built up on it. The forms of knowledge used are taken for granted: 'theories', 'abstractions', 'generalisations', 'definitions', 'models', 'concepts', as well as 'judgement' and 'syllogism'. That is, each of the sciences takes for granted the foundations and determinations of thinking in general, and that implies the way of life which is bound up with that thinking.

From this derives one of philosophy's proper tasks. It accepts the sciences in general; but it is itself not simply another science. It doesn't just repeat what the others are doing on yet another object. Philosophy's task here is to try and spell out what the sciences assume: the constitution of a scientific object and the way in which thinking thinks about it. When we talk about 'philosophy', we are at the same time saying something about what it means to be a science. It is in this sense that we shall use 'philosophy' and 'science' interchangeably.

The task of philosophy or science is simply to investigate the given, to show what *is*. Their endeavour aims at knowledge of how that given is constituted or made up. Necessity is the core notion of scientific thinking. And this in two respects. On the one hand, the principles *of the world* given to us, or whatever particular clipping of it one may have chosen, are considered necessary; on the other hand, whatever we *know scientifically*, we know because we can show that it necessarily derives from something else. This necessity is always twofold: real and logical, simultaneously in the head and outside it. Neither science nor philosophy can work without that notion of necessity — whatever their subject-matter might be. What if the given were an insane monstrosity, destroying soul and spirit, and killing the possibility of a human future in front of our own eyes? Still, science would show its necessity, that what is, has to be. From our point of view, the problem with this necessity is that it is a useless notion

when it comes to grasping the essential contradiction of an 'inhuman human life'.

Yet, it might still appear to some that scientific thinking is very well-suited to grasping the two kinds of knowledge that we have been talking about in relation to that contradiction. For, are philosophy and science not about the relation between two worlds, the world of the here and now, of contingent appearance, and of the principles and laws behind that appearance? Yes, but this must be differentiated from our two kinds of knowledge. For science, the principles and laws are always present within the world of appearance. There is no essential contradiction between the two worlds, between appearance, and the metaphysical world of the laws giving appearance its soul or notion. This is how it is and has to be, says science. The core notion of scientific thinking — necessity — has its place precisely between the two worlds. It shows us which bits of the world of appearance are necessary by deriving them from something behind or beyond the perceptible. To say that there should be no such split between the two worlds would be utter nonsense in science. However, the essential contradiction that interests us, between a human world and its denial in our inhuman human world, is something that should not be, that ought to be overcome.

The notion — the nature of things as uncovered by science — shows us the general content of reality, by grasping what is necessary within appearance,. In our way of life, we cannot know this unaided by science. It renders to us the necessary inner being of a thing that we might find in our world. When uncertainty, narrowness, worry and delusion of prosaic consciousness have been removed, the notion is a clear eye, looking at blind reality, revealing its generality. Through this generality, it provides ordinary life with knowledge about itself. However, it is as if, by looking at a bright picture of our home, we had sought to cure the disease in it, which casts its shadow on everything we do.

The knowledge of scientific necessity is the most developed answer we may get to the question of why we have to live the way we do. But whereas the question seems to indicate an opening up of possibilities, the answer, being provided by science, only binds us back more firmly to the starting-point, our given reality. The reduction of our world to unshakeable logical principles is good for demonstrating that, in principle, we have to live the way we do, but no good for comprehending that this way buries our humanity.

Thus, science and philosophy cannot but be reconciliatory. What is more, as the specialised skills of thinking in general, they might have given us the idea that *all* thinking has to reconcile us to what is going on anyway. Hegel, however, is the only philosopher who has explicitly made reconciliation (*Versöhnung*) the heart of his thinking.

> To recognise reason as the rose in the cross of the present and thereby to delight in the present — this reasonable insight is the *reconciliation* with actuality which philosophy grants to those who have received the inner demand *to comprehend*, and as well as to preserve their subjective freedom in what is substantial, to stand with their subjective freedom not in what is particular and contingent, but in what is in and for itself. (PhR, p 22)

Let us make a beginning in understanding the quotation. In German, just as in English, *cross*, in its worldly sense, means 'adversity or affliction in general, or a burden or cause of suffering, as in *bear one's cross*' (Chambers English Dictionary). If we look at our present life, it might appear to us as such a cross. However, if we look at it with the eyes of *philosophy*, we learn *'to comprehend'*. With philosophy we learn to keep the other world in view, we learn what is to be disregarded, the 'particular' and 'contingent', and what is to be held fast, the notion, or 'what is in and for itself'. This will also teach us to be free, even though we have to participate in our given everyday world. For, our participation is now one that comprehends. And we are no longer led astray by appearance. Thus, philosophy shows us how to see something else in that cross. Thinking pierces through that appearance and discovers necessity. This, according to Hegel, will offer an almost mystical experience of the 'rose', of joy instead of suffering.

The picture obviously refers to Christ, through whose suffering and death on the *cross*, God offered the world the opportunity to be *reconciled* to him. To understand this reconciliation by the cross, means to be comforted in this world, for it is now seen to lie in God's hands. However, rather than relying on religious feeling, Hegel's reconciliation is built on *logical* stringency. This means that the other world is not God, but the world of reason, to be comprehended by reason. Our world is not governed by God, but by reason, or by necessity. In Hegel's reconciliation, reason is reconciling itself to itself. And it happens when we recognise that the two sides which appear to be opposites, the world and our grasp of it, are actually one. When we know that the concept that *we* have of the world is truly the concept *of the world*, then we see that the concept is *in* the world, is the world itself, that the world *lives* it. Only conceit could make us believe that *we* could influence the reason of the world with our futile ideas. Philosophy is the way to break through the appearance of the world to its innermost concept, so that we may make the concept of the world our own. The world's reason is then the same as the reason that we have in our head. Then, while being only with ourselves in thinking, we are also, in thinking, united with the whole world. We are free, because as single subjects we 'stand in', are part of, 'what is substantial'.

This is the meaning of *speculation* for Hegel. It is a mostly tacit as-

sumption of science in general that the notions it gains through its work, catch reality as it is. But only speculative philosophy is able to spell out how this occurs and how it is possible for it to occur. If what we have in our heads is the essence of things, then that means that that essence and our thought are *the same*. Now, if they are the same, we can look at it the other way round as well: whatever we know about the principles of our thinking, that is about logic, must also be part of the essence of things. If this were not the case, our thinking, according to the laws of thinking, would distort the essence of the things that we would like to get hold of through thinking. There is only one reason, or spirit. Reason is the same, whether as residing in the outside world, as yet undiscovered by us, or as residing in our heads, where it is the essence of 'things' in their discovered form.

If reason is undivided, it is this unity that must be disclosed in all the different realms of the world. We then have to see whatever there is in the world as a particular *form* of *one* principle, reason, Aristotle's *nous*, or Hegel's *Spirit*. This is what Hegel expressed in his famous double equation, occurring two pages before the quotation that we just cited:

> What is reasonable is actual; and what is actual is reasonable. (PhR, p 20)

To be 'reasonable' means to be of reason, to have the property of *reason*. To be 'actual' means to be part of the general make-up of the world, to be the opposite of a contingency. What is actual has the laws of reason *acting* within it. Actuality carries out the purpose of reason, which is *active*. The principle of reconciliation states that, whatever the subject-matter, we can only think on the assumption that both the reasonable and the actual are *the same*. What governs our reality *must be* reasonable, *must have* the character of reason.

Aristotle is the other great speculative thinker in the history of philosophy, in fact the first. Together with Plato, he is the founder of Western philosophy as a science. One of the broadest minds ever, he delved into every realm and is the founder of many a branch of modern science. But among his greatest achievement was the Logic, which occurs in history for the first time in his work. And for the next two millennia, thinking could not take a step beyond the foundations he had laid. Logic is the coming into light of the movement of thinking itself. Thinking which always seems to be immersed in something, occupied with a certain content, here looks at itself, free from any admixture from outside itself. With the principle of speculative thinking, that the reason in things is the same as the reason in our heads, this logic, being about thinking, spells out the deepest knowledge we may gain about anything that is. From the point of view of later centuries, Aristotle's shortcoming was that he did not make explicit the system that his work implies. This is what Hegel accomplished. And thus we have the history of philosophy embraced by the two great systematic minds and speculative thinkers, Aristotle at its inception, Hegel at its close.

These, then, are the two ways to respond to the general contradiction of our given way of life: reconciliation and rejection. They are directly opposed to each other. One says about the dark shadow of life that 'it *ought not* to be', the other that 'it *has* to be'. The 'ought-not' contains the human-made irreconcilable contradiction between essence and reality that we keep on reproducing with our given way of life. Rejection can only occur by expressing its judgement with full conviction. But, although it might — just for a moment — smash up those laws of reason, that actuality, it has so far been unable to rise to the level of real knowledge and to effect a real change. Reconciliation, on the other hand, makes it its main task to express its wisdom in the form of generality, to reveal necessity which holds for everything and everybody. It is convinced that the generality and reason that philosophy reveals are the real powers governing our world. In order to grasp this, we are required to look behind appearance and discover its imperceptible principles. Then we gain the higher knowledge that what is, 'has to be'. We can see 'the rose in the cross of the present', but the inhumanity of the world still stands.

Philosophy doesn't invent anything, but spells out a necessity *that is already there*. We *live*, create and recreate this necessity, but ordinary consciousness can't *see* it. Showing reality what binds it together, philosophy reveals this necessity, but only as something which cannot be otherwise. Philosophy's form of reconciliation, therefore, rests on a lower form: the common resignation to the everyday treadmill. Both ordinary ignorance and specialised thinking take their relation to each other as a natural given. You need a reflecting device, because you can't see yourself directly. Thus, according to philosophy, it is in the nature of things that society needs philosophy to tell it about itself. In one respect philosophy is absolutely right: everyday consciousness does not really *know* anything. It doesn't get very far past the immediate impression and, therefore, dwells in the realm of mere opinion. It doesn't know what it is that it abhors, it has no means to spell out its generality. Of necessity, it has to leave, ticking away like clockwork, what is hated and suffered .

But not always. From within this state of our lost dignity, opposition gathers itself, and from time to time breaks out of the ordinary, that which confines our freedom and hides our essence. We are led to *reject* it, to relate in a *new* way to the world, whose destiny, for a moment, we try to take into our own hands. The judgement, an 'inhuman human world', or the opposition between a reality that

fails our essence and the essence imprisoned by that reality, bears fruit. All of a sudden, the blindness of our essence is healed. Freedom, all at once, sees its prison, its 'second nature', and rejects it. The new relation to the world comprises three new recognitions: what the world is, who I am, what I can do. There is no science, no canon of thinking, which can think this rejection.

We all carry the essence in us, as a seed carries the plant it will become. But in this desert where we live, which has dried out our souls, freedom will never flourish. It lies there, waiting, like a dry seed. Occasionally, however, heavy rainfall transforms the seemingly barren land into the most exuberant oasis. The desert becomes lush green and soothes the eye. The seeds were there all the time, but only after the rain does their potential become real. They sprout and display their being, which had been until then hidden in the grain.

In its own kind of abstraction, art can, at best, only express the opposition between an essence that ought to be and a reality that denies it. For philosophy, this contradiction is unthinkable, is contrary to its very meaning. But, in everybody's life, from time to time, that contradiction and the demand to overcome it have to make their way into deed. Certain circumstances awaken the potential of our essence to grow, to display its content, to become real and resolve the opposition to the world by *changing* it.

Reconciliation, whether in the form of ordinary consciousness, or of science and philosophy, is tightly shackled to the given world, so overwhelmingly powerful. The shackle is made of the material of necessity which says 'it has to be'. It effaces the statement and the demand made by suffering. Everyday consciousness has to leave it at that pale assertion of necessity; for science the necessity of the given is a conclusion, derived logically. Rejection on the other hand is the conclusion *in the deed* that *this* state of the world 'should not be'. It casts away the disfiguring shackles.

Reconciliation of ordinary consciousness means submission to the deadening requirements of the everyday given. However, in *one* respect, it is like rejection: neither can grasp its adversary, the given world. Rejection doesn't know what it actually is that is being rejected, and this implies that it doesn't know *itself* either. The only thing it knows is that no possible constraint can make the given bearable. This lack of knowledge will immediately be brought home to rejection, for it cannot carry out its task. It has no chance against the whole, the general movement, which swallows it up unnoticed. The generality remains undisturbed. But the heroic side of the event of rejection is kept in peoples' memories, kept alive as a germ of hope and a source of strength, passed on in stories, in works of art, in friendship. It is thus endowed by individual people with another kind of reality.

The opposition between reconciliation and rejection is not only to

be seen in their result, as if this was a chance product, but it is a consequence of their respective methods and criteria for truth. Since science has to show the necessary constitution of what is, this given is, in a way, the measure which science has to live up to. If, however, the given is being rejected, what could then be the measure or criterion for this break-out? *According to what* has this rejection of the given life and world been made? A rejection is a deliberate way of saying 'no'. So, there must be some yardstick, some ground or criterion according to which the decision to reject has been made. Since it is precisely the given that is being refused, it cannot itself be the reason for its own dismissal. That reason must be something *else*.

The reason for rejection cannot be anything existing in the same way as the rejected given exists, as if they stood like two neighbouring houses, so that you might just take all your stuff and move from one to the other. This criterion is in a different mode from the given, something that is *not yet*, but is to be, shall be in the future. It is just as in Käthe Kollwitz' art: the given misery and suffering contain their opposite, the firm knowledge of a beautiful life. The mode of being of that opposite is the 'should', while the mode of being of the given is the 'is'.

The time in which we live is marked by the dark shadow of a recent historical event: we live after Auschwitz. (Yes, it still is recent!) It does not cease screaming at us, across the few decades that have elapsed. But who can hear? And what *if* we heard? Would we know what to do? Not only can we not get out of that shadow, but, what is more, we live in exactly the *same kind of society* which brought forth the slave-work and extermination camps as the outward symptom of its disease. In fact, in the meantime this system has tightened its grip over the globe. The symptoms might change, but the disease has not been cured. We don't know what to *do*, because we don't *know* what we are dealing with, what we are living in. One conclusion that definitely has to be drawn from our recent history is that we cannot go on just *living without thinking*. But how to think?

Auschwitz is a deep wound hacked by humanity into its own body. It is the 'reductio ad absurdum' of our way of life, the 'falsest untruth' possible. For it stands in the furthest opposition possible to the essence of humanity. No philosophical reconciliation can deal with this opposition. Scientific thinking is based on the conviction that the given world to be investigated is *reasonable*, and that its intrinsic reason is brought to light by scientific endeavour. Auschwitz smashes that relation between thinking and the reality of the world in which we live. Without that relation, philosophy cannot make sense of the world any more. And, therefore, through science or philosophy, we can no longer make sense of our reality.

We have to go beyond science. We have to go beyond philosophy.

Part One

Definition and Friendship

I

WHATEVER ITS species, the life of an individual consists in constant exchange and interaction with the world around it. For a non-human organism this relation is determined and shaped through the body of the organism and the instincts guiding it. Whatever is an object for the non-human individual, what it perceives of its environment, what it needs and what it uses, all this is defined and given to it by powers outside it, leaving no opening for free decision. In contrast to this, it can already be seen by looking at the human body how deeply rooted is the freedom of the human being. The forelimbs of a bird, for example, which are its wings, can only be used for flying. They are perfectly adapted to the purpose, but utterly useless for most other things. And the instinct of the bird drives it to fly. In opposition to this, the hand of the human being is open in its application, and no instinct or power can drive or determine it, as if from the outside, to do any *particular* action.

The hand is, of course, related to the whole of the human physique, its erect posture, the development of the brain, the concomitant development of consciousness manifested in language and social life. The evolution of the human body goes hand in hand with that of the spiritual capabilities of the human being. Any activity in which we are engaged is always bound up with consciousness; and our physical nature does not determine our being, but is part of our freedom. Freedom means that the *object for us* has to be given to us through something *other* than nature; *we* have to give it to ourselves. What we perceive of our world, what we need, what we use, what we enjoy, what makes us suffer, whatever is an object for us, is given to us only through our, human, activity. Whatever is now an object for

us, is a testimony to the past development of human freedom. And whatever history has passed down to us, now partiticipates in the making of our present and future.

How do we give an object to ourselves? What enables us to place an object in front of our inner eye? This activity has been split into the work of two 'faculties': thinking and will. Together, they have to represent our object to us, whatever the activity in which the human being engages.

We are here talking about thinking in a broad sense, not as a special skill. Thinking in this sense is simply the activity which gives us our object, that is, provides us with a general representation of the world — or rather of *a* world. For the freedom in thinking means that it is not bound, as a receptacle, to what is directly poured into it via the senses. Thinking in this sense is not a mere possibility, which withers if we don't cultivate it. Rather, it is a necessity for us. Nobody can cease thinking, as long as blood is pulsating in their veins. The world that is in thinking may take many different forms: it mat be a memory recalling the past; it may represent any part of the already existing outside world; or it could be about a world that might exist if we decided to realise it. Thinking is not static, nor a mechanism, nor a set of rules, but a *free activity*. And, in fact, it is only because of this freedom that it can represent the world to us. What is more, it makes us *do* something with that representation, see it in our own light, turn it around, look at its different sides, reverse it, investigate it, ask questions about it.

Thinking goes hand in hand with the will. The one could not be there without the other; each implies the other. Without the will being implied in thinking, the latter would not be an activity, and thus would not be at all. If, for the moment, we separate what is really united, we can say that in the link between head and world, thinking and will go in opposite directions. Thinking is the activity that forms and reshapes the outside world into the world in our heads. And, starting from that inner world, the will wants to move into the outside world, to be active and to effect some change in it, transferring the inside, the inner life, to the outside. We might say that *because* we can create things in the world and act according to our will, we need to be able to reshape our picture of that ever-changing world; and *because* we can imagine and project, we need a will, rather than an instinct, to drive our action. With this intertwinedness of thinking and will, it is difficult to see why we normally think of them as separate. And with this constant movement between subject and object, or between your head and the world, it is hard to know where to draw a border between them. There really is only *one* world, part of which is situated outside the head, part inside it.

Endowed with the powers of thinking and will instead of instinct, the mere process of life is, in principle, a creation for, as well as of,

the human being. In this *social* process of our creation, there are two sides involved: the one and the many. Each particular individual is for itself the one, opposed to the whole of society, the many. But each individual is also, at the same time, part of the many for everybody else. In terms of thinking and will, this means that my being, which I put out through the activity of my will, is the possible object of thinking for everybody else, for each of the many. The result of my will becomes part of their being when they perceive it, recreate it in their heads. I spread myself into society; the single 'I' dissolves into the many. And similarly the other way round. The representation of the world that I form in my head through my own activity of thinking, recreates the outcome of other people's will in my head. For the world as I find it is the will of others made manifest. I recreate the congealed will of others in my head. I absorb society. My single 'I' contains the many. And not only the living but the dead too: I am history made present. Others are part of my world; my world is made by others as much as by myself. 'Nature' is never my world, only nature as it has been *created*, made by humans. And from this picture of my world, in which I am the many and the present is history, my will is free to form itself and find its own way of putting itself out into the world. This is the movement of freedom passing through necessity.

This is very much like that example of a conversation I mentioned in the Introduction. Language is the prime example for self-creation of social beings. It is first of all an activity, which is both individual and social. Nevertheless, language also means system, seemingly in contradiction to freedom. Each language, for example, has its own system of meaningful sounds, a small set compared to all the possibilities of the human speech-organs and ear; each language has its own delicate grammatical anatomy. This systematic character is a necessary outcome of freedom, of language as a *social* activity. And this 'unfree' system is, in turn, the ground for our freedom. Only this *previously known* system allows us to impart any *new* meaning or knowledge. This system alone, which is true for any instance in which we use language, allows us to say something that can only be understood in *this* singular moment. However, as the outcome of our social activity, such firm structures are not eternal and unmovable, but their firmness is only a moment in a continuous flux.

For human beings, endowed with thinking and will, life is the process in which they make themselves. However, this process is a free creation in principle only. The obstacles which stand in its way are conventions, labels which tell you which drawer to put things in, *definitions*, forming an un-free way of thinking and living in general. These obstacles in the way of free creation don't appear to us as such but as their opposite. They are in fact the high road of our established social relations. The delicate machinery of our societies functions

smoothly, only if the material it is processing is prepared in advance to fit in. The shapes required for its maintenance are *definitions*, *lived* and *thought*. They can only be lived because they are thought, and they can only be thought because they are lived. Definitions are not given by nature, but are made by us. Nothing else in the world could make them. Thus, we create what stands in the way of our own freedom. Can this still be called 'creation'? We might answer with a picture: creation is like a river. It goes on flowing as long as there is water in its bed. If you build barrages, dams, locks in its way, it will still be the river. If you steal its freedom, the water will still flow, push forward. But not as before, freely undulating, a process in which landscape and river shape each other in their own kind of conversation.

The genealogy of the word 'definition' shows us more about the meaning that we are concerned with here. The Latin *definire*, 'to set bounds to' is related to *finis*, 'limit', 'end of something'. *Definitio*, is what the Romans chose to render the Greek term *horismos*, from *horos*, a 'boundary post', used to mark one plot from another. A definition, then, is the setting of boundaries and thereby the constitution of what these fences encircle. What a defined thing is in itself comprise these borders; they belong to its intrinsic being. Take the limits away and the thing will be gone. A definition has a purpose, which is not the fence, but what is gained by fencing something off. The land out of which a plot may be gained, is not a free being. We, therefore, might be said to have the *right* to put our own will and purpose into it by marking off a plot. But what if we define what is intrinsically free?

Our societies only function by way of definitions. Is there any realm which they leave untouched? Maybe only in art is there any free space left, and perhaps in the rare blessing of a trusting friendship. In the public market place, every one of our encounters is based on large-scale definitions, that cut up the whole of a possible life and determine the links between the various mutilated parts. For example, in a slave society, everybody knows who is 'free' and who is an item of property and trade; everybody knows what different attitudes that implies towards any member of either group; and everybody acts in accordance with this knowledge. In a society in which the relation between the sexes is one of subordination of one sex by the other, everybody knows who belongs to the dominating and who to the dominated group; everybody knows how to relate to a member of either group; and everybody acts accordingly.

Not only the slave, but the slave-owner, too, is determined by the definitions 'slave' and 'free'. Because of the stark inequality, we may feel reluctant to agree with this. Its truth emerges when looking at a social relation which, unlike the slavery relation, is *equal*, yet, like slavery, still given through definitions. Let us look at the relation of commodity exchange. The persons involved are exactly equal: each is

a possessor. In this relation, the possession determines what each is for him- or herself, as well as what he or she is for the other. The owners assess themselves and each other *in terms of* the objects possessed. The human being vanishes behind its property, behind its defined role as possessor of a certain kind of object. Behind the 'just' and 'beautiful' 'equality' and 'freedom' of that relation, hides the ugliness of relating according to the dictate of a definition — here, that of the commodity.

We recognise the *inequality* of the relation between a slave and a free person, as it has always been recognised in history. The inequality of master and slave, contrasts sharply with the equal relation of two commodity owners, who might stand, at least formally, on an equal footing. But all four of these people are alike in that they are governed by definitions. Today, we easily recognise the *inhumanity* of the slavery relation. However, in that the commodity dealers are also ruled by definitions, their relation is just as inhuman. But their equality blinds us to this inhumanity.

Once we have learnt the definitions through our own life experience, they *are* us. We then always know a definition before we meet one of its real-life 'exemplars'. Before we were allowed a view of the whole landscape of life, we are assigned the well-defined plot. The activity of thinking which is to form a picture of the world in one's head, stops short at the definitions. It knows them already. The definitions are not the world that it has to reshape in the head, for they are already resident there, ready-made, stored up. Now, that power to portray the life of the world to you, to get to the essence of things, to make them known to you, this power called 'thinking' is reduced to the reproduction of definitions that were known beforehand. It just has to subsume the living world under them. Definitions are like the specialised organs of animals. They determine which tiny realm of the infinite world will be accessible to you. Like insect antennae, they determine what you can perceive, and therefore what you know, how you act, how you live. Definitions define what can be an object for us, just as nature determines what can be an object for animals. Definitions are therefore a mainstay of our 'second nature'.

They are an insult to the true power of thinking.

This defined and confined world is, then, the starting point of the will. The will is activity. When it is turned towards the outside world, it is activity that wants to get into it, and create it as its own. The will sets out from a given situation, a picture of the world which is represented to it by thinking. And the changed state it aims at has likewise to be imagined by thinking. That is, if this thinking works according to definitions, the will is embraced by these dead bodies which make up our thinking. The will's goal is given to it through the definitions, as a state previously defined. But then, where does that leave the freedom of the will? What does it do to the freedom

which consists in aiming at something that has not been done before, which is the direction the subject freely set for itself? What does that do to the freedom of the self that wants to put itself into the world and create it as its home? Where does that leave the human freedom of creativity? The will becomes a mere organ of choice between predefined options. Often, its only function is like that of a motor, driving us, standard vehicles, along the roads of our tarmacked life. The creativity that is our human essence is consumed in the mere reproduction of what has been defined in advance. A will that is part of the defined world is not free and is a distortion of itself.

Definitions are an insult to the free will.

We might have been prone to think that 'definitions' were a matter of science, a necessary tool helping us to understand, the only way of concisely stating what something is. But if science can define what 'a slave' is, where does it get its undefined matter from? This has to be there before science begins to operate on it. Before any science can begin to think about how properly to define 'a slave', the slave *is*. A slave is a *real*, existing 'thing'. A slave *lives* the definition of 'a slave', and a slave-owner *lives* his definition. The two together, and the rest of society, *live* the definition of slavery, before anybody can come along and work anything out scientifically. Before any definition can be the object of science, it has to be preformed in life, it has to be lived by people. *We live the definitions.* They are the chief support of the inner structure of our way of life.

Definitions are an insult to human life.

We can see the contradictory character of the definitions. They are not given by nature, but are like nature to us. They *are* us, but they dominate us as if from the outside. They are walls against freedom, yet these walls themselves have been built out of freedom, could only have been erected by free beings. Here the picture of the river does not help any longer, because it cannot incorporate this contradiction. The river, standing for free creation, cannot itself have built its own canals and dams. These, unlike the definitions guiding human life, are an addition imposed on it from the outside, by some being other than itself. Even though we have also compared definitions, and what they are for us, with animal organs, they are not 'natural', given by nature. They exist through our own activity, our thinking and willing, which are free. They are our 'second nature' since the way they determine us is similar to the way in which 'first nature' determines animals.

Nevertheless, definitions also *are* a 'matter' of science. We live them and give them material shape. We do this because they dominate our ordinary consciousness, or our everyday thinking and will. The fact that they come to us from outside, makes us ignorant of them. We are acquainted with them and were forced to learn them, but we don't *know* them. This ignorance is the reason why we feel the need for science. Dissatisfaction, a feeling of emptiness is the seed of philosophy. Philosophy is sparked off by the feeling that there is something missing, by an uneasiness with the normal way of things as we live and as we know them. This discomfort is stilled — for those engaged in that discipline and for those only — by the nourishment provided by philosophy. Science is the form in which our thinking can take a detached view of the definitions. Scientific thinking begins with those lived definitions, the definitions which contain our real life-blood. Only their investigation by science makes them known to us. And thus, since the definitions are us, it is only through science that we can change a mere acquaintance with ourselves into what seems our own self-knowledge. So we have three things: there is the way we live; there is our common everyday acquaintance with what we are doing and who we are; and there is science. These three form a kind of unity. None of them could be without the others, and all of them are what they are through the definition.

Science, however, has this limitation. Definitions provide its subject matter, but it cannot know that they contradict human essence. This is a knowledge far beyond the reach of definitions. The only thing science can do is to investigate the definitions as such. Thus, neither in our ordinary everyday consciousness, nor in science, can we know what the definitions *really* are.

Unable to know their real being, what we are left with is their appearance. They appear to be other than they really are. Appearance cannot even show that the definitions are made, let alone that their making is a contradictory process. There does not seem to exist any power strong enough to destroy the false gloss of their appearance and get to their real essence. For it is our own activity which sustains that lustre, every action putting a new coating on the definitions. The cause of the trouble is our life, our freedom which creates unfreedom. This, no science and no philosophy can see. And therefore, they cannot change it, and they would not even be interested in such a cure.

What we have in our heads as part of the definitional make-up of the world is, for philosophy, an absolute given. From the scientific point of view, this is the only kind of knowledge that the reality of our life can *prove*. Anything that has to do with rejecting the definitions must be discarded as 'invalid'. Philosophy is entirely built on the conviction that the principles of the way we live could not be other than they are. Because of this, philosophy must also be convinced that how these principles appear in our heads, is the way they *have to* appear. The subject matter of philosophy is what we *already* have in our heads. From here, science proceeds to change the way we *know* our ordinary life by putting it into a scientific form. This has nothing to do with whether our way of life is good or bad, or whether it should be different from what it is. *For philosophy, this way of life simply is.* And its task is to make it appear necessary and *therefore good.*

Although Aristotle does not make reconciliation a topic of his system, the shape of his thought is very much like that of Hegel, for whom reconciliation is the central task of philosophy. In the quotation we looked at in the Introduction, Hegel said that the burden of ordinary life could be discovered to contain happiness, if seen through philosophy. Thus for any philosopher, the knowledge that we possess as ordinary people leaves us dissatisfied. And instead of asking why this is, philosophers try to transform that knowledge.

One of Aristotle's biggest contributions to this transformation of our common knowledge is the *scientific definition*. From this, the whole system of logic derives. For him, a definition is the expression of the real nature of something. And it doesn't make any difference whether this 'something' is an inanimate thing, or a living, or a conscious, or a human being. Not just a linguistic convention, the definition is *actual*, making something the kind of thing it is, its principle or essence. This definition is the basic building block of logic, and therewith of all scientific thinking. It is the smallest unit of uncontradictory knowledge. What does 'uncontradictory' mean here? It means not knowing about the 'essential contradiction' talked about in the Introduction, not knowing that, in our way of life, humanity creates inhumanity. Thinking which starts with that uncontradictory unit, will never be able to grasp the essential contradiction. The only logical development of the definition leads into 'judgement' and 'syllogism', further devices to prove the validity of our way of life as a whole, and to keep the real nature of the definitions in the dark.

This by no means signifies that science and philosophy are free of any contradictions. On the contrary. Their attempts to squeeze a contradictory world into contradiction-free terms can never succeed. The cracks in the inner coherence of their account are valuable openings for a deeper understanding. One such place can be found in Aristotle's account of friendship. While it plays a key role in his Ethics and Politics, its meaning raises great difficulties for him, getting him entangled in deep contradictions. These arise because Aristotle tries to define the indefinable. Friendship, in the highest sense, is a relation between people quite different in *kind* from a relation determined through definitions. Without the obstacles of definitions, people may relate to each other *directly*, and this opens the way to the free deployment of our intrinsic powers, of will and thinking, which gain a new meaning. Definitions reproduce and subsume; friendship is a continuous creation.

True friendship is entirely created by the people involved. A friend is unique. She is nothing like an animated definition, a mere exemplar of something known universally. There is no preformed knowledge of friendship, the reproduction of which makes up our everyday life. Friendship is outside the everyday. It is in relations of *this* kind, therefore, that the human powers have their proper home.

Here, thinking, which is the activity of representing the world to us, comes into its own. Only here is it not about confirming and reproducing what it knows already. And only in such relations, then, is the will really free. For only here is it not confined by the tight borders of definitions, but free to will what is not already given anyway. Here the will creates life, present and future.

This direct and free relation between people is as such opposed to relation through definition. But in life, this opposition only comes to the fore when the two kinds of relation openly clash with one another. As an accident, such a clash may occur in anybody's life, even though it does not do so often enough. It is also a well-known motive in world literature, and the force that explodes the defined relations is often love. In realistic epochs, such rigid relations were predominantly depicted as those of social status. The conflict is conjured up when two people of different social standing, who formerly accepted those social divisions, fall in love with each other. The same kind of conflict is exhibited when a free man becomes friends with a slave, and that is why Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn provides the first example for our study. It illustrates how the evolving direct relation between people is much deeper than what the system of prefabricated definitions would allow. It leads to a *rejection*. This breaking out takes place, at the same time, in thinking, as well as in social reality. There is no difference between the two, they are *one*.

II

THE ADVENTURES of Huckleberry Finn was intended by Mark Twain to be a book of boyhood adventure, a companion to its predecessor, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. But it contains a drama of moral conflict which ranks among the finest in world literature. The coincidence that begins this part of the story is the re-encounter of Huck and Jim. Each is running away from an existing life. Huck has escaped a persecuting guardian, as well as the 'lickings' and imprisonment by his drunken persecuting father. Jim is a runaway slave. Against the 'lonesomeness' of three days and nights, Huck has no other remedy but counting the stars, and the drift logs and rafts floating down the river. His encounter with Jim delivers him from his solitude and friendlessness.

> ... it was Miss Watson's Jim! I bet I was glad to see him ... I was ever so glad to see Jim. I warn't lonesome, now. (p 94. All quotations are taken from the Penguin edition.)

This coincidence is the beginning of a friendship which, according to the rules of society, and the knowledge of them possessed by every member of it, should not be. The only relation between Jim and Huck that society would be prepared to accept, is that between a free white man, and a slave, a black man, an article of property.

Because the definitions of people and the implied relations between them are the work of *society*, a breaking down of those definitions is at the same time a kind of rupture within society. For Huck and Jim, the severance from society is very direct, for both are runaways. Each on his own had to run away from an unbearable position in which society had placed him. With the outside social pressure lifted, Jim and Huck create their own world, out of the growing friendship between them and their direct connection with nature. Their survival is not built on a predefined social division of labour, fixing mind and body. Nobody else has to work to give them their livelihood, which they provide for themselves through directly relating to nature. The independence and freedom of their relation is portrayed in literary form in their life on the raft, a few square metres of vulnerable wooden platform, floating down the river, cut off from the surrounding world, the cultivated reality on the land, as if cutting through civilisation.

This set-up has two interlacing dimensions: the relation between the two, and that between the pair and society. Between themselves, they *create* a relation, which means at the same time dismantling the definitions and changing the way in which each perceives himself and the other. For the established definitions of society would only *condition* each of them into a certain way of relating to the other, reproducing the definitions that they know, submitting their will to the power of the given. Friendship and definitions contradict each other.

The second dimension, the separation of Jim and Huck from the generality which is built on the upkeep of those definitions, is vital for dismantling them. It provides the space for creating something else. But a mere outward separation from society is far from enough. How to dismantle definitions is no mechanical problem, for society sits inside us. Our common knowledge is the repository of society's definitions. And conscience reinforces that knowledge, and therefore that way of life, by providing moral backing. Conscience is like the 'ought' of the general given, the voice of society deep down in each of us.

Jim and Huckleberry are very different in the way each of them is able to change, from relating to the other as through the given definitions, to a self-created, free relation. Jim ran away from his position as a house-slave, when he learnt that he was going to be sold 'down the river', that is, to a plantation-owner. There is no indication that, before then, he had ever quarrelled with his lot. Although up to then, he had always lived in a framework where it would have been possible for him to be sold at any time, it is only when this possibility becomes actual, that he finds that he cannot put up with it any longer.

Quite miraculously, it seems to us, it is no trouble for Jim, the one who, up to now, accepted being dominated, to discard this form entirely. But for Huck, it is a huge struggle. He has to gain the new conception of Jim, and of himself too. His struggle shows how the shape that soul and mind have acquired, while living in that predefined world, cannot simply be taken off and thrown away like a pair of worn-out shoes. We are able to follow this struggle closely, and even in Huck's own words, because the form it takes is a quarrel of Huck with his own conscience. From inside him, society, in the form of his conscience, speaks to him, holding up against him all the definitions of things and the rules prescribing how he must relate to them.

First, it takes Huck some time until the power of their friendship has overcome the old ways of thinking. After remonstrating with Huck over a trick that he had played on him, Jim quietly retreats to the wigwam.

> But that was enough. It made me feel so mean I could almost kissed *his* foot to get him to take it back. It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger — but I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterwards, neither. (p 143)

Thus, Huck gradually learns to relate to Jim in an entirely new, di-

rect, way. But when their little new world on the raft is placed in the larger surroundings, and their whole is made into a tiny fragile particle of another much bigger whole, the new way loses validity. When the reality from which they had run away can no longer be dismissed, and has to be dealt with, a perfect crisis erupts, pushing into the light two irreconcilable opposites which vie with each other. Which is the true life? The one from which they had run away, or the one of their own creation? The one which sells 'niggers' as slaves, or the one in which Jim is an equal human being and a friend? Jim now has two meanings or essences, as it were, which mutually exclude each other. Which is the true one? Which one corresponds to what, or rather who, Jim *really* is? And which corresponds to who Huck really is? Which meaning belongs to the right way of living? Which to the right way of thinking?

The conflict between Huck's conscience, awakened by realising that he has stepped beyond the limits society prescribes, and his newly gained personal appreciation of Jim, flares up for the first time when they are approaching the free states.

> Jim said it made him all over trembly and feverish to be so close to freedom. Well, I can tell you it made me all over trembly and feverish, too, to hear him, because I begun to get it through my head that he *was* most free — and who was to blame for it? Why, *me*. I couldn't get that out of my conscience, no how nor no way. ... It hadn't ever come home to me before, what this thing was that I was doing. ... I tried to make out to myself that I warn't to blame, because *I* didn't run Jim off from his rightful owner; but it warn't no use, conscience up and says, every time, 'But you knowed he was running for his freedom, and you could a paddled ashore and told somebody.' That was so — I couldn't get around that, noway. ... Conscience says to me, 'What had poor Miss Watson done to you, that you could see her nigger go off right under your eyes and never say a single word?' (p 145)

And a little while later:

> My conscience got to stirring me up hotter than ever, until at last I says to it, 'Let up on me — it ain't too late, yet — I'll paddle ashore at the first light, and tell. I felt easy and happy, and light as a feather, right off ... and as I shoved off, he [Jim] says:
>
> 'Pooty soon I'll be a-shout'n for joy, an I'll say, it's all on accounts o' Huck; I's a free man, en I couldn't ever ben free ef it hadn' ben for Huck; Huck done it. Jim won't ever forgit you, Huck; you's de bes' fren' Jim's ever had; en you's de *only* fren' ole Jim's got now.'
>
> I was paddling off, all in sweat to tell on him, but when he says

> this, it seemed to kind of take the tuck all out of me. I went along slow then, and warn't right down certain whether I was glad I started or whether I warn't. When I was fifty yards off, Jim says:
>
> 'Dah you goes, de ole true Huck; de on'y white genlman dat ever kep' his promise to ole Jim.'
>
> Well, I just felt sick. But I says, I *got* to do it — I can't get *out* of it. (p 146f)

Just then, coming across people searching for runaway slaves, Huck has an easy chance to tell on Jim; but he cannot bring himself to do it. His struggle is not a detached intellectual search for the hidden truth of things. It is about himself, *his* truth, how he should make his life. And it is a struggle in which his whole being, including his body, is engaged. And by feeling sick, his body is guiding him to the right answer at that point.

Later, he enters into another heavy combat with his conscience, which, this time, gets to rule him so far as to make him write a letter betraying Jim to his former owner. The result of that good deed is immediate:

> I felt good and all washed clean of sin for the first time I had ever felt so in my life, and I knowed I could pray now. But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking — thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the river; and I see Jim before me, all the time, in the day, and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a floating along, talking, and singing, and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind. I'd see him standing my watch on top of his'n, stead of calling me, so I could go on sleeping; and see him how glad he was when I come back out of the fog; and when I come to him again in the swamp, up there where the feud was; and such-like times; and would always call me honey, and pet me, and do everything he could think of for me, and how good he always was; and at last I struck the time I saved him by telling the men we had small-pox aboard, and he was so grateful, and said I was the best friend old Jim ever had in the world, and the *only* one he's got now; and then I happened to look around, and see that paper.
>
> It was a close place. I took it up, and held it in my hand. I was a trembling, because I'd got to decide, forever, betwixt two things, and knowed it. I studied a minute, sort of holding my breath, and then said to myself:
>
> 'All right, then, I'll *go* to hell' — and tore it up. (p 282f)

This is the high point of the novel. Huck finds a compromise solution of the conflict between the two worlds. Despite opting for his friendship, which means at the same time opting against society, Huck still accepts the validity of that society by agreeing with its verdict on him. He knows that it will condemn his choice, for which, according to its religion, he will go to hell. By being ready for this punishment, he acknowledges the beliefs and values of the society against whose definitions he has finally decided. Therefore, his decision is neither fully against, nor fully for, either of the two worlds. Huck is unable to see the broader implications of his individual rejection. If it is a victory of his 'good heart' over 'deformed conscience' — words that Mark Twain jotted down in his notebook — the winner while accepting the laurel also accepts to be viewed the loser according to the conventional values of society.

Huck expresses his resignation to, and acknowledgment of, the ways and values of the society he rejects even more strongly, when he ascribes his individual solution of the conflict between the two worlds to his bad upbringing:

> I knowed very well I had done wrong, and I see it warn't no use for me to try to learn to do right; a body that don't get *started* right when he's little, ain't got no show ... (p 149)

Friendship involves *two* people. If it cuts across given and accepted definitions, it does so for both sides. Huck cannot have Jim as a friend, without Jim also having Huck as a friend. So Jim has to decide against society, too. And he did so by running away from his fate, his owner's decision to sell him. But, like Huck, he also does not cease to recognise the validity of that generality. Both think of Jim's reunification with his family, who had to remain behind, in terms of him honestly earning the money needed to buy them and pay for them fair and square. In case this would not work out, however, Jim's closer concern in that matter leads him — but not Huck — to have more deviant plans ...

> ... and if their master wouldn't sell them, they'd get an Ab'litionist to go and steal them. (p 146)

After Huck, for the sake of his friendship to Jim, had been able to refute all assailing arguments of the accepted definitions of society which stood against it, he now takes the side of the same definitions against Jim's attitude towards his family. That is, what Huck did as regards his friend Jim, he does not concede to Jim to do in relation to his own family. Huck is deeply shocked by Jim's way of reasoning about how to get his family back:

> It most froze me to hear such talk. He wouldn't ever dared to talk

> such talk in his life before. ... Thinks I, this is what comes of my not thinking. Here was this nigger which I had as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children — children that belonged to a man I didn't even know; a man that hadn't ever done me no harm. (ibid)

When, later in the book, Tom Sawyer enters the scene, Huck's restrictions are once more brought to the fore. What he accepts for himself to do because of his bad upbringing, he cannot take from a 'well-bred' fellow citizen. For respectable people to be against society, its institutions and values, can never be right:

> ... I'm bound to say Tom Sawyer fell, considerable, in my estimation. Only I couldn't believe it. Tom Sawyer a *nigger stealer*! (p 296)

> Well, one thing was dead sure; and this was, that Tom Sawyer was in earnest and was actuly going to help steal that nigger out of slavery. That was the thing that was too many for me. Here was a boy that was respectable, and well brung up; and had a character to lose; and folks at home that had characters; and was bright and not leather-headed; and knowing and not ignorant; and not mean, but kind; and yet here he was, without any more pride, or rightness, or feeling, than to stoop to this business, and make himself a shame, and his family a shame, before everybody. I *couldn't* understand it, no way at all. It was outrageous ... (p 304)

But Tom Sawyer does not become a 'nigger stealer' any more than Huck. At that point of the novel, Jim *is* already free and the whole story of liberating him is only invented for the sake of some sham adventures for the boys, wittily thought out, but utterly unreal. That is, Tom joins in for some quixotic entertainment, not because his 'good heart' brought him to it. With Tom Sawyer entering the story, it loses its direction.

III

MANY CENTURIES earlier, Aristotle is confronted with the same kind of problem as Huckleberry Finn: how is it possible to live the definitions and still maintain free, good and beautiful relations with other people? Is it possible to live within the walls and at the same time go beyond them? His answer, however, is rather different from Huck's. For the philosopher, by profession concerned with science and logic, the ultimate truth is expressed in definitions and the basic logical rules necessarily connected with them.

The friendship that we encounter through Aristotle is doubly ambiguous. The first ambiguity is historical, arising out of the changes in Greek society which precede Aristotle. They add new meaning to the notion of 'friendship', while retaining the old. The second contradictory meaning seems to be scientific, or logical: Aristotle in his account of the world uses the term 'friendship' to stand for relations which are irreconcilably opposed to each other. We will find that this last contradiction is not due to a flaw in method, or observation, or to any other weakness in Aristotle's capacity. It is rather an expression of the essential contradiction into which our given way of life is led. It is Aristotle's greatness to have expressed it. That condition is the outcome of human self-making: a making which is not yet self-conscious, has not yet understood its own creative powers. Arising out of freedom, it establishes constrictions against itself.

The Greek term for what we want to talk about is *philia*. Its meaning, however, is quite different from what the English 'friendship' might suggest to the reader. Changing social forms of Ancient Greek life left the term *philia* with more than one meaning. They show the emergence of the principle of individuality in Greek society, the birth of the idea of an independent person.

It seems that, long before Aristotle, and before the heroic times described by Homer, life was entirely communal and the social groups were given by the tie of blood. The members of the clan, the only group to which the individual owed allegiance, were called 'friends' and the whole was held together by 'friendship'. Natural, social and individual relations were indistinguishable. Later, in the Heroic age celebrated by Homer, still a few hundred years before Aristotle, there had emerged another kind of group alongside those family groups. They were comrades, not related to each other by

blood, but who had been thrown together into the same social situation, by chance or by similar interests. For examples of this kind, we might refer to Aristotle. He talks about 'people on the same ship or in the same battalion' and 'partners in any common enterprise' (Ethics, VIII, 9). Their solidarity was thought of in the same terms as that of the clan, and it assured the support and assistance of one another just as among blood-relatives. This new kind of group, too, was made up of 'friends' and held together by 'friendship'. But here, the more natural bond does not come in; social circumstance goes hand in hand only with individual relations. Individuals feel that they are related by 'friendship' because social circumstances have brought them together. So far, then, 'friendship' referred to the belonging of the individual, the 'force' that assured the cohesion of the group, which was given either through nature and society together, or through society alone.

By Aristotle's time, yet another, third, aspect of 'friendship' had developed. Now, personal friendship, too, based on affection and choice, was firmly established in Greek society. This kind of friendship is no longer a group property, for it binds people together when they are so inclined, and not because they just happen to find themselves in the same given group. This new meaning does not supersede the older ones; all three, as in the reality they describe, exist side by side. Aristotle, then, is confronted with a triple meaning of friendship: a natural bond; a solidarity which each offers, but with their own self-oriented utility in mind; and mutual love for the sake of the other person. (Cf Geoffrey Percival, Aristotle on Friendship, Cambridge University Press, 1940, Introduction.)

This is the historical background to the standing assumption of political thought in Ancient Greece, that the tie which unites the members of any state is friendship. And Aristotle is in complete agreement with it: '... it appears that it is friendship which holds cities together.' (Eth, VIII, 1) Aristotle confronts *philia* as an element of Greek life. It is given to him, as to anybody living in the same framework, through that particular kind of society at that particular time in history; he takes it, analyses it, thinks about it in other ways. Reshaped through these theoretical endeavours, remoulded into a theoretical form, 'friendship' has become part of Aristotle's philosophy. The best he could do was to *show* what was otherwise simply *done*, that is to express *scientifically* what was just *lived*.

By doing that, Aristotle cannot but transform the contradictions that are lived into contradictions within science. So 'friendship', the binding force that holds together all the different relations between people in society, contains relations that contradict each other. For it comprises both the relations that make up the living *definitions* of society and those that — in principle — stand against them. This contradiction may be provisionally pointed at in the difference between a

friend and a merchant. The friend gives you a present not because convention requires it, nor for what he expects in return, but for the sake of the other person, the friend. His spontaneous love and impulse to give are, when they are true, unimpeded by calculation on how to preserve his own. The shopkeeper, by contrast, wants you to buy his merchandise, not for your benefit, but because he wants and needs the money for his own sake and survival.

This is what Aristotle's views on friendship ideally illustrate: science or philosophy are unable to state that opposition between relating to something or somebody through definitions and relating to them outside the definitions. For scientific thinking, such 'outside the definitions' does not exist, since their real, *contradictory* nature is ignored. Although the *logical* ambiguity of 'friendship' in Aristotle is striking, he does not recognise it and therefore cannot investigate it.

The contradictions which entangle Aristotle in discussing friendship may be summarised in three points.

1. On the one hand, justice and friendship are coextensive for Aristotle. For example, each is equally said to hold the state together. On the other hand, as we shall see, he believes that real friendship removes the need for justice.
2. In real friendship, a friend does something *for the friend's sake*, not because justice, equity or any definition require it, not because of anything other than that friend himself. In opposition to this, there is the opposite kind of relations which, in accordance with the use of the Greek *philia*, is also friendship for Aristotle. For example, relations between people who simply trade with each other, economic relations, in which self-interest makes them obey the definitions.
3. It is possible to be friends with a slave, but only in terms of the slave being a man. However, the definition of the slave is to be a *tool*, not a man — and it is impossible to be friends with a tool.

These are but different forms in which the basic contradiction appears. And this underlying contradiction is that between true, free friendship and the so-called friendship which accompanies the given unfree social relations which hold the city together. We do not only meet with this contradiction because we are dealing with friendship, but because of the underlying, as yet insurmountable, contradiction of freedom creating un-freedom, humanity creating inhumanity. Those social institutions alone, congealed un-freedom, have been suitable items for philosophical analysis, because it is they which make up the general framework of our societies and the general knowledge in the heads of its members. And it is with these that we shall begin.

Justice, exchange, friendship and the state are all tightly interwoven in Aristotle's thought. If you want to talk about any one of these, the others will have to come in as well. This complexity reflects the more developed society which can no longer adequately be grasped with concepts based on the idea of the blood-tie. Now, there

is a much more differentiated society, with specialisation in professions and functions, a developed economy with widespread commodity-exchange, a state, a written law and a constitution. In his Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle provides the first analysis of the new kind of society. He formulates a concatenation of three conditions:

> Without exchange there could be no association, without equality there could be no exchange, without commensurability there could be no equality. (Eth, V, 5)

'Exchange' here does not mean a free give and take between people who find pleasure in each other's company and who do things with true joy and for the other's sake. Here, 'exchange' is a strictly economic term. But it does not only refer to an external exchange of commodities, as certain objects changing hands, an affair outside you which does not touch your essence. 'Exchange' is an activity, is what we do, the result of our thinking and will; it only functions if we make something like utility the only purpose in mind, and submit to *a certain logic*, inherent in that activity. (We shall meet this logic later.) So, the first of Aristotle's conditions states that, if people were not relating to each other in this way of exchange, no reason whatsoever could be thought of for them to enter into contact, to 'associate', with each other. The basis of, and reason for, society is economic exchange. Without this, we would not be social.

The second of Aristotle's conditions answers the question of what the basis is of this exchange. The answer is that the condition and guiding principle of exchange is equality. Again, we have to be careful with how we understand that word. 'Equality' here has a purely *logical* meaning, which is necessary to understand the inner essence of *exchange*. Its *ethical* meaning derives from this, the claim that its logical meaning ought to be fulfilled in the practice of exchange. This kind of ethics, though, is an ethics of the *thing*, not of the human beings involved. 'Equality' here has nothing to do with any political or humanistic striving. The logic of exchange is based on a concept of equation or balance: what is given has to be equal to what is taken. Only when this equation has been achieved, can we call the movement that has taken place 'exchange'.

The question, of course, arises: 'equal' *in what respect?*

And this question is addressed by the third condition. How can the required equality be established? The foundation of the equality of exchange is that whatever two items are being exchanged, however much they differ from each other, they can still be compared. Without this comparison, there would be no possibility of telling whether or not equality has been reached, and when.

The possibility of comparing things that are different must rely on at least *one* respect in which they are the same, something they have

in common. Comparison presupposes difference *and identity*. The difference of things compared must not be so total as to exclude all commonness. This community between things that appear to be different might also be called 'measure'. This is not itself a part of the thing measured, but is applied to it from the outside. It presupposes an activity, a subject doing the measuring. This subject is the source of bringing together measure and thing measured. The only inherent nature of the thing that enables it to be measured, is its 'thinghood', that is, the fact that it has no will, no self, no subjectivity. The Latin for 'measure' is *mensura*, also meaning 'standard'; and from this is derived the word employed here in the translation of Aristotle's third condition for a state or an association: 'commensurability'.

Looking at things *from the point of view of exchange*, gives us the common measure according to which they may be compared. It applies to all of them, and so we can determine when equality between them has been established. And only this fixed equality between things makes exchange possible.

What does this exchange look like in practice for Aristotle?

> The process of give and take according to the right proportion is carried out by 'diagonal conjunction'. Let me give you an illustration. A is a builder, B a shoemaker, C a house, D a shoe. It is required that the builder shall receive from the shoemaker some part of what the latter produces, giving him at the same time some part of what he produces himself. Now if they achieve, first, proportionate equality, secondly fair give and take, they will find the problem we have stated solved. (Eth, V, 5)

In order to effect an exchange between a cobbler and a mason or carpenter, their products, shoes and houses, have to change places. The articles swap their owners. The mason is not interested in the cobbler as a human being, and, likewise, the shoemaker is not concerned with the builder in terms of a friend. Each is only preoccupied with what goods the other possesses, and how to conduct a profitable trade. The meaning of exchange presupposes that what passes over from one side to the other and the opposite way, must be *different*. (Only in a Marx Brothers film can you encounter an exchange of one sausage with another of exactly the same kind. Then, however, we actually find that this is not exchange in our sense at all. The sausages are *presents*, the characters are *friends*, and the context is comedy, not economy.) Because of this difference in the things compared, the 'fairness' of exchange can't lie in a *numerical* equality. *One* house against *one* pair of shoes would not make sense. The equality aimed at relies on the just proportion between houses and shoes.

From here, then, follows the question: how exactly is the required *amount* of the exchanged items established. How is the measure found

and the quantity determined? Builders build houses and shoemakers make shoes — how would each know how to get hold of the other's products? It is difficult, by simply gazing at some shoes and houses, to see what they might have in common and how much of each would equal the other. Even Aristotle can't quite get to a satisfactory answer; he just knows that equality must be the basis of exchange, and that this equality can only be established if the things between which it is supposed to hold are being compared. However, the brilliance of his analysis can be gauged by the fact that it was nearly two and a half millennia, before the Scottish political economists were able to go any further. Aristotle concludes his investigation of exchange with an allusion to money.

> This implies that all products exchanged must be somehow comparable. It is this that has led to the introduction of money, which may be regarded as a medium of exchange, since it is a measure of everything ... informing us, for example, how many shoes are worth one house ... (Eth, V, 5)

However, he is not able to show why money should be the measure he claims it to be.

Aristotle here makes two statements about money. First, that it had been introduced into the *previously* existing institution of exchange. Second, that it is 'a measure of everything'. How, then, were things compared or measured before money entered the scene of exchange? Was there another measure? If all things were compared, there must have been another measure before money was introduced. But since money is such a measure as well, we now have *two* universal measures: money, and the one which was extant before its introduction. And, in relation to Aristotle's second statement about money, we have to ask how it could be a measure? And how it could 'know' the worth of things? Anyway, somehow people do seem to get informed about the right amount, for if this were not being hit, the exchange relations would dissolve, and with them the whole city:

> But if reciprocal proportion could not be arrived at in this way, there could be no association between the parties. (Eth, V, 5)

So, we can now hook the three conditions together again: commensurability, exchange, association. According to Aristotle, people come together for the purpose of economic exchange. In order to carry out this purpose, they create 'associations', institutions under which they can live together. This is possible for them, because of the universal commensurability of the items they exchange. This characteristic allows the items to be exchanged on the principle of equality. And equality is to be adhered to if there are to be any associations.

This piece of analysis begins with something everybody knows, *must* know, because it is the condition of how people live in their 'associations', and everybody is constantly engaged in it: exchange. 'Exchange' might seem to point first and foremost to an observable, material movement, things moving from one owner to another. And this is how Aristotle looks at it, investigating the exchange between cobbler and mason. However, those things do not quite propel themselves. In themselves, they are inert, and it is the activity of people which moves them. And this activity is led, not by nature, but by will, based on knowledge of the world which thinking has pieced together in their heads.

Aristotle takes this exchange as much for granted as any trader on the market-place. He cannot go there and watch what people are doing as if he had never seen it before. But unlike them, he wants to enquire into the nature of exchange and find its foundations. In order to do that, he takes a standpoint which is different from theirs, the standpoint of science. This makes him look at exchange as if he were *outside* it, with everybody else being inside. However, this standpoint cannot fulfil its claim. For, it doesn't allow him to become an outsider to *his own knowledge*. So, while assuming that he confronts an outside 'thing' which has no relation to himself, he presupposes his own knowledge which, as an *insider*, he must have, of necessity. He knows what they are doing, just as much as the people who are engaged in exchange. And this includes the knowledge that they are carrying out an *equal* transaction, where give and take equal each other. The knowledge of this equality is an intrinsic part of exchange. It is the knowledge that if I give you so much of this, you have to give so much of that in return. 'Equality' is contained in the activity of exchange as undertaken every day. It is part of the knowledge that guides people who engage in it. Aristotle presupposes this knowledge, and his scientific investigation can only attempt to establish a logical relation between its parts.

Now, in this manner, knowing about equality and observing exchange, Aristotle can arrive at the concept of commensurability. It is like an answer to the following implicit question. 'How is it possible that by exchanging *different* things, *equality* is achieved?' Without that presupposition of equality, 'commensurability' would be incomprehensible. This latter is an abstract concept, which cannot itself be observed. Its *knowledge* is by no means necessary to engage in exchange, that is to know, in an ordinary sort of way, what exchange is. However, Aristotle found, it is a concept *underlying* exchange and equality. And this means that, *logically*, none of the more accessible notions or observable facts would be possible, if this most abstract notion of commensurability were not assumed. Once it has been found, commensurability then appears as the *condition* for the possibility, or the existence, of exchange. Exchange, an institution of our society, resting

on our action, now appears to be founded on something else, something that is not human in itself, coming to humanity from outside itself. If 'commensurability' is understood as a logical notion, this power, extraneous to humanity, is logic; while, if 'commensurability' is, for example, taken to be an inherent property of things, the power is that of nature. By this link to an outside power, the grip over our lives of exchange, and indeed of any definition, has been tightened.

Insofar as we engage in exchange, we all know it. With scientific investigation, however, we find that it rests on principles that we *don't know*, and to find out about these, we need to call in a specialist, a thinker. The task of a thinker is *thinking* instead of *doing*. This immediately leads to a major change in the form of the item thought about, which now has acquired the form of an object of thought. When 'exchange' is such an object, it no longer includes 'doing'. It is not looked at as an activity which is undertaken by essentially free beings, an activity that is therefore the result of thinking and will. Looked at in terms of an object, the truth has been buried, that exchange is also very much a subjective 'thing', something that only exists by virtue of *our doing*. Once the more abstract principle of this object, 'commensurability', is arrived at, the subject is irretrievably lost. What people are doing now appears to be mere subservience to given laws, laws that only scientific thinking is able to apprehend. But the reason why and how they are given always has to remain obscure. This leaves no opening for so-called value-questions. If exchange is unquestionable and its principle is the intrinsic commensurability of things, or some logical necessity, what sense does it make to ask whether it is good or bad? If, however, we knew that such definitions have only *been made* by us, such questioning would naturally arise and unlock the chains that hold captive our thinking and will.

This investigation of exchange is a prime example of the underlying *reconciliation* in Aristotle. We live according to institutions by which we define ourselves, define what we are doing and how we think. We perpetually reinforce them by our compliance with them, by thinking about ourselves and what we are doing in that predefined way. We don't know these institutions and definitions and their principles as such. Our relation to them is similar to our relation to the laws of nature. We know, sure enough, that the moon 'rises' and 'sets', and also the sun, that leaves fall off the trees in autumn, that water freezes; but that doesn't imply any familiarity with the hidden laws governing these regularities. The scientist, however, can bring them to light. Human institutions are inside life. They rule our heads, govern our will, direct our doings, control our senses, plan our future. Human-made rules and laws sit everywhere. If we could uncover them, it would be like catching sight of God, who has created the whole world, it would transform our view of our oppression, make us see 'the rose in the cross of the present'. To find the laws as such,

and look at them, is to overcome the ignorance of blindly following the given orders and to know the necessity of what is.

Aristotle concludes his section on exchange and money, by saying that their analysis finally provided an explication of the notion of what his Book V of the Ethics is actually about: justice.

> Thus we have arrived at the definition of the just and the unjust. ... For to do injustice is to have more than one ought, and to suffer it is to have less than one ought. (Eth, V, 5)

'Just', then, means to have what one ought to have. The statement of this definition is arrived at after, and through, the investigation of exchange. So, 'to have what one ought to have' is also something that exchange is achieving. Exchange is not just giving something for something else, pairs of shoes for a house. It is giving the *right*, the *just amount* of something for something else.

If exchange defines justice, we can put justice instead of exchange. Where Aristotle says that the *polis* is held together by exchange, we can say that it is held together by justice. And since Aristotle also says that the binding force of the state is friendship, we find that all three — justice, exchange and friendship — are equally essential. Without any one of them there could be no state.

But Aristotle's 'friendship' is ambiguous. For he also knows of another kind of friendship which hits the first one straight in the face:

> Between friends there is no need of justice ... (Eth, VIII, 1)

What friends do for each other is not the kind of thing which needs justice. They give to each other out of their own free will, not because they have to balance the credit accounted to them. They don't give ten pounds worth of something, because they have received ten pounds. The give and take between friends is not ruled by the commensurability of the things given and taken. There is no measure to their 'exchange', and no possible measure would be applicable, for what they do is measure-less. Their giving and taking is indeed not an exchange at all, therefore, there can't be a measure to the things they give. That is why they don't need justice. Justice is about proportionate equality, and for this there are definitions, laws, rules, measures. But since friends don't give according to a measure, justice does simply not apply to their relation. They don't deny or refute it, they do not say that justice is wrong: they are simply outside it.

This leads over to another statement, directly linked to the first, which indicates the general contradiction between the way we live and a truly human life. It also signifies Aristotle's own contradictory understanding of friendship. Exchange is our social mechanism, and the laws which govern it, determine what everybody gets for what

they offer. The give and take between people is determined by equality, commensurability, proportion, justice. But what about the friendship which *does not need justice*? How is what one gives and takes determined in that case? If it is not determined by any overall rule, or by a measure which is reliable and applicable, how do you know how much to give to a friend? Or if your friend gave you something, how do you know whether to give anything in return to restore the balance, and if so how much? The answer is that in true friendship, an action is undertaken *for the friend's sake*. And this can only be 'measured' by *the friend's enjoyment and need*.

> But it is those who desire the good of their friends for their friends' sake who are most completely friends, since each loves the other for what the other is in himself and not for something he has about him ... (Eth, VIII, 3)

This 'sake' of *your friend* becomes the source of *your* will. What *you* want to do, is to fulfil *your friend's* needs and to care for his or her well-being. You want to see yourself doing something for the other person, you want to see yourself in the other person by seeing how the other person enjoys what you offer. Such a relation excludes selfishness. Only in exchange relations can you be selfish — in fact, you *have to* be so. In these, you have to make *your* need and greed your only concern and guiding principle. And this orientation does indeed change the whole character of need. If you lived in a society of friends, there would be neither a need for exchange nor would it be possible for it to arise. There would equally be no need for justice, nor would it be possible for justice to arise.

This doing-for-the-sake-of-another is not only a different relation between people, it also implies a different relation of people to things. When things are not all the same in terms of their measure, they are no longer commensurable, for commensurability no longer exists. It is only exchange that gives life to and establishes their measure. What might appear to the economist as the nature of things, is in fact only the result of the *activity* of exchange, the result of what we are doing with the things. Now, with relations of friendship and not of exchange, things are *gifts*, not *commodities*. The person who makes the thing which is a gift, enjoys the process of producing it; the person who makes a commodity has no intrinsic relation to it. Most likely, they hate that activity. While the person who makes a gift is only driven by her or his own free will, the person producing commodities is driven by outward necessity and is determined by an overall, external process. In the gift the free will is realised, given form; in the commodity, determination from an unknown force is expressed. When I can make the 'sake' of another person into the source of my will, then I am free.

Another contradiction is related to this question of the form of will involved in doing something or making things, and in the meaning of this for the human being. The slave is forced to do what he does. The master is the immediate force that determines what the slave does. The only purpose involved is the interest of the master, and this is forced onto the slave's self.

> Again, the relation of master to slaves is a kind of tyranny, for it is the master's interest that is the object of its activities. (Eth, VIII, 10)

('Tyranny' here is not a term of abuse, but a neutral scientific description.) In such a relation, neither of the two can make the sake of the other into the source of their own will. Therefore, neither has a free will, neither is free. The master appears to be free, but he is not. His will is turned onto his own self, so he can't make the sake of the other, the slave, into the object of his will. When, however, as with the slave, the will is entirely determined *from the outside*, then the human being is not really like a human being at all. It is a thing, an instrument, something to be possessed by somebody else, deprived of a will of its own.

> We have already pronounced the contradiction involved here: a human being who is unlike a human being, a non-human human being. As long as Aristotle is concerned with the definition of a slave, this contradiction does not bother him. Then, a slave is just 'a non-human being'. Historically, this definition has grown together with the other definitions shaping Greek society. Earlier, it had been part of Greek intertribal warfare to turn prisoners of war or kidnapped people into slaves. This means that to be or not to be a slave was not a fixed social relation. Plato, in his Republic, suggests not taking Greeks for slaves, in order to strengthen the Greek nation. The sophist Alcidamas, in a now lost book, referred to by a later scholar in a marginal note on Aristotle's Rhetoric (1373b6), thought that 'God set all people free; nature has made no one a slave'.

> But Aristotle makes a slave into a *natural* given, a species of nature, that is, something that can't be changed. '... the slave is an animate article of property.' (Pol, I, IV, 2)

> ... there are species in which a distinction is already marked, immediately at birth, between those of its members who are intended for being ruled and those who are intended to rule. (Pol, I, V, 2)

> We may thus conclude that all men who differ from others as much as the body differs from the soul, or an animal from a man ... are by nature slaves, and it is better for them ... to be ruled by a master. (Pol, I, V, 8)

However, as soon as Aristotle tries to talk about what a slave is in relation to friendship, he gets entangled in contradictions – just like Huck. For then it turns out that 'to be a slave' does not comprise the whole of their nature, that the slave is *also* a human being, therefore, a 'non-human human being'.

> No doubt the instrument is in every case all the better for the manipulation it receives from the user, but there can be no friendship or justice in our dealings with inanimate things. We cannot even have it towards a horse or a cow, nay, towards a slave in his character of slave. For the slave has nothing in common with his master; he is a living tool, just as a tool is an inanimate slave. There can therefore be no friendship of a master for a slave as such, though there may be for him as a man. (Eth, VIII, 11)

A tool is an inanimate thing; it has no will; but it is the outcome of somebody's will transferred into some material, shaping it according to a specific purpose. A tool is purpose materialised, inertly slumbering until awakened to its task when made use of by a free being. A human being cannot be an instrument in that sense. And a tool, or simply a thing, can never be a friend. The possibility of being a friend is an exclusive privilege of humanity. The nature of a tool and the nature of friendship contradict each other totally.

According to Aristotle, then, this contradiction is embodied in the slave. The slave lives this contradiction, is this contradiction. A slave is both thing and human, soulless material and wilful self-movement, passively receiving its purpose from the outside, and actively forming its own. A slave is a human being who is granted and denied humanity at the same time. Nothing but a human being can be a slave. The contradiction of what it means to be a slave is human-made. The way we live denies humanity to the human being, and our life therefore is always torn by a contradiction.

When Aristotle talks about the slave, he usually does so as a *defined* being, where there *can* be no mention of that contradiction, for definition does not admit of such a duality. Then, the slave is a being that is squarely what it is entirely *by nature*.

In the third and penultimate book of his Ethics, Aristotle lumps together all these contradictions in one overall definition of friendship, smoothing them all out. This is a typology of friendship, which can be represented in the form of a two-dimensional table, comprising two columns, and three rows. One dimension gives the 'lovables', as

he calls them, the objects or purposes of friendship. They are 'the good', 'the pleasant', and 'the useful'. The second dimension adds the ingredient of 'equality' or 'inequality' to each type of friendship. Each of the purposes of friendship looks different according to whether the people it binds together are equal or whether one is superior to the other. Of course, the 'friendship' between master and slave is placed at the co-ordinates: utility, superiority.

One kind, or species, of 'friendship' keeps society the way it is; or, in the form of exchange, is even thought to be its ground. This kind of friendship *is* the kind of society in which we live, the kind of social relations we entertain. The other species of 'friendship', true friendship, has the intrinsic power to blast that established society to pieces. Unconcerned about their contradiction, Aristotle throws them together into one notion. This is one place in his philosophy which expresses the essence of all philosophy: reconciling the irreconcilable.

Aristotle's notion of friendship is but one *example* of his philosophy or of scientific thinking at work. It is therefore not a random opinion, the expression of a mood or any other personal inclinations. As the outcome of philosophical thinking, it is an example of this, or an example of logic. There is only *one* logic; it is the same in whatever field it might occur. Thus, truth is a question of form, not of the particular content being stated. And in order to know whether what might appear to us to be true, is true indeed, we have to know whether it can be *shown* to be true. Scientific knowledge is true when it knows itself to be true, when it knows why it is true.

We might say that this thinking is split into two directions: investigation and demonstration. Aristotle is very aware that investigations needs a method. For example, at the beginning of the Politics, he states that he will proceed in his investigation according to

> our normal method of analysis. Just as, in all other fields, a compound should be analysed until we reach its simple and uncompounded elements (or, in other words, the smallest atoms of the whole which it constitutes), so we must also consider analytically the elements of which a *polis* is composed. (Pol, I, 1)

Analysis is but one of the three kinds of investigation Aristotle talks about. The others are induction, and discussion or dialectics. However, of the two sides of scientific thinking, investigation and demonstration, the latter is the much more decisive part. Indeed, investigation is only thought about in terms of yielding results that will be compatible with demonstration. Investigation is subordinate to demonstration. It is in demonstration, therefore, that the ideal of scientific thinking is to be found. And its fundamental principles are laid down in logic, with which the name of Aristotle is indissolubly linked.

The key to the highest kind of knowledge, and to its holy of holies, demonstration, is the question 'why?'.

> We suppose ourselves to possess unqualified scientific knowledge of a thing, as opposed to knowing it in the accidental way in which the sophist knows, when we think that we know the cause on which the fact depends, as the cause of that fact and of no other, and, further, that the fact could not be other than it is. ... Consequently the proper object of unqualified scientific knowledge is something which cannot be other than it is. (AnPost, 71b)

To know something scientifically means to know its cause, to find out what brings it about, what makes it just this and not anything else. The reason why something is as it is lies outside itself. Finding the cause converts the independence of the thing, that seemed so firm when we first caught sight of it, into dependence on something else. Once we have discovered the cause, we can take this as our starting point and look forwards, as it were, to what it necessitates or brings forth of necessity. Then we arrive at that thing from which we started out before looking for its cause. Cause and necessity answer each other in this way. They are the two opposite directions making up the movement which is scientific knowledge. Cause and necessity are the same relation looked at in opposite ways. For the cause we look 'back' from the consideration of a certain thing to what brought it about as a result. With necessity, we follow the movement forth from the cause to its result. Once we have found these two relations of something, cause and necessity, we 'possess unqualified scientific knowledge'.

What do these two movements of thought do to our knowledge? They constitute the only 'real' knowledge that we possess so far in our account. Any other 'knowledge', 'knowledge' that does not contain these two movements, is only 'accidental'. As Aristotle says, it is not different from opinion. If opinion is the only way in which things are for us, then we are in their grip. Without real knowledge, we cannot assert our freedom. The 'why?', then, is the key to freedom, because it is the key to scientific knowledge, liberating us from mere opinion.

This 'why?' poses the problem: how do we get what is around us in the world into our heads. The division between opinion and scientific knowledge is that, in the latter, what we have in our heads does give us a proper account of the world outside. The 'why?' gives us cause and necessity to go with the *is*, or *given*, of the world in which we live. From the point of view of philosophy, this is what bestows knowledge and freedom on us. This is a freedom of, or from, mere opinion; but what is it freedom *for*? This is where scientific knowledge ends. It is not about anything but cause and necessity of the

given. But then what? What is it that we know when we know the necessity of what we see around us with our own eyes? How do we go on thinking? Is what we see any good? Is it bad? Is it to be criticised? Is it what we really want? None of this can be part of scientific knowledge as characterised by Aristotle.

If the given happens to be slavery, science has the task of proving its necessity. Science has to show the necessity of slavery, not because of anything particular about *slavery*; it is not *because of* slavery that science has to account for its necessity. Science has to transform *whatever* is *given* in that way. The inner structure of science is linked to this particular attitude towards the given, which it has to affirm through its own notion of cause and necessity.

However, the question 'why?' is not quite enough to gain scientific knowledge. You cannot simply go on asking this question like pre-school children, as if the knowledge of cause and necessity were automatically to follow. Our scientific 'why?' is only satisfied when the answer elicited is of a certain *form*. And this form consists of two elements: the syllogism and the definitions through which we grasp the world. Given these two prerequisites, definitions and form of syllogism, the 'why?' will be followed by the right answer and provide us with knowledge of cause and necessity of the given. The journey that thinking undertakes when it puts together the syllogism required, Aristotle calls 'demonstration'.

Let us have a look at the typical textbook example of a syllogism. (I think Aristotle never actually uses it himself.)

All human beings are mortal
Socrates is a human being
So Socrates is mortal

The first two lines are called 'premisses', and the third 'conclusion'. The three lines taken together make up the way in which scientific knowledge comes about. The statement of the third line follows *of necessity* from the two preceding ones which are its *cause*. Aristotle explains what happens in a syllogism like this:

> A syllogism is discourse in which, certain things being stated, something other than what is stated follows of necessity from their being so. I mean by the last phrase that they produce the consequence, and by this, that no further term is required from without in order to make the consequence necessary. (AnPr, 24b)

Two separate statements are being made. Somehow, the two together 'produce' a third statement. Nothing would follow from either one of the first two on its own; but together, they bring forth the 'consequence'. This happens out of themselves — according to Aristotle — in the sense that they don't require any 'further term' to yield the new statement. What is more, it is not *anything* new, but only *one particular* statement that follows, and *must* follow. The consequence follows of necessity, and has the two prior statements as its cause. That Socrates is mortal is not explicitly stated in either of the first two lines, the premisses. But it follows of necessity from them. They don't allow of any other conclusion. If there were two or more consequences possible, either one of them or both would not be a *necessary*, but only a *possible* conclusion.

The knowledge we are talking about here is nothing without that form. Otherwise, without that form, this scientific knowledge wouldn't exist. A statement like 'Socrates is mortal' could, of course, be made at any time outside the structure of the syllogism. But then, it would have lost all its power. It would become a mere statement or an observation, which, as such, can only *claim* truth, but not *be* truth. From the outside, it appears to be the same sentence as the one which was a conclusion in our aforementioned syllogism, but the inside, the essence, the meaning that depends on the form, is completely different.

Let us see what happens when we apply this syllogistic principle to our problem of slavery, shaping our own syllogism in exact parallel to that textbook example. The first premiss, 'all human beings are mortal', consisted in a simple statement that ascribed a certain property to a certain group of things or beings. The second premiss, then, stated that one particular individual belonged to the same group of things that was mentioned in the first premiss. The individual was singled out by a personal name, Socrates. Why not call our individual 'Jim'? Earlier on, Aristotle provided us with enough characteristics to ascribe to the group of beings called 'slaves'. According to him, there was a bodily mark, possessed since birth, that distinguished such people. It decided whether they were allowed to own property, or were themselves to *be* property; the mark decided which position of the master-slave relation they would occupy. Aristotle didn't specify this bodily mark, though. So, let us invent one which fits the reality of modern slavery in the New World, and proceed to state the premiss. Now, however, we find it hard to proceed. We have to overcome an awful feeling that accompanies a statement like:

All blacks are slaves

This, our first premiss, is formally in exact parallel to Aristotle's. It contains just one characteristic, 'to be a slave' — parallel to 'to be mortal'. It is ascribed to a certain 'species' as a whole, 'all blacks', by analogy with 'all human beings'.

The second premiss, then, is to state that the particular individual chosen, Socrates there, Jim here, belongs to that very group or spe-

cies, which the first premiss is about. So, parallel to 'Socrates is a human being', we may put forward the second premiss:

Jim is black

Now, we are trapped. For we cannot but conclude *one* thing. Within the framework of our logical thinking, only *one* conclusion can be drawn. And it follows with all the force of unshakeable logical necessity, delivering to us the highest kind of knowledge, scientific knowledge:

Jim is a slave

The two premisses are the 'cause' for what necessarily follows out of them: the conclusion. Due to this derivation, the statement of the conclusion is considered to provide 'unqualified scientific knowledge'. Thus, this syllogism would indubitably answer the question: 'why is Jim a slave?' And this question, in turn, rests on the given reality that Jim *is* a slave. Through the demonstration following the question 'why?', this presupposed reality is given scientific support.

If the conclusion follows like that from the premisses, they are the reason why the conclusion is true. It is therefore the premisses which must now attact our attention.

How is it possible for two statements — the premisses — to give birth to another statement, to 'produce the consequence' as Aristotle says? Those two sentences we quoted from the Analytics (see previous page) are the nearest Aristotle himself ever gets to an explanation of *how* the insight in the truth of the conclusion comes about, or what 'following of necessity' means. He only suggests that nothing is needed other than the mere statement of the premisses. But how could they cause the truth of *another* statement, the conclusion? After all, the premisses are only two kinds of *sentences*, strings of words. Surely, it is not *they* who produce — they can't *do* anything — but rather the *thinking* and *knowledge* for which they stand and which they convey. When thinking goes through the form of the premisses, it can only arrive at *one* final point. So, it must be the kind of knowledge which the premisses contain that causes the inevitable 'production' of the consequence. The necessity which is intrinsic to the knowledge of that consequence must, therefore, in some way already be contained in the premisses.

The premisses are of two kinds. One of them expresses a definition: 'all human beings are mortal', 'all beings with the bodily mark 'X' are slaves'. 'Definition' is used by Aristotle as another word for 'essential being' or 'intrinsic nature', that through which something is what it is. Thus, it is true for the human being as such to be mortal; there is no other possibility for a human being to be. This definition

implies that any single, particular instance of a human being that you perceive, is — by definition — mortal. The definition implies a kind of generality which is so powerful that it will hold true for any particular individual realisation.

The other premiss expresses an identification of one particular being: 'Socrates is a human being', 'Jim is a being with the bodily mark 'X''. This identification is possible because of previous knowledge that, in principle, there is a kind of thing or being which the individual instance then realises. That is, this identification presupposes or implies the knowledge of the definition. To identify a particular instance in front of your eyes as a realisation of the general definition, is only possible because this generality was known before that particular instance. Before you meet Jim, for example, you know that there is this kind of being which is a slave; and you know how, by which mark to recognise it. To identify Jim as such a being, or thing rather, is only an actualisation of that general knowledge existing preformed in everybody's head.

Thus the two premisses imply each other. Both express the same split between the general and the particular: that there is an immaterial, spiritual world of definitions, and a bodily world which is open to the senses and in which that other world realises itself. The conclusion of the syllogism follows from this mutual implication. It simply reaffirms the general definition to hold for the particular instance. Since I know the general definition, and I know this instance to be of the kind that the definition defines, I know that the definition and whatever it contains must hold for this particular before my eye. If it belongs to the definition of the human being to be mortal, then any one particular being which may be defined as human must also be mortal. If it belongs to the definition of slaves to have the bodily mark 'X', then to any particular slave this bodily mark 'X' will also belong. And if any body carries the attribute 'X', this body needs must, by definition, be a living tool.

The knowledge contained in the conclusion is *scientific* knowledge, the highest kind of knowledge. It is different from some other simple statement, which *outwardly* might be saying exactly the same thing. For the conclusion has been arrived at through the whole syllogism, the movement of knowledge through this form. This adds necessity to the content of the statement which now carries the proof of its own knowledge within itself. As a consequence, the sentence includes the knowledge that what it states is what it is *of necessity*. Torn out of the form of the syllogism, it would be nothing more than a random opinion or an unfounded judgement. As a result of the syllogism, however, it is scientific knowledge. It implicitly answers the question 'why?', the certificate needed to qualify as this highest kind of knowledge. The answer to the 'why?' is contained in the premisses. And it is implied in the consequence; for this can only be

reached by passing through those premisses. The movement requires nothing else, nothing coming from the outside, to be added to them. All of this is to say why the syllogism is 'demonstration'. The movement of getting to the conclusion shows, or 'demonstrates', its own reason for being.

We can see again the mutual implication of definition and syllogism. Definitions cannot exist without the syllogism also existing; and the syllogism cannot be without the definitions. It is impossible that some clever philosopher might come along one fine day and show that the syllogism is all right, but there is a flaw in the idea 'definition', or maybe the other way round. The syllogism is the definition put into movement, and the definition circumscribes precisely the realm in which the movement of the syllogism takes place. It is this movement of the syllogism which creates scientific knowledge. The definitions are presupposed in this movement. They are not themselves scientific knowledge, because their knowledge does not contain the knowledge that they are what they are *of necessity*. Thus, contained within the syllogism are two different kinds of knowledge: the proper syllogistic one and the more static, presupposed knowledge of the definitions. What exactly is this latter kind of knowledge?

Aristotle has a clear answer:

> Our own doctrine is that not all knowledge is demonstrative: on the contrary, knowledge of the immediate premisses is independent of demonstration. (The necessity of this is obvious; for since we must know the prior premisses from which the demonstration is drawn, and since the regress must end in immediate truths, those truths must be indemonstrable.) Such, then, is our doctrine, and in addition we maintain that besides scientific knowledge there is its originative source which enables us to recognise the definitions. (An Post 72b, 18-25)

In this extract, Aristotle does two things; he states and he proves that there are two kinds of knowledge, the additional one being the 'originative source' of scientific knowledge; let us call it 'originative knowledge'. This is the knowledge of the definitions. It is 'indemonstrable'. The truth of definitions themselves *cannot be proved*. The argument, occurring in the bracketed passage, by which Aristotle wants to derive logically the existence of originative knowledge is curious. The problem he is answering is that of 'infinite regress'. If you want to erect a building, you have first to lay the foundation. If the foundation itself requires a foundation, and that one yet another and so forth, there is no end to it, and the purpose, of actually building a house, gets further and further postponed. This would, of course, be in opposition to the very meaning of 'foundation', which is to lay the ground, create some firmness, on which some

other lasting thing can be *built*. Similarly with knowledge. For the logician, 'Socrates is mortal', 'Jim is a slave', as statements, may be true or false. Their truth can only be proved or demonstrated by showing that it is possible for these statements to be the conclusion of a syllogism. Then they would have been properly founded — in the premisses. Therefore, scientific knowledge is only secure if the premisses are so stable that they themselves are not in need of another foundation to support them, and that support wanting yet another backing, and so forth.

It is worth mentioning that this is another indication for the inseparability of definition and syllogism. To keep referring to the picture, it is obvious that, although the foundations of a house need to be laid before the house can be erected on them, this is not to say that historically people first built foundations only, until someone had this inspiration of building walls and roofs on top of them. The foundation belongs intrinsically to the concept of a house. Definition belongs intrinsically to the concept of syllogism.

The real question about Aristotle's originative knowledge is how it becomes known. It cannot be demonstrated or shown, since it is its character to be known in an *immediate* way, without any mediation, nothing coming between the knowledge and the thing known about. They can only become directly known through life, or rather living, the active experience of and participation in life. Aristotle in the above quotation says about this kind of knowledge that it 'enables us to recognise the definitions'. Well, we can only recognise them, if they are there somewhere, waiting to be recognised. This is a spontaneous act of knowing something, where it is known as what it is without any thinking preceding the act of recognition. This is the knowledge involved in the world in which we live, which makes the world into what it is for us. We have now arrived at what we named earlier the 'definition lived'.

This is the way by which free beings create unfreedom, humanity inhumanity. In the human being, nature is free. The free human being is still a natural being. But unlike other beings of nature, what it does depends on itself, not on the instinct of the species, it is a human-natural being, in which freedom shapes its own matter. Whatever the human being does is part of its freedom, guided by and going through thinking and will, which are free. The definitions, however, are a bulwark against this freedom, only insisting that life follow *them*. We are free beings forging shackles around our feet. Short chains link the shackles, only permitting us to make tiny steps, allowing our movements a very restricted scope, and causing incessant pain and clumsiness. The world and life that these poor prisoners know, is given to them in an immediate way. They don't get acquainted with them through investigation, but through direct life-experience. Measuring and defining this interesting accessory, building a science on

chains, would in no way free us — for that, there is only one solution: to break them.

Science and philosophy begin with these definitions. Logic, being the account of how thinking as such works, in whatever particular task it might be involved, states this most clearly. These definitions are the firm ground on which the edifice of science can be erected, up into the spiritual sky. A little preparation is needed, however, before the definition lived has taken on a form suitable for science, has been stripped of its life ingredient and is abstract definition only. That is, when science uses definitions they are no longer immediate, but already carefully prepared and processed, mediated through science which is then going to proceed further with them. Most importantly, through this process the immediate knowledge of the pain caused by the shackles is lost. Science, transforming the world into an *object* of thought, loses the world's subjective side. A few pages back, we watched such a process of preparation, where Aristotle developed the definitions of exchange, equality and justice. Science is reconciliation. It can measure the shackles and chains, calculate how big a step they allow, develop soothing ointments for sore ankles, build all manner of facilities which allow the self-mutilated creatures to move about a little, design diets and pills against the obesity resulting from lack of activity. This science, they would think, alleviated their lot, explained it to them, developed their standard of living. But they wouldn't know that it reaffirms a given which could and should be very different from what it is.

Aristotle agrees that if originative knowledge recognises the definitions, these must be given from somewhere outside knowledge. Since antiquity did not know about subjective activity, Aristotle places the definitions into the things themselves. It is one of the main themes of his Metaphysics to explain that whatever anything is, it is through its combination of matter and form. Transferred into language, form is the definition; it makes a thing into the *kind of* thing it is, while the combination with matter makes this generality of the definition into a particular, sensuous *this*. And there is no possibility for any being to be outside the grasp of the definition.

The technicalities of the inner shape of the definitions remains to be pointed out. It consists simply of genus and species.

> ... species and genera ... these alone of all the predicates convey a knowledge of primary substance. For it is by stating the species or the genus that we appropriately *define* any individual man ... (Cat, 2b; my emphasis)

The relation between genus and species is more exactly one of hierarchical containment and mutual opposition. Each species is contained in a genus and every genus must contain more than one species. A species adds one further defining characteristic to the genus to which it belongs. Together, genera and species form a hierarchy, the relatively higher placed definitions are the genera, and the relatively lower ones the species. 'Higher up' is more universal, more *general*, 'lower down' is more *specific*. The 'lowest down' of all is the real individual in front of your eyes, containing the most detailed specifications, which cannot, in their turn, contain any further specification. The very 'highest' and most abstract genus is the 'unmoved mover', later to be called 'God', which cannot possibly be included in any even 'higher' genus. A genus incorporates species which stand in a negative relation to each other. Each species is in direct opposition to the other species contained in the same genus. Aristotle usually alludes to examples from the natural sciences, mostly about animals: if we take the species of 'footed', as against 'winged', this may be further subdivided into 'cloven' and its opposite, 'uncloven' (Metaphysics, 1038a). Unluckily, the human being defined in this manner receives an unseemly similarity to a plucked chicken: 'Animal that is biped, that is featherless' (Metaphysics, 1037b).

This is a whole world picture, the essence of which is the definition. There is no truth in the world that lies outside definition. Definitions are *real*, not conventions or agreements about the usage of terms, not part of a pastime about possible worlds, an attempt to cure boredom and intellectual staleness. In fact, any such definition is the truth of some real thing; and the truth of anything cannot be expressed in any other way than by a definition, or what derives from it, a conclusion.

Definitions must be known in order for simple judgements, which properly identify an individual, to be possible. I don't know what the individual is, if I cannot recognise it as a realisation of a certain definition, like 'Jim is black', or 'Jim is a slave'. These judgements are a kind of equation, linking two worlds by means of the 'is'. One of the worlds is eternal, unchangeable and spiritual, the other the finite one that we live. This world of ours, however, depends on the yonder world. We subsume it under the other world in which we have no part. We can only understand our world by seeing it in terms of the other world. Our world as such is nothing to us. It receives its meaning by being held against the other world, through an equation with it.

There is a form similar to this one, which is neither judgement, definition, nor syllogism – at least in the sense that we have known them: the form of exchange. The 'is' of its equations is slightly enlarged, no longer a mere 'is', but an 'is *worth*'. Something is worth so much of something else, has such and such a value. According to Aristotle, the place of this 'something else' would eventually be taken up by money, his universal measure, or 'measure for everything'. The worth

of something can never be expressed by the thing itself. Looking at just *this* one item, will never tell you its worth. Some knowledge that transcends the immediate and separate, and can see the thing in terms of other things, is needed in order to learn their value. Economic value lies beyond the things and in order to estimate their worth, I have to connect the immediate with the other world. This connection is implemented by means of the 'is worth x'. This is similar to the knowledge of the metaphysical world which we presuppose and which participates in every single act of our definitorial thinking. If we were to suspend that knowledge, we would be unable to make the simplest judgement, such as 'this is a builder'. These judgements presuppose definitions, the knowledge of genera and species; and they consist in recognising that transcendental form, the definition, in the real thing or person confronting our senses. Judgement, which is a certain combination of these two worlds, would be impossible if one of those worlds had vanished, or was suspended. Equally, if there wasn't another world of value, it would be impossible to know what anything was worth. Exchange would be impossible, and so, according to Aristotle, there could be no 'association' between people.

Both exchange and definition are vital in directing how we live. The split into two worlds, a spiritual-metaphysical and a sensuous-lived one, creates the *generality* of our societies. For they ensure that the multiple individualities and differences are annihilated through subsumption under the metaphysical unity. There could be no exchange if what something was worth for me were completely different for other people. Or worse, if, when I did things for others, I actually didn't expect, or take anything in return. For me, the worth of what I gave would not be expressed in what I got back in terms of an exchange in trade. On such principles there could obviously be no exchange. Similarly with definitions. I cannot simultaneously be a slave and a master, nor an entrepreneur and a wage-worker. I cannot, at the same time, be your friend and your customer. I cannot relate to somebody through definitions and, at the same time, freely create my relation to him.

Just as this kind of society is held together by exchange, so the corresponding kind of thinking is guided by definitions. Each of them is able to reign by determining us as something different from ourselves, coming upon us from the outside. This foreign rule over us is possible for them because they are *abstract* principles. If their power resided in, or emanated from a particular thing, they could simply be smashed, like idols. But abstraction makes their grip on us much tighter. Since we cannot understand our ways and doings without recourse to these abstractions, they appear to us as *given*, as natural and necessary as the wretched lives they rule. These two worlds make us lose our bearings. Sense has been abstracted from our world, referred into the other world, leaving an empty but haunted place. This

is philosophy's reason for being. Its task is, accordingly, to reconcile us to the given by endeavouring to show its necessity. But in this way, we will go on living our friendless life in the dungeon of exchange, value, definition and syllogism. The real nature of all such abstractions will forever remain a mystery. They uphold the contradiction of our life which denies our humanity. Science and philosophy themselves will never find a way out for us.

IV

IMAGINE A magnificent river, its water reflecting the colours of the sky, winding its way majestically through the landscape. The Mississippi, as captured in Mark Twain's writings, is an excellent example. Nothing can stop the indomitable power of the river. The masses of water constantly change the banks and the way that the river bends. The delicate movements of its ever-changing surface barely hint at the secrets of its own inner life and dangers. It takes a good memory, and many years of direct life-experience, which cannot be extracted from books, before the river can be understood.

Imagine another river, used for irrigation. A slight incline leads its water over very long distances, across vast plains. In a huge network of canals, it feeds a big expanse of otherwise barren earth and makes it fertile, strictly guiding the flow of the water. One might say that the canals *define* the water's path. From given measurements of the canal-system, all kinds of conclusions may be derived, according to straightforward logical notions of cause and necessity. For each point, a kind of syllogism may be set up. Looking upstream, we might deduce, for example, that whatever amount of water flows by a particular spot, must have passed all the previous places, too. This is an absolute necessity. Looking downstream, we may conclude that whatever amount of water streams through any particular place, will, at the next bifurcation of the canals, either go one way or the other, and not both. Since the canal branches in a certain relation of width, this implies that the water will divide in the same proportion, and continue its journey with proportionately reduced amounts. Where the water is going is entirely determined by the way the canals have been constructed.

In relation to the original river, the canals are externally-imposed features. They don't naturally grow out of the river's own essence, nor out of the landscape, for that matter. But these canals contain the basic knowledge of the principle of the behaviour of water, including that it flows downhill. Given any particular amount of water at any particular spot, it can be accurately calculated which places it must have flowed by, and how much of it, or the spots it will flow by later. All these truths may be derived from the given definitions, as scientific results, or conclusions of syllogisms.

Something else, however, has vanished: the river. Its water, irrigating dry ground and making it fertile, will do a lot of good and help to

yield a good harvest. However, its uncaptured flow and life must not be confused with willing submission to human ingenuity.

This is a picture for the meaning of the word *definition* itself. We have seen earlier that it goes back to the Greek *horismos*, 'the marking of one plot from another'. Both show that the definition is the result of an *activity*: the setting up of the boundary posts to mark plots, the building of the canal system. What the definition defines here, could not exist without that form-giving activity. This is applied to a natural element — the landscape, the river — and is guided by a purpose lying outside the thing, a purpose foreign to the thing, but imposed onto it. The definitions governing society, however, have a more inscrutable origin. They have not been forced on us by some alien power, putting its own purpose into human society. They are the result of our own activity. The river did not, out of itself, erect its own canals, nor the open land carve itself up into plots. However, in relation to the power that imposed and imposes the definitions on our lives, we are as numb, unfree, will-less, submissive and ignorant, as is the land and the river in relation to the human purpose which makes use of them.

The picture visualises something that is otherwise invisible. It is in the nature of definitions that they can never be seen. They are in our heads and in our actions, and, therefore, in what might be called the structure of the way we live. Definitions are the general principles which are realised by individual things, people, actions. Neither Jim, therefore, nor Huck, nor any hero more valiant than they, can single-handedly fight and vanquish a definition. No individual can touch the general. But the general lives off the individual, and decides on its validity.

Actions which do not comply to the definitions are invalid. However, their invalidity does not impair the validity of the definitions in general. Let us consider an example. The cheating of a shopkeeper who always adds a few extra quid for fictitious items onto his bill, entirely relies on the general maintenance of 'honest' buying and selling. Otherwise no exchange relations would be possible and his cheating would not be cheating at all. What is more, this shopkeeper must know perfectly well the 'right' way to do business, and must consciously try to evade it to his own advantage. What he is doing, in a perverted way, is completely in line with the general definitions and institutions of society. His deviant actions do not suggest another idea of what 'exchange' should really mean, or that prices should be fixed by a different mechanism from the way they come about in the given system. The shopkeeper's negation – or rather, perhaps, evasion – of the expected way of trading is really a kind of affirmation. The cheating must therefore leave unaffected the principle of the generality, the validity of its definitions. In relation to the principles of 'fair trading', it is only an accident. To revert to our earlier picture, this kind of

deviation is like a twig that got stuck at a bifurcation of the canals. This doesn't bother the current, which smoothly flows around it. Maybe the twig causes a tiny eddy. After a while somebody will calmly take it out. In relation to the irrigation system, it is some chance incident, an accident within its necessary flow.

Like the shopkeeper's negation of the definition, Jim and Huck cannot get rid of the validity of the definition that holds for the general whole. But quite unlike the retailer's action, theirs does not rest on that validity, it is not a perverted affirmation of it, but a real, if powerless, *rejection*. Neither Huck nor Jim can be said to be cheating. They are not implicitly using the definition, while shifting around it for their own benefit.

For Jim and for Huckleberry Finn, there somehow appeared a crack in the invisible walls of the canal. Somehow they happened to experience a tiny bit of the life of the river. This is what caused the crisis. River and canals are incompatible, friendship and slavery cannot wholly exist at the same time. Then, you have 'got to decide, forever, betwixt two things'. The huge importance of this is that, thinking about Jim and Huck, we too break the definition. But in contrast to the element in which they break it, in thinking, we know that it is the *definition* which we are breaking, and so, unlike them, we learn something about definitions in general. Neither our ordinary effort smoothly to comply with the definitions in everyday life, nor philosophy's work of showing their inner necessity, could ever get at this meaning.

Running away carries out the particular purpose that the subject has set itself. But 'to break the definition' cannot form a purpose. The crack has to occur inadvertently. For, as long as we live our ordinary kind of life, we are *inside* the defined world. Merely complying to the given, there is no way to have the slightest premonition of the free world. It follows that the free world cannot be intended, or form the purpose of one's action. Also, if there is no inkling of freedom from definitions, there is no way to know the world of definitions for what it is, and consequently, no way to know how to get from the world of self-created suffering to the one of self-created freedom. It is therefore the spontaneity of direct, living relations to others which will have to guide us step by step, until we realise the overwhelming power and creativity of the free life beyond the definitions.

Relating to Jim, Huck experiences the contradiction between humanity and inhumanity, between a free and a defined life. The definition 'slave' bars his friendship. This contradiction is not like a bifurcation in the road, where one part of the traffic takes this, and the other that branch. It is the contradiction between 'is' and 'ought'. The definitions are the given, the 'is' — Jim 'is' a slave, a nigger. The 'ought' is what contradicts the 'is'. The 'ought' says what the 'is' should be, but isn't — Jim 'ought not to' be a slave, he 'ought to' be a

friend. The 'ought' can guide reality, until they become one — Jim 'is' a friend, he is what he 'ought to' be. This is the life in which humanity creates itself.

This 'ought' is of a very special kind. It is the primordial 'ought', the only indisputable 'ought' in the world, because it directly flows from the universal criterion of humanity, against which no other criterion can be placed. What is constantly holding in check the driving force of this criterion, however, is the consolidated power of the given world. This world, with its rules, its definitions, its logic, is not another criterion. It simply exists. And the question is: according to what criterion do we keep it going?

The 'oughts' of common parlance are spoken from a blinkered point of view, driven by a particular interest, and they will have to clash with all the other 'oughts' of opposing, similarly-restricted views and interests. None of these 'oughts' would be more justifiable than any other. Each is equally only an expression of some particularity. Remaining on the level of this clash between criteria, their opposition could not be resolved. One criterion can only win temporary domination over others by employing the force of weapons external to itself.

When Huck realises that the definition of 'slave' stands in the way of him relating to his black friend as to an equal human being, the slumbering universal criterion of humanity awakens. It will stand up, an invincible pillar against all assaults. It is the only landmark to guide the way out of the defined into the free world. Only through this criterion, can 'slave' and 'friend' never be equally valid options.

But in spite of the support from this criterion, there is an intensive battle to be fought before Huck is finally able to reject the definition. The arena is his conscience. 'Conscience' is a modern notion. The Latin *conscientia*, from which it developed, means both 'consciousness' and 'conscience'. (This dual meaning is maintained in French.) They both are some knowledge that goes 'along with' (*con-*) some other knowledge (*scientia*). It is probably only through Descartes that 'conscience' became a concept in its own right, when, from the double-meaning of the Latin term, he detached the modern meaning of consciousness, making it the central human characteristic.

This conscience goes along with the generally-accepted knowledge that binds society together, the core of which are the definitions. In Huck's case, the abstract inner voice of his conscience, speaks in defence of the general order. He has to argue through the logic belonging to the definitions: It is part and parcel of the definition of slave that she/he is an item of property, owned by somebody. For every slave, there must be a 'rightful owner'. For Huck, then, to help Jim means to damage Miss Watson, to whom Jim 'belongs'. This right is established because she paid for him. Helping Jim is in this regard a theft. Why should Huck steal from someone who had never done

him any harm? If she had, that is, then he might have had a way open for arguing that as she did to him, he does to her ...

There is religion waiting for every soul, with its reward and punishment, which exactly answer the right and wrong deeds that conscience judges over. Huck had been introduced to religion at Miss Watson's, who generally tried to 'civilise' him. He learnt that not to do as conscience tells him, may have bad consequences in the afterworld. Moreover, the legally right is also the religiously right, so that opposition to the one means also the refutation of the other. Finally deciding for Jim and the friend and against 'nigger' and 'slave', leads Huck to draw this conclusion: 'I'll go to hell.'

Friendship, a spontaneous, creative relation between people, unconstrained by definition, does not belong to the realm of arguments and logic. There doesn't exist a logic of love and friendship, there is no argument for or against friendship as such. When Huck tries to unwind himself from the burden of guilt by bringing forward an argument that might formally prove that he 'warn't to blame', because it was Jim who ran away, this doesn't touch upon his *friendship* at all. On another occasion, Huck does not row back to the raft from which Jim is shouting after him 'the best fren ole Jim ever had', to try and convince Jim that he got everything wrong, that the relation between them had nothing in common with friendship. No, the denial of their friendship is impossible.

Definition hides the good of life and silences the truth of the human being. But it can never destroy the criterion of humanity and the power of its 'ought'. When the 'ought' has gathered strength enough to crumble the definition, we see humanity emerge. When the walls come down, the way towards the other human being is open. Only now is friendship possible. This liberation cannot be a liberation of an individual person. It may only occur as a freeing of the relation to another person. Only when the relation to the other human being is free, have thinking, will, action and future been freed.

The way you live with a friend, what you do for a friend, is never done as a re-affirmation of a definition. People are no longer seen through definition. What you do for a friend, you do *for her or his 'sake'*. This sake is always a 'this', always belongs to just *this one human being*. And yet you *know* the 'sake', you know it as a 'this'. *Now*, without the definitions, the here and now, the this, is knowable. Time has been liberated. The present is free to be created by you, to become a human time. Your knowledge, thinking and will are now free to go towards *this* human being, to find out and hold dear the 'sake'. You have found your human purpose in the other, in your friend. You have found yourself, the meaning of your life, in your friend.

Friendship is totally incompatible with the principles that govern the general social life of the world in which we live: exchange, the

freely create our lives, there cannot be any such principles to determine us from the outside.

If we wanted to maintain the idea of science and scientific knowledge when our relations have been freed, they would acquire a completely new meaning. Aristotle told us that we knew something scientifically if we knew it to be true *of necessity*, or if we knew that its cause lay in definition. In the defined world, this knowledge of necessity is to be found in the conclusion of a syllogism. You only know scientifically that a particular person is a slave, if you know the intrinsic definition that, *of necessity*, makes a slave into a slave. Without the definitions, these notions of necessity and of cause can not pertain.

In the world in which we freely create our relations with each other, the deed that I do for your sake is a *creation*, and is *mine*. Your sake is the 'cause' of my action, the cause of how I create my life, the cause of how I put myself into the world. You are the 'necessity' of my life if I can freely relate to you, if no definition is an obstacle between you and me. Cause and necessity are now directly made by living people, not imposed on them from the outside. They arise through the act of the free will which wants to make the sake of the other into its own driving force, and enjoys doing so.

V

PEOPLE LIVE together. Two mates on a raft hardly form a lasting viable community. Their transitory situation is obvious. They must come from somewhere and go somewhere; and these endpoints of their itinerary are societies, larger associations to which these two temporary escapees also belong. There is no getting away from society as a whole. Human life is social life, as Aristotle knew.

Philosophy is a child of the epoch in which this living together of people, on the one hand, and the knowledge of the resulting form of that togetherness, on the other, are separate. People do live together, but they don't really know how; they don't know how the whole of their togetherness hangs together. Thus arises our everlasting task of overcoming this ignorance about ourselves. But this task is daunting, not just for its scale, but for its logical intricacy. How can a part know about the whole of which it is part? From Aristotle to Hegel, this question remained. Take, for example, Aristotle's cobbler and carpenter. They engage in exchange with each other. So, over and above the particular knowledge of each about his own trade — how to fix timber and how to put shoes together — they possess the knowledge of how to exchange their finished products. Now, we have seen that according to Aristotle, there would be no association without exchange. With this in mind, can we not conclude that if those two craftsmen do enter into exchange with each other, they know about it and, therefore, about that association brought forth by exchange, the entire associated whole of society? No. First, they don't know about exchange in a knowing sort of way. And secondly, the relation between exchange and association, we have imported from Aristotle. And there, it belongs to a whole train of philosophical thought which is alien to our craftsmen. They cannot transcend the part to reach the whole in this manner. Does that mean that, if a part is too restricted to grasp the whole, we are looking for a very versatile person who spends some time in one trade, then moves over to the next and so forth, thus gradually piecing together a picture of the whole? The answer, again, is 'no'. The problem is not one of quantity, of adding up a sufficient number of experiences.

How, then, can the part know about the whole? The answer, philosophy tells us, is through philosophy. Philosophy makes this possible not through number, but through *form*. As much as any other

individual, Aristotle himself is only a part of the whole that he intends to scrutinise. But philosophy developed a way of dealing with this problem. It developed *thinking* in such a way that it is able to encompass the whole. Sure, the philosopher is part of the living whole just as any craftsman. But *in thought* he is able to take this whole as a whole and look at it, make it into the object of his thought. Aristotle is one of the philosophers who contributed most towards this tremendous achievement.

The key idea of philosophical, indeed of any kind of scientific or coherent, thinking is 'necessity'. It is only through this that the kind of whole in which we live can be grasped by a part. Guided by this necessity, the individual member can, in thought, transcend its own restricted standpoint. Necessity only holds as such, if it holds, potentially, for everybody.

Aristotle revealed to us the most important form in which this necessity is more explicit: the syllogism. Within the syllogism, there is no escaping necessity. Let us quickly remind ourselves of the meaning of this notion. Necessity is a form of knowledge. We know something in this form, when the question 'why?' has been answered in a scientific way. Thus, we know something to be true of necessity

> when we think that we know the cause on which the fact depends, as the cause of that fact and of no other, and, further, that the fact could not be other than it is. (AnPost, 71b; see above p 45.)

First, then, we must think of something which is a 'fact', 'exchange', say, or 'slavery'. Our cobbler and carpenter know 'exchange' as a 'fact', the slave knows 'slavery' to be a 'fact', and everybody else, who is neither slave, nor woodworker nor shoe-maker, knows these 'facts' too, and behaves according to that knowledge. However, they don't know them philosophically or scientifically, not in a knowing sort of way; they are only acquainted with them. And this mere acquaintance leaves the necessity of those facts obscure. In order to bring it to light, the '*cause*' would have to be known. Knowledge of the cause transforms 'knowledge' of the fact from mere acquaintance into firm scientific truth. Now, the fact no longer hangs in the air, but has been found to be dependent upon its newly discovered cause. The cause is that from which the fact originates. The fact is brought forth by the cause.

The cause answers the question 'why?' If somebody should ask Aristotle why a certain being who was known as a slave actually was a slave, he would have answered with the cause that he knew, namely because the being in question exhibited the bodily mark belonging to that species. If somebody wanted enlightenment about why a certain swapping of things was exchange, he would reply by hinting at the

proportionate equality according to which the give and take was carried out.

The most concise and stringent form in which the 'why?' can be satisfied, is the syllogism. It is the form in which the 'fact' is most tightly linked to its cause, thereby making it into a logical conclusion, directly and of necessity produced by the two premisses. Thus the syllogism entirely depends on the existence and knowledge of definitions, on a formula stating what it means to be a certain thing. If you know that a particular bodily mark defines a 'slave', then you can logically conclude that, if a certain individual carries that very defining mark, he or she is indeed a slave. Given the definition, no sane person could fail to draw that conclusion.

Suppose somebody, for whatever reason, neglected a definition. Assume that person befriended a slave. This act would be against the truth of the living whole of society, and against its general knowledge about itself, anchored in the definitions. So, it would be an easy job for a wiser person to bring the aberrant back onto the common path. The syllogism would complete the task. Restating the relevant definition, that all bodies with the mark 'X' are slaves, and identifying a particular as exhibiting that very mark, leads automatically to the conclusion that this particular must also be a slave. The syllogism does not produce entirely new knowledge. It just brings back the given truth; it reasserts the given lived truth of the whole. The syllogism belongs to a society which needed a way to constantly reassert its own truth in this 'theoretical' manner. Just living wasn't enough. Life could forget its truth at any time. Life thus stood in need of a way to 'un-forget' truth. (Compare what we said in Part Three, I).

What is the deed of Jim and Huck against this logic of life and thought? From the standpoint of that logic, it is simply nothing. What they have done, can be of no consequence to the whole. They might be lost to the whole, but this could not in the least matter to *it*.

The reason why the whole is immune against the two runaways is that they are ignorant of it, as well as of the notion of necessity that is bound up with it. In relation to the whole, the friendship of Jim and Huck is only an accident, which, of course, can never touch the definition of slavery, nor the meaning of definition as such. Huck's victorious battle against his conscience can never do injury to the general definition. That is why the two 'illegal' friends must be solely concerned with their own particular case. Ignorant of the nature of definition and necessity, both can only reject slavery in the case of *Jim*, but not as such. For one particular slave they want slavery *not* to hold, but for all the rest of the slaves, they do not question their lot and its legitimacy. Therefore, the meaning of their great deed and humanity is minute, it cannot touch the generality, it is a fly on an elephant. The generality of slavery goes on whether or not some Jim becomes friends with a white man, whether or not some Huck becomes best mates with one slave.

Suppose that minds who grasped things in more general terms than Jim and Huckleberry were to clash with a definition. Then they would immediately find themselves confronted with the most terrific problem: the problem of the criterion. They would know that a clashwith a definition – if it wasn't just the result of subterfuge – was a clash with the general. They would realise that they claimed in general, and not just in relation to their own little lives, that something shouldn't exist which does exist, like it or not. But on what grounds can such a claim against the whole be made? And why should anyone prefer to base themselves on these grounds, rather than follow those who propose another alternative on other grounds? The deadlock of clashing claims will have us dizzily staring into the bottomless abyss of infinite regress. Each claim must lack necessity, at least in the philosophical sense that we have been discussing. Outside the given, real community, there are no shared premisses, nothing from which necessity can flow. This necessity belongs to a life which, as a whole, is formed by definitions. It arose out of the need and effort of the community to un-conceal its own truth while not falling apart. There does not exist any notion of necessity which has its starting point outside the life of the whole. There is no necessity without shared premisses; none outside the syllogism. Truth and necessity, therefore, depend on precisely those forms that Aristotle has extricated. To uphold that this or that definition should not be, is like shouting at world-history to follow you.
It isn't listening.

VI

THERE IS a sense in which Aristotle, Hegel, Jim, Huckleberry Finn, together with the writer and the readers of this work, are all contemporaries. What contemporariness is this that can span indiscriminately over more than two millennia? What makes us all into *logical* contemporaries is the presence of the same problem: how can we human beings cope with an inhuman way of living; how, in thought and deed, can we deal with, and bear, the contradiction of the inhuman human.

In friendship humanity is actual. When I don't fear to put myself into the world, when I give you something of my own because I know of your pleasure and need, when my criterion is your joy, when it is my happiness to see myself reflected in your eyes, when your voice tells me that I am at home, when I love the world because I can see you in it, then humanity is creating itself. But the freedom of human creation runs into definitions everywhere; it is turned into unfreedom and inhumanity. Ruled over by definition, actual life denies humanity. Penned in by the walls of definition, there is no way I can reach out to *you*, or you to *me*. I cannot do anything for *your* sake, and I will never see myself in you. Everything we do, we do for the definition. The definition is actual at the expense of humanity. We are slaves to the definition and friends of nobody.

This contradiction of humanity and inhumanity has to bring forth both philosophy and rejection. It leads thought to delve into the forms that hold the community apart; and, in unique moments, it leads individuals to wrest their life from the rule of definition in order to be free to create it and share it with another human being.

When life is fenced in by definition, then, of necessity, thinking shapes itself according to the thought-forms of definition. These are the forms that Aristotle laid bare in his logical works, collected together under the name of *Organon*. Whenever we try to think soberly in our everyday lives, whenever we try to explain the world to ourselves, whenever we get involved in any of the sciences, whenever we argue, whether in Aristotle's time, or Jim's time, or nowadays, we always employ our understanding, work with those forms that Aristotle has shown to us in their nakedness, stripped of any accidental additions of matter. And it is this pervasive and imperative character of the forms that gave them their fascination, and drew the attention of philosophers, from their first appearance until now. And this is why, in modern times, Kant, and after him Hegel, felt they

had to get to grips with them. After Aristotle had shown humanity, confined by its own definitions, its own logical workings, nobody came along to claim that there was a basic flaw in the Ancient Greek philosopher's observation or argument. Nobody claimed that, actually, those forms did not really exist at all, that it was all a big deception.

However, life is not just the whole, it is not altogether determined by definition. That is why it may also revolt, burst its confinement. Aristotle lived in a slave society; he even had his own slaves, and he was their master. And at that time, as at any other, slaves did run away from their 'rightful owners', in order to become free. In Aristotle's time there were people like Jim. At any time, there will be people who try to break away from the grip of definition, people who say: 'I will be a slave no more!' Although thinkers can demonstrate or explain the necessity, the justice, the logic of a given way of life, against which no counter-*argument* may win, individual people may *disprove them in their deed.*

The whole is not a thing, definitions are not things. They exist only because they are being lived by individual human beings. The definition is actual only when it is active in the world through the action of individuals. The whole exists only if the individuals which its definitions collect together, keep re-enacting those definitions. Slavery pertains where people act according to the definition of master and slave. Exchange, as analysed by Aristotle, can regulate the give and take between people only as long as these obey the law of commensurability. Definition defines the action of the individual. And the defined actions of individuals taken together form the whole.

The individual is therefore the battleground between free will and servitude, life and definition, humanity and inhumanity. It is here, that the questions are posed: 'What does it do to me, to re-enact the definition?' 'How does it feel to *live* the definition?' This is by no means to say that humanity is merely a matter of the individual. Rather, that, in the way we live, where the whole is inhuman definition, there is no room for humanity on the level of the whole.

When humanity, compressed into individual form, can't bear restriction and foreign rule any longer, then it has to posit itself against the whole. Rejection can only occur from this subjective standpoint. The subject is the spark of hope for humanity, but also its tragic end. For will and thinking involved in rejection are unable to grasp the whole. Rejection, therefore, has to leave the whole untouched. And the whole will hold its sway.

There is only one way that philosophical thinking can be about the whole: when it follows the definitions. For thinking to be general, it has to trace the generality lived. Doing that, it can only look at the individual in terms of the whole. But, since the individual is the refuge of humanity, the battleground between humanity and inhumanity must escape philosophy. Thus, the question whether the whole is human or

inhuman cannot be asked by philosophy. The whole is what is. There is no alternative. By its very own nature, philosophy has to be reconciliatory. This thinking will never know what rejection knows, that there is something standing both against the whole and against the way philosophy grasps this whole.

But, to us, rejection means that another kind of sociality and another kind of whole *are* possible. Rejection is not, and could never be, an empty, abstract, lifeless decision. It is the proof in the deed that definition is not necessarily intrinsic to human society. Huck does not find another, better definition; he finds a better way of living: without definition.

Part Two

War and Abstraction

I

RECONCILIATION LITERALLY 'calling together again' – is the re-establishment of a togetherness that has been disrupted, whose participants have been alienated from each other. The unity in question may be small or big. It may be the friendship between two people, the place of a person in a whole community, or the place of the human within nature or the universe.

The possibility of reconciliation presupposes the possibility of an essential disruption. Without rupture, there is nothing to be brought together again. That possibility of tearing apart what belongs together, is given in the kind of being that the human is. The human being is a natural being; it is in the middle of nature, part of its life-processes. But, as a spiritual being, it is also outside and opposed to nature. Nature can never disrupt, or cancel, or split its own being. If nature is taken as God's creation, it cannot but be God-like. Nature itself cannot be sinful or rebel against what ought to be, or against the order of the creator. But nothing merely natural binds the human being to strict compliance to any predetermined order. And so the life of the human, their thoughts and actions, may turn against their own meaning, well-being, possibilities. If you wish, they may turn against the one who created them, against God. This rupture is not like a rent in a threadbare garment, which might simply be taken off, discarded, and exchanged for a better one. Humanity cannot take off and throw away any part of itself. In order to come back to its intrinsic wholeness, holiness, the human and its meaning need a total reconciliation.

Reconciliation lies at the heart of religious beliefs, at least of those with which Western civilisation is most familiar — Judaism and

Christianity — and through them it became part of our way of thinking. Reconciliation here deals with the special place of the human within the largest whole, the universe, as God's creation.

Each year the people of Israel celebrated the Day of Atonement, *yom ha-kippurim*, which eventually became their most holy festivity in the year. *Kippurim* is a verbal noun in the plural, from the verb *kipper*. The original meaning of the latter is not quite clear, and the dictionaries usually state it only with reference to other semitic languages as 'to cover, hide, wash away, rub off'. Reconciliation can only take place when something is 'rubbed off, covered, washed away, or hidden'. When Yahweh acknowledged the offerings the people of Israel made to Him, and considered them 'sufficient' and 'satisfactory', then their sin would have been taken out of sight. 'Underlying all these offerings there is the conception that the persons offering are *covered* by that which is regarded as sufficient and satisfactory by Yahweh.' (A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1906.)

The Day of Atonement was a communal festivity to atone for all sins of the community, and thus to recreate the community between God and His people which had been torn apart against His will. The recreation of the bond with God is at the same time the recreation of the community of the people, which is only alive when it knows that God is among them. However, ritual purification is only the human preparation so that God *may* re-enter the community. In Judaism, offerings are not themselves atonement, creating *one-ness* with God. That would be a magical relation between human action and the holy, which does not belong to monotheism. The rites only cleanse the holy place of sin, so that God, the holy and source of all holiness, may return to live among His people. Although the rites of *yom ha-kippurim*, laid down in Leviticus, are to be performed when, where and how stated, it is not this performance itself which reconciles. Human beings cannot themselves reconcile themselves to God; they can only change their ways, so that reconciliation may be granted to them by God through his mercy.

As Christianity as a whole has historically grown out of Judaism, so too has the Christian idea of reconciliation. Its focus now is the Event of Calvary. The sacrifice of Christ at the Cross brings together the meanings of the various offerings in the Old Testament. But the crucifixion is a much more general event than the earlier sacrifices, the offering of one goat and the chasing of another into the desert, the scapegoat, laden with evil and sin, on the Day of Atonement. Christian reconciliation is no longer tightly linked to laws and rites, and it is no longer bound up with a particular place and people. In Christianity, God has, in principle and for all time, reconciled to himself all the world, the whole of humanity, through the sacrifice of His Son. And He is continually offering reconciliation through this

once-and-for-all event. Whether this reconciliation in general is true for any particular individual, depends entirely on this individual. Individuals have to *recognise* and to consent to this offer of reconciliation. The sacrifice of the Son has to be made into one's own means of purification and one's own path to God.

When Hegel uses the expression 'recognition' of 'the rose in the cross of the present' (cf our Introduction, p 12), to explain the general task and method of philosophy, he is alluding precisely to this religious background. And his terminology is very accurate. *Versöhnung* ('reconciliation') is the word Luther chose in his translation of the Bible. The legacy of reconciliation has passed on from religion to philosophy. To grasp the world philosophically is analogous to grasping God's sacrifice of His son. In Christian *Versöhnung*, peace is re-established because the individual recognises God's mercy; it changes its ways and makes amends for its aberrations. In philosophy, too, reconciliation depends on the individual. But it does not follow after an amendment; it is purely the outcome of comprehension, gained by thought, into what cannot be other than it is.

In many places, Hegel draws out the continuity between religion and philosophy, not only by implicit reference, but also directly. Both have a common content, but it is the higher form of thinking which makes philosophy the completion of reconciliation.

> Thus, religion and philosophy have a common content [*Inhalt*], and only the forms are different; and the only point is to perfect the form of the notion so far as to be able to grasp the content of religion. (HPh I, p 79)

We have one content which expresses itself in two forms, religion and philosophy. (In fact, for Hegel, there is a third form, art, in which this same content is also expressed; but we are not concerned with this here.) The nature of this content is such that the form is not irrelevant to it. And the forms in which it expresses itself do not stand in the same logical relation to their content. The forms can make their content more or less present. Philosophy is not a superior form to religion because it adds to the content, but because it grasps the same content more comprehensively.

> The concern of philosophy is twofold: first, it is about the substantial content, the spiritual soul — just as it is religion's in worship; and second, to bring this before consciousness, as an object, but in the form of thought. Philosophy thinks, conceives of that which religion represents as the object of consciousness, be it as the work of fiction [*Phantasie*] or as historical existence. The form of knowledge of an object in religious consciousness belongs

> to representation [*Vorstellung*], containing what is more or less sensuous ... Nonetheless, thought, what is substantial in such a relation, is still recognised by philosophy. By thinking its object, philosophy has the advantage that what is a separate moment in religion, is in unity in philosophy. (HPh I, p 76)

The content shared by religion and philosophy is the 'substantial content', or 'spiritual soul', of what is. We might say that this content is 'what counts', or we might call it 'reason', 'thought', 'truth'. In religion, this content is present in consciousness in the form of images, 'representation'. A representation makes present something that cannot be present itself, it stands in for the original. In religion, the 'substantial content' is not itself present. In order to develop philosophy, thought has to grasp the content present in the form of religious representation. When thought grasps that content, the form of representation has been transformed, by thought, into the form of thought. As long as that spiritual content is not being grasped conceptually, it does not find itself in the form most adequate to it. In religion, it is a 'separate moment', since representation, the form of religion, and thought, its content, differ. In the 'unity' of philosophy, the separation is overcome. For now truth is in the form of truth. Thought, the content, is now grasped by the form of thought, thinking. The forms that express the same 'substantial content' seem to stand in a relation of logical development to each other. The lower one carries with it the demand, the 'ought', that it be transformed into the higher one. The process has reached its highest level only when full adequacy of form and content has been achieved.

However , the step from religion to philosophy is by no means a mere logical development, abstracted from history. In his Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Hegel gives a concise account of the historical preconditions for the emergence of philosophy:

> It may be said that philosophy only commences when a people has left its concrete life in general, when separation into and difference of estates has begun and the people approach their fall [*Untergang*], where a gulf [*Bruch*] has arisen between inner striving and external actuality, when the hitherto existing form of religion etc. is no longer satisfying, when spirit manifests indifference towards its living existence or dwells unsatisfied therein, when ethical life dissolves. [Then] Spirit takes refuge in the space of thought and forms [*bildet*] for itself a realm of thought standing against the actual world. Philosophy, then, is reconciliation of ruin, which was begun by thought. Philosophy begins with the fall of a real world; when it appears with its abstractions, painting grey in grey, then the freshness of youth, of life, has already gone, and its reconciliation is reconciliation not in actuality, but in the

> world of the idea. (HPh, I, p 52)

Philosophy is 'reconciliation of ruin'. Philosophical reconciliation comes about because a people and its world have been ruined. Certain changes in their life caused spirit 'to flee' into 'the space of thought'. The un-making of the whole bears on all aspects of life. There is a developing division of labour, rigidifying society and splitting it into fixed groupings, cutting up the social whole. Old ways of living suffer loss of meaning, leaving behind obsolete, empty forms. What was considered good disintegrates, 'ethical life dissolves'. This is indeed the ruin of the life of a people.

When sinful comportment of people disrupted the bond between God and the community, reconciliation could restore the bond, the whole, the unity, the happiness. But when the community is in ruin, and instead of religious reconciliation there is philosophical reconciliation, the wounds can no longer be healed. Philosophical reconciliation cannot overcome the rift through the living whole and restore the community. Looking at the ruin, it seems as though all the community needed was reconciliation within itself in order to reconstitute its wholeness and call spirit back home. But history proved the impossibility of this kind of reconciliation. Who would have been the subject to grant it? The community never became whole again and spirit never returned. With the ruin of the community sets in the miracle of humanity: the powerful unfolding of human life and history within a world abandoned by spirit. Once spirit has rejected outdated forms of the ruined community, no new social form will evolve which could attract it and make it reside in them. Henceforth, the forms in which people live will be hollow.

So, from now on, reconciliation can only take place in that 'world of the idea'; truth has to be sought by thinking and will only be present in thinking — not in living. The only thing left is for thinking to follow the flight of spirit into its removed refuge, where it creates its own 'realm of thought'. The thinking able to follow the flight of spirit is philosophy. This is the reason why philosophy *has to be abstract*, lifeless and colourless. Its reconciliation takes place *away* from colourful, sensuous, concrete life, *outside* the actual living community.

From what we have been discussing, we arrive at the following paradox. When spirit is still present in the community, the form in which it is being conceived of is representation, the less adequate form for it. When, however, spirit has fled ruined life, is no longer present in the living community, then it can be fully grasped, conceived of in the form most adequate to it. Only when spirit is absent, can it be present in its proper form: thought.

What, then, does this tell us about 'form'? The question of form belongs to philosophy. It arises from the actual experience of empty,

meaningless forms of life, vacated by spirit. When spirit still lived among people, the content/form divide did not exist for them. Only for us, looking back from our experience of hollow forms, to the time when they were dwelt in by spirit, does the divide exist. Form is what is left behind by spirit. From our experience of abandonment, the question is always how to get over this devastating experience, how to find meaningful forms. And the only forward-looking answer lay in philosophical thinking. It yielded the new forms in which spirit could be present, the pure forms of thought.

In Western history, what we understand by philosophy was born in Ancient Greece. For the first time, people were compelled to ask themselves what was the truth, because it had now departed from them. Spirit had fled to another domicile. Now people had to set out to discover what anything was by their own intellectual effort. It was now up to the human mind, through its own activity, to bring the truth to light. There still remained an absolute conviction that there was a truth of things, the *eidos*. It was there, somewhere, unchanging; but it was now simply a given property of truth that it was hidden from direct insight. This idea we owe to the Greeks. The new task was to gain access to what was thus concealed. The new kind of specialised activity needed for that task was philosophy.

The *eidos* is the form in which spirit which has fled from living is present in thinking. *Eidos* is a spiritual form, but it is the truth *of* or *about* what is present in the world which spirit has abandoned. Through the *eidos*, spirit is made present again in this actual world of ours, but this presence is the result of thinking, and can only be grasped by thinking. The *eidos* is that which makes anything what it is, its firm, unchangeable truth. The relation between this eternity and the finitude of our world is provided by necessity. Whatever is true within the finite, changeable world, is true because it has been brought forth by spirit. Thinking moves in the reverse direction to spirit, as it were, back from the worldly outcome to its spiritual source. What shows the way to spirit's refuge, is the question 'why?' With this guide, thinking, starting from the given void of the world, has to trace the path laid by that necessity back to the presence of spirit.

Truth is only *one*. For there is only one spirit, and only one necessity, one way in which spirit brings forth the actual world. In other words, truth is *universal, general:* it is the same truth for all those who take the trouble to follow up that necessity. Such a truth, generality or necessity offers reconciliation in two directions. It reconciles each thinking mind to the world, singly and separately. And it also reconciles these thinkers with each other, in a community of thought. Insight into truth transforms the emptiness of the abandoned immediate world into the world that gives expression to spirit. The grasp of the *eidos* shows us that spirit *does* dwell right

inside the world, is the heart of everything. Spirit is outside the world only insofar as it is not immediately seen or experienced. When the individual takes it upon itself to follow spirit, and exits the immediate world, it will be led back into the world to see that this is alife only through spirit. The *eidos* found by thinking is the same for whoever looks at it. Thus it is the spiritual foundation of the community. In modern times, this kind of truth is called 'objective'. It is seen as growing out of the object or thing under consideration.

Among the ancient Greek philosophers, Aristotle has worked out this generality as far as possible — so far, indeed, that only Hegel, over two thousand years later, could go any further. And Hegel did not simply make a little advance on Aristotle, but completed what his predecessor had begun. Hegel accomplished Aristotle's generality, by recognising where it was not yet general enough. He amends this 'defect', by recasting the Ancient's logical and metaphysical work into the form of a *system*. In the preface to the first edition of his Science of Logic, Hegel himself calls what he has done in this work a *Umbildung*, a 'reforming, reshaping, remoulding' of the logic as it had existed hitherto. ('Reconstruction' in the English translation, SL, p 27.)

Aristotle has drawn up for us the plans of a large part of that palace in which spirit has taken refuge. Among its rooms are the living-quarters, judgement and syllogism. In doing that, he has also given to philosophy and science the prime expression of what necessity is: *demonstration*. Demonstration was the necessary movement from the premisses to the conclusion. The conclusion, then, was demonstrated truth, a truth that could not be otherwise, and that carried its own proof within itself. However, first premisses themselves were not proved. Their truth had to be attained in other ways, and accepted for other reasons. The kind of knowledge that knows the premisses, Aristotle called the 'originative source of knowledge'. It granted insight into the premisses in a direct way, gaining firmness of truth without any derivation. 'Originative knowledge' was a knowledge without demonstrated necessity. If the truth known in this form were considered necessary, it was a necessity that differed from that in the conclusion. (We have investigated these two forms of knowledge in Part I.) But where did the premisses get their necessity from? They were given by the way people lived. Premisses are definitions of society as a whole. Only in this way is it possible for them already to contain the generality, which is then shown openly by the conclusion drawn from them. The generality contained in the premisses, or in definitions, is the real generality of the people, all of whom live and think in accordance to that generality.

In modernity, however, this living generality itself is the problem. It is a clashing generality in which everybody has their own

premisses, is their own starting-point. Nothing shared can be taken for granted. The essence of modern society is self-interest. All activity rests on that desire which seeks the satisfaction of one's *own* person. The satisfaction, the 'sake' of somebody else, is directly incompatible with this. The other person, as a *human being*, is excluded, and so, therefore, is one's own humanity. Satisfaction has to be attained by means of a *thing*, or *a person treated as a thing*. The necessity of the ensuing clash is obvious. When several people want the same thing, then, according to their own principle, they will *have to* be enemies.

This has been seen early on in modernity. In chapter 13 of Hobbes' Leviathan (original edition 1651), called 'Of the NATURAL CONDITION of Mankind ...', we read:

> From this equality of ability, ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our Ends. And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which neverthelesse they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their End ... endeavour to destroy, or subdue each other ...
>
> Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre, as is of every man, against every man. For WARRE, consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known ...
>
> The Desires, and other Passions of man, are in themselves no Sin. No more are the Actions, that proceed from those Passions, till they know a Law that forbids them: which till Lawes be made they cannot know: nor can any Law be made, till they have agreed upon the Person that shall make it ...
>
> To this warre of every man against every man, this is also consequent; that nothing can be Unjust. The notions of Right and Wrong, Justice and Injustice have there no place. Where there is no common Power, there is no Law: where no Law, no Injustice ...
>
> (Hobbes, Leviathan, edited by C.B. Macpherson, Pelican Classics, pages 184-186)

Spirit had fled ancient society because this was approaching its fall. In modernity, spirit seems to have fled even further; the ruin of the community has worsened; it has broken apart into bits called 'individuals'. With this break, the unity of human nature and society is broken apart as well. Human nature is now opposed to human institutions. The broken community does not leave a dead heap of debris behind. Rather, its process of breaking is at the same time the process by which it gives birth to these little self-motivated individuals, each ready for battle whenever another of their kind

crosses their path. Society is a busy hive, bustling with hatred. The nature of humanity is *at war with itself*. Against this belligerent nature, the bulwark of the state and its laws is needed. Its duty is to keep its members away from each other's throats, to prevent immediate mutual extinction. However, by just keeping things in check, it also keeps them going. This abstract reconciliation of the state reconciles us to our eternal warfare. It creates a community in name only.

Hegel agrees with the commonly-accepted picture drawn by Hobbes. About 170 years later, after the French Revolution had failed to deliver *fraternité*, we find in his Philosophy of Right the same equation between our society and war: '(C)ivil society is the battlefield of individual private interest, of all against all ...' (PhR, paragraph 289)

How can thought come to terms with this modern antagonism among people? How can it create a thought-whole out of broken reality? How can there be any scientific truth, demonstrated truth? For, where in this turmoil are the firm premisses, which could be the starting-points for syllogism? Anyhow, what can a few syllogisms here and there do for us? Each person just starts with their own premisses, and these set them in direct opposition to everybody else, always ready for a fight to the death. The only stability seems to be provided by the state. But what is *its* truth? What is *its* necessity for being? The state is *given*. Spirit fled from such forms a long time ago, never to return. The state belongs to the history of the 'ruin' of a people. Philosophy, being the only way to follow the flight of spirit, reconciles the ruined life to its ruin, by demonstrating its 'necessity'. Showing the necessity of the state would reconcile us to the warfare contained within it and in its notion. But where are the premisses with which to begin this demonstration? If each individual is their own premiss, is out for their own self-assertion and satisfaction, then the necessity contained in this premiss cannot be shared by others; it must be contradicted by others. But if the premisses are not firm first truths, no generality, no logical conclusion can follow from them.

Thus modern philosophy has to come to terms with the phenomenon of the state, and for this purpose it is forced to reconsider Aristotle's logic. The logic can only be rescued if it is recast in form of a system. By explicitly investigating the beginning and procedure of logic, Hegel was the only one able to achieve this. 'The moments of the speculative method are (a) the beginning ... (b) the procedure' (Enc, paragraphs 238, 239). With these two constituents of method, the whole of logic could be related by necessity, could be a demonstrated system, where each part arises out of its own inner necessity, just as the conclusion is brought forth with necessity by the premisses. In this chapter, we want to look at the first constituent, the beginning.

Hegel sought to complete the task of philosophical reconciliation begun by Aristotle, under the conditions of modernity. This confronted him with the problems of the state and of logic. These two problems are in fact interconnected, and neither could have been resolved without the resolution of the other. Only by accomplishing the requirements of logic which modernity had brought to light, would it also become possible to show the necessity of the state, and the general way in which we live. Conversely, in order to prove that necessity, logic had to be explicit about its beginning and its procedure, so that it would not contain anything presupposed.

With this method, Hegel was able to show that there was an '*eidos*' of the state, that thinking was still capable, even from within the most antagonistic social forms, to follow spirit into its refuge, that we could still learn to discover spirit in a deserted world, and 'the rose in the cross of the present'. Hegel's great achievement was to have shown us what thinking must be like, if it is going to reconcile itself to the given of modern life. The path had become much longer and more arduous since Aristotle's time, for spirit had run away so much further.

In the twentieth century, however, it has completely escaped our grasp. So brutal is today's inhumanity, so deep the fragmentation, that logic would never be able to cope, however we recast it.

II

THE STATE may be the power that keeps its ready-for-war subjects from openly fighting each other, but, at the same time, it is itself a power to launch war. Sometimes it does so against its own subjects, but mainly against another state, chasing its own citizens into the burning crater of the world, as if shoveling fuel into the furnace. The relation among states is different from the relations between people, in that states are not governed by yet another authority above their heads, keeping them 'in awe', to use Hobbes words. Beyond the level of the state, there is no entity that stands in relation to the members under it, analogous to the state that keeps order among the pursuers of individual interest on the lower level, civil society. And, following Hobbes' reasoning, we would have to draw the conclusion that, because of this lack of awe-inspiring power, the states are in fact in constant war with each other. 'For WARRE, consisteth not in Battell onely, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time, wherein the Will to contend by Battell is sufficiently known'. What could reconcile these contending powers to each other? And, after the disasters of the twentieth century, what can reconcile us to living in the entrails of such beasts, daily breathing their poisonous fumes?

Without war, our century cannot be understood, thought about or imagined. Understanding it may not even be possible at all. War now means, in a more common understanding than Hobbes', not just the readiness for it, but the enmity acted out, real boundless killing. War shaped this century world-wide. It destroyed the civilisation of the past and is an important side of this century's moral and theoretical barbarism. In the historian's sense, this century did not start bang on time in 1900, but was rung in by the knell of war, 1914. This was the first *world*, and the first *total* war, state-organised carnage as the solution to fierce economic and political competition between those guardians of law and justice. Economic expansion of some states had collided with the, in principle limitless, drive of the others. Within the given world this competition could only have war as its arbiter. This measures the extent to which the principle that Hobbes had expressed more than two-and-a-half centuries earlier had developed. 'And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their End ... endeavour to destroy, or subdue each other ...'

The eye which moves over those 'events' is a prejudiced judge. It has obtained its education inside the very institution — the state — whose life brought about the piece of world history under investigation. The most vital skill taught at that school was how to

distinguish between what is contingent and what is generally valid. For that, it had to acquire a basic knowledge of the principles according to which the institution is run, as well as the kind of thinking to which these principles appear necessary. This notion of 'what is' then formed the general yardstick, used to measure any particular case. Only what complied to it could be called true and valid. The philosopher and the historian are such prejudiced judges. Trained by the given in this way, they can see *one* side only.

At all times, however, there is *another* side, distinct from the one that science can grasp, and as long as the human being creates these monsters, there will always be *two* sides to history. Even someone who exults in the divine law of the market and the eternal value of money will give presents, do somebody an unpaid favour, that is, will turn his or her back on the battlefield of our quiet everyday warfare. Huckleberry Finn rescued himself and his friend Jim from the claws of slavery. And so too, in the fully armoured war of guns, tanks, bombs, blood and mud, there is never one side only. Here, too, there are people who revolt, who jump out, who cry: 'No!'

We want to look at such an event of rejection, one which is part of the author's memory. In order to appreciate it fully, we have to place it into its historical context of World War I. It must have taken place in the middle of the madness of the 'Western Front'. The history of warfare had been described many times as an insatiable gullet devouring human lives. Only now, however, did modern technology reveal the true potential for horror. The German offensive had come to a halt just outside Paris, on the river Marne. Each side set out to fortify its defensive position. Soon, two parallel lines of trenches stretched from the North Sea to the Swiss Alps and were hardly to budge for the following three-and-a-half years. Incessant bombardment, over days and weeks, aimed at softening up the enemy and providing the opportunity for a breakthrough. Then, waves of soldiers would climb out of the sludge, out of the rat-infested ditches into the 'no-man's land' of death, to be felled by the storm of machine-gun fire. When the Germans tried to break the line at Verdun in 1916, two million lives were thus consumed, one million mutilated. The British counter-attack left 420,000 on that 'slaughterbench of nations'.

In the mid-60s, when I spent my mornings in the nursery, our family lived in a block of flats in Essen, on an estate owned by the company where my father was employed. The building's basement contained a communal laundry; and it was there that I caught the story which one housewife told another. Even though a small child, I was vividly struck by it. The storyteller's grandfather had been a soldier during the Great War. So close were the hostile trenches, that the men at the front opposed the enemy face to face. The grandfather, on the look-out for yet another target, did not shoot when he found

one. He had not run out of ammunition; and neither had the enemy. At that moment, they just could not shoot. The deadly enemies slowly rose, moved towards each other, embraced each other. The one who should have been the grandfather's killer, removed a ring from his finger and passed it over to him, sliding it onto his finger. After that, they returned to their units. The ring had been passed down to the son of the recipient, who handed it down to his daughter, our neighbour. She had never taken it off. I still remember its solid, manly shape and blue seal. Since then, whenever the topic of war came up, I remembered the story, and thought to myself 'I know what it is, war'.

This is all the author will ever know about the two soldiers. Since our neighbour was German, it is likely that this was also the nationality of her grandfather. As to the other soldier, we cannot know what passport he carried — French, Belgian, British. And none of this matters. We don't know whether they survived the war. The ring could have been brought home by a comrade, by another link in this bit of history. If they did return, we will never know how the recounted event shaped the rest of their lives, or how they fared through the next world-catastrophe which seemed to throttle, for ever, any hope of a decent human life. Was their experience something that, from then on, made them see everything in a different light? Or did it remain an incomprehensible occurrence, disconnected from the rest of their lives? Did they bury it in silence, as we do with so many of our memories? Could they ever again be sucked into that metamorphosis of man into beast? We will never know. What we do know, however, is that the horror they rejected went on, took no notice of them — and returned many times.

We had as little trouble skidding into the disasters of the 20th century as we had with the making of our previous history. We didn't need to think about it, nor would our usual kind of thinking have been able to make any significant difference. Our history more or less happened to us. Growing into a given set-up of the world, we just fit in, learn the rules, continue the same logic, as if our history were a process in which we were continually being swallowed by the monster that we ourselves kept on making. The question is, how can we think about all this? What can the highest achievement of thinking, philosophy, say to it?

Aristotle, the Hegel of the ancient world, must be silent. His world was too different from the modern one. The monster was still in its infancy then. Compared to its later nature, it was timid and docile, even lovely. 'The Philosopher' scientifically captured this product of humankind's own making, so that it was there for other men of lofty thought to look at. By *thinking* about it, they could be reconciled to a spiritless world, while the rest of humanity simply and thoughtlessly continued living in the absence of truth. But in modernity, and in the

20th century in particular, life in the absence of truth means living in the presence of monstrosity. Can philosophy reconcile us to this?

III

TO BEGIN with, let us remind ourselves what the highest kind of knowledge, scientific knowledge, was for Aristotle. For him, the key to open it up was the question 'why?' Through this question, thinking was guided towards the *cause* of whatever it was that it wanted to know. This is the highest kind of knowledge, knowledge that is founded in something else, its cause. This foundation has to be known if one really wants to know the thing that rests upon it. It is through this foundation that knowledge is general, and has the power to be shared by all. This power rules over any individual case. Only through this generality, can the truth of the single instance be shown, 'demonstrated'.

But how do we know that we know the cause? How do we know that what we think the cause to be, does indeed stand in the relation of cause and necessity to the thing we seek to grasp? How do we know that, in taking something to be the cause, we have not fallen prey to passing fashion, mere opinion-mongering, portraying the world in a shape that suits greed, brute power and cheap desire? Ignorant, of course, of the deep quagmire through which we have to wade today to acquire any knowledge at all, Aristotle already knew that the answer to those questions lay in *form*. This form alone could show whether the question 'why?' was adequately answered. Only through this form, could you tell whether something in your head appertained to knowledge rather than opinion. Aristotle simultaneously discovered two things: the syllogism as a form of thought, existing alongside other forms, and the prime importance that this form has for knowledge. For him, and for the more than twenty centuries which separated him from Hegel, it was thought that 'demonstration' was bound to syllogism, and only occurred in that form. Let us look again at the central passage from Aristotle that we quoted earlier (page 47):

> A syllogism is discourse in which, certain things being stated, something other than what is stated follows of necessity from their being so. I mean by the last phrase that they produce the consequence, and by this, that no further term is required from without in order to make the consequence necessary. (AnPr, 24b)

Within the syllogism, knowledge grows, so to speak, before your eyes. Out of certain 'statements', as a ground, another statement, the consequence, follows, and has to follow. That is, when the consequence has been produced in this way, two things are known at the same time: the content stated, and its necessity, which derives from the form. The consequence is knowledge that does not only

know the content of itself, but also knows that it is necessarily true. The consequence shows what is true of necessity. It can therefore never be mere opinion — philosophy's foe — but is *demonstrated* knowledge.

Hegel freed demonstration from the rigid form of syllogism. Not mercy, but the urgent demand for a logic for incongruous modern life, led him to accomplish this. Demonstration will still be the hallmark of scientific knowledge. But the flow of necessity, the movement in which truth produces, or 'construes', itself, will now have to be all-encompassing. It will thus create an entire system.

In the preface to the first edition of his Science of Logic, Hegel sums up his brief outline of dialectic in this way:

> I maintain that it is this self-construing method (auf diesem *sich selbst konstruierenden Wege*) alone which enables philosophy to be an objective, demonstrated science (*objektive, demonstrierte Wissenschaft*). (SL, p 28)

The aim of philosophy is to be an 'objective, demonstrated science'. Until Hegel, it had not yet attained this as a whole. Philosophy will reach its objective, when it lets itself be formed by the 'self-construing method'. The demonstrated knowledge of the consequence was 'self-construed'. It had been arrived at by the movement which flows from the premisses into the result, without the assistance of, or reliance on, any outside means. Only a truth which construed itself can resist being deviated or twisted or manipulated in any way. Philosophy, as whole, can therefore only be a demonstrated science if it, as a whole, is self-construed.

The 'self-construing method' is a method in an uncommon sense of the word. In this quotation, it might, at first sight, be misleading to translate the German *Weg*, meaning 'path, way', by 'method'. Etymologically, however, 'method' contains the meaning of 'path', deriving from Greek *meta-hodos*, 'along, according to a path or way'. The translation is also justified with reference to other places where Hegel himself is talking about the 'dialectical *method*' (*Methode*, rather than *Weg*). But in his special sense of the word, this 'method' has nothing to do with the usual understanding of the term. This implies the triad: scientist, something to be investigated, and method of investigation. The latter is chosen by the scientist as the best one suited to do the required job, from the toolbox in which he carries the various procedures around with him, ready for application. Hegel's method, however, cannot be carried around. A truth that construes itself does not have to wait until the mechanic is ready. Demonstration cannot be applied. Hegel's method is the movement which belongs to what is under consideration.

And consideration it is indeed. The movement of truth is just

being watched. The premisses don't need to be worked on by any tool, especially selected for the task to skilfully extract their truth, the conclusion, from them. Quite the opposite, you consider the premisses and out of themselves, driven by their own necessity, they lead you to their truth, contained in them. Only such 'self-construing' assures that the explicated form truly reveals the truth that was implied before.

Method in general might be divided into two 'moments': beginning and procedure. In syllogism, the premisses are the beginning, and the conclusion is the outcome of the procedure. But where, in modernity, is there any firmness to be relied upon? The truth of the premisses has been shattered. Once the community's life is no longer based on shared firm premisses, there is nowhere for the syllogism to begin. The form of premiss has now become unacceptable as the foundation for firm truth. And a demonstrated truth, a truth that wants to construe itself, must now first of all construe its own premisses. With Hegel, therefore, the path of self-construction does not merely stretch that tiny step from premisses to conclusion, but over the immeasurable distance from the very beginning of an entire system to its all-comprising completion of unfolded truth.

Where, then, can this self-construing procedure find its starting-point in truth-corroding modernity? Don't we always begin in the wrong place? How would we know which is the right one? If we begin in a place which contains falsehood, can the procedure still guide us to truth? It seems as if, for this method, everything depended on the beginning.

Even though the beginning is of paramount importance in all of Hegel's works, it is only in the Science of Logic that he dedicates a separate chapter to it: 'With What Must the Science Begin?' Its key-passage will help us understand what the beginning is.

> If earlier abstract thought was interested in the principle [*Prinzip*] only as content, but in the course of philosophical development has been impelled to pay attention to the other side, to the behaviour of the cognitive process, this implies that the *subjective* act has also been grasped as an *essential* moment of objective truth, and this brings with it the need to unite the method with the content, the form with the principle. Thus the principle ought also to be the beginning, and what is the first for thought ought to be the first in the *process* of thinking. (SL, p 67f)

The term 'principle' is just a more learned word for what we are talking about: the 'beginning'. It is the first or origin from which other things ensue. Hegel indicates that the history of philosophy developed two basic ways of taking this principle or beginning. For

the immediate conclusion that he draws from these two ways, it does not matter at what point they emerged within the evolution of philosophical thought. On the one hand, the principle was taken to be something that could be a 'content' for thinking, something that could be looked at as an *object*, a thing existing independently of the thinker. On the other hand, the principle was seen to lie on the side of the subject. Truth was equally dependent on the way in which the thinker thought about it.

From the observation of these two differing principles, Hegel, then, derives 'the need to unite' them. He expresses the unification in two ways: the unification of 'the method with the content' and of 'the form with the principle'. Each brings the subjective and the objective side together. 'Method' and 'form' stand for the subject; 'content' and 'principle' for the object.

But it is only in the second sentence of the quotation, that we get to know how this unification of subject and object is to come about: through the beginning. In Hegel's thinking, the beginning is the source of both objective and subjective truth; each does not have its own beginning, for 'what is the first for thought ought to be the first in the *process* of thinking.' What is 'for thought' is the content, what thinking is *about*. In thinking, there is a first thing, the thing with which thinking begins. This thing can be picked at random. One might start thinking about the state, another about money, a third about the free will. And in the 'process of thinking', too, there is a first. This would be a thought from which thinking can only move 'forward', but not 'backward'. For Aristotle, primary premisses were thoughts which could form a starting-point only, they could not themselves be a result; it was nonsense to ask why the definition of a thing was what it was.

Take someone who begins to think about money. From this point of departure, there are an innumerable amount of ways 'forward' for thinking. He might think about why some people are rich, while others are poor, he might think about how to calculate the speed with which it circulates, he might think that the world could only be rescued by abolishing it. From the starting-point of money, there is no necessity for thinking to move in any particular direction. And so with any other arbitrarily chosen starting-point. This *subjective* beginning is laid down in the spontaneous whim of the moment. It does not begin with the *objective* beginning. Objective truth, the equivalent of Aristotle's conclusion, can only come from such an objective beginning, the equivalent of his premisses.

According to Hegel, the fortuity of the subjective beginning has to be overcome by placing it at the objective beginning. What is the first on the side of content should be the first on the side of thinking. That is, there is a point to begin where these two sides are joined together. What is the earlier, prior, first, *for* thinking, what your thought is

about, must also be the starting point for the process of thinking itself, must be the first form of thinking, the form in which thought begins its movement. Before this beginning *you* cannot *think* anything: this is the beginning of the subjective side. At the same time, this is also the beginning of the objective side: before this, there is *nothing* that could be *thought of*.

> Thus the beginning must be an *absolute*, or what is synonymous here, an *abstract* beginning; it must not *presuppose anything*, must not be mediated by anything nor have a ground; rather it is to be itself the ground of the entire science. (SL, p 70)

The beginning of science has to be absolute, so that nothing can come before it. This can be achieved when the beginning is so abstract, that there is no form of thinking which may precede it. It is the ground out of which the content of the science unfolds, without being itself the result of any previous process of unfolding. This is the point in which objective and subjective beginning would be united. And it is the only foundation out of which science can self-construe itself.

If this beginning is called 'abstract', we must now do some work in order to understand Hegel's meaning of 'abstract' and its opposite, 'concrete'. We will see that the pair, *beginning* and *procedure*, is somewhat parallel to the pair: *abstract* and *concrete*. However, great caution is needed. For Hegel's understanding of this latter pair is the opposite of both their common and their pre-Hegelian meanings. In order to follow Hegel, we first have to take a look at their prior meaning, then at their Hegelian one.

In general logic there is something called 'the hierarchy of notions', which we have already encountered while discussing Aristotle. A brief exploration of it will help us to see our problem more clearly. ('Notion' here has to be understood in a looser sense than Hegel.) In this context, the relatively 'higher' notion is called 'genus', the relatively 'lower' one 'species', and the 'lowest' one would be an individual exemplar of the species. Each genus comprises several species, and each species, side-by-side with another, or several other species, is contained in a genus. Within this hierarchy, the 'lower' a notion, the more *concrete* it is, and the 'higher' a notion, the more *abstract* it is. Genus is more abstract than species, species is more concrete than genus.

Take cats: they might, for example, be subdivided into 'wild' and 'domestic'. To the first genus, 'wild cats', would belong the species 'lion'. As a genus, this might, in turn, be split up into more concrete classes, different kinds of lion. In the other direction, 'cat', as a species, is included in even more abstract groups, that of 'mammal', say, which is itself a division of 'animal'. A certain small species of

lion, only to be found in some remote area of Africa, is a very concrete member within this structure, 'animal' the most abstract. Accordingly, a very abstract notion does not say much, but it says it about a lot of things. Thus, a spider and a dinosaur are just as much an 'animal' as a lion is. 'Animal', being a very abstract notion, covers a huge range of different kinds; it can, therefore, not tell us anything very specific about any of them. On the other hand, a very concrete notion may say a huge lot, but about very few things only. Thus, among the genus 'lion', we may single out the small species of 'Abyssinian lion'. This would be a fairly specific notion, but it would refer to only a small number of animals.

Abstraction as implied in this picture is still important in Kant's thinking. For him, it is one of the three activities (*Handlungen*) of understanding which are necessary to transform representation (*Vorstellung*) into notion (*Begriff*). (Kant, Logic, paragraph 6. The other two activities of understanding are 'comparison' and 'reflexion'.) Abstraction is the activity of disregarding the differences between the items which are to be comprised within a species. Kant therefore says that 'abstract notions' should much rather be called '*abstracting* notions'. (Ibid, Remark 2)

Thinking concerned with abstraction moves along characteristic 'marks' of things. In the Introduction to his Logic, Kant says that we only cognise things through such characteristic marks, for it is understanding which orders things according to them: '... all our concepts are marks, and all thinking is nothing other than representing through marks.' (Introduction, Section VIII) And the essence of a thing is thus just a certain combination of marks, first, those marks which make up the genus, then, the one mark which characterises its difference from all the other entities that are gathered together in that genus (the *differentia specifica*).

If abstracting thinking goes to work in order to transform representation into notion, it sets out from a first, given representation in the head, which, in pre-Hegelian terminology is viewed as 'concrete'. Then, abstracting thinking leaves aside whatever inessentials it finds in this beginning and draws out the characteristic marks to attain the 'abstract notion' that it is aiming for. It can go on abstracting from abstractions until it has produced a whole hierarchy of notions. The further this process has proceeded, the fewer marks remain. The content becomes increasingly empty, contentless, that is, abstract. The hierarchy of notions just referred to is but a congealed structure into which the result of this abstracting thinking has been frozen. That structure was crowned by 'animal', the notion containing the fewest marks, having abstracted from many oppositions.

However much an abstract mind may dazzle us, by removing the cloud from in front of our eyes, its scientific foundation is built on

shifting ground. Two irredeemable shortcomings prevent it from being truly scientific. How does it decide on its beginning? It can begin to abstract merrily from whatever concrete given it may stumble upon. And, further, what are its criteria for selecting certain marks rather than others? Abstraction simply takes away certain determinations from what is given to it. But on what grounds does it choose them? Abstraction can never get out of these accidental circumstances. And science must not depend on personal discretion. As a starting-point for self-construing truth, this just wouldn't do.

> *External* negation — and this is what abstraction is — only *lifts* the determinatenesses of being *off* from what is left over as essence; it always only puts them, so to speak, in some other place, but leaves them as beings as much as ever. But in this way, ... essence is *through an other*, the external, abstracting reflection; and it is *for an other*, namely for abstraction and, in general, for the being that remains there facing it. In its determination, therefore, it [the essence] is the lack of determination [determinatelessness], dead and empty in itself. (SL, p 390)

For Hegel, abstraction embodies that concept of method to which his whole thinking is opposed. This method takes for granted a given subject matter as well as the authority of the investigating mind. It is linked to the understanding that the truth of a thing is gained by operating upon it with the appropriate tool. But when abstraction has cut out some features and transported them elsewhere, thinking is merely left with *two* items, where previously there was only one. It is now confronted both with the initial object, and with whatever has been dissected from it. Out of one uncomprehended given, abstraction has made two. This numerical alteration does not touch the relation of opposition between thinking and whatever it is thinking about. The object of thought remains foreign to the mind.

In contradistinction to abstraction, Hegel's method corresponds to the picture, which he employs in many places, of a plant growing out of a seed. Truth grows out of a first given, when its abstractness, spiritlessness, is transformed into concreteness, which is the form in which spirit shows itself. The activity of thinking changes what was immediate into notion. It reshapes the *whole* of its initial object, not by taking certain features of it away, leaving others behind, but by bringing forth what it contains. Thinking is thus *explication*. It is the process of unfolding what is contained in its own object of thought, just as the growth of a plant makes visible what is in the seed, in an invisible form. If thinking looks the other way, looking to see where its unfolded results come from, it will find them *implied* in what went before. Both explication and implication refer to the Latin *plicare*, 'to

fold'. With their prefixes, they signify to 'enfold' and to 'unfold'. Implication contains the result folded in, wrapped up; the converse, explication, has unfolded and deployed what was wrapped up. As long as reason is in the state of being folded in, and wrapped up, it is latent and potential; it is there, and yet not there; there, but not seen, not yet there for reason and thinking.

The self-construing path of truth that Hegel is looking for, and his idea of reconciliation, are not two different things somehow stuck together. They are one and the same. Reconciliation could not be added on to abstraction, for example. Nor would it be possible for Hegel's method to be just a way of thinking, without reconciliation. The shortcoming of an operation like abstraction does not lie in the fact that reconciliation cannot be added on to it; abstraction is scientifically untenable, says Hegel. Only a method which is scientifically sound, producing true science, will reconcile us to reality. For only with such a method can we be certain to grasp the world. And the meaning of reconciliation is this full grasp of the world, certainty about its necessity. Necessity shows us the rose in the cross of the present, for it reveals to us what matters, and discards what is of no consequence.

It is the dignity of freedom that it alone reconciles itself to a world which is worthy. And the world is worthy only if it is the work of spirit, if reason is at its heart. Then the world is the result of reason acting in it, making it what it is. When we can see this, then, the cross of our times is not only suffering, but the source, and the only source, of delight, too. For this reconciliation to happen, thinking has to discover reason *in* the world; the notion has to be grasped *within* the manifold, not as removed, abstracted from it. The notion has to be alive, not dead. Thus reconciliation needs a method which gives life and spirit to abstraction.

How can thinking move *towards* or *into* what is given to it, or what confronts it? Certainly not by means of abstraction. Lifting certain features off the given leads in the opposite direction, *away* from the given. Its extracts become thinner and thinner, until, in the end, it is left with the *caput mortuum*, the residuum after distillation, a worthless matter left over, for which there is no use. (Cf Hegel, Enc, paragraph 112.) What can thinking grasp of the world, if its highest result has led it away from it, as far as possible? The 'flight of abstraction', running away from reality, can never reconcile itself to what it turns its back on (cf ibid, paragraph 159).

With Hegel's philosophy, everything depends on the beginning being absolute and presupposing nothing. Thinking must begin at the point from where the whole truth can evolve out of itself, unblurred by contingency. He calls this beginning 'abstract'. But we have just seen that, before Hegel, abstractions were considered to be a *result* of thinking, *not* its starting-point. How is it possible to begin at the end?

How did philosophy before Hegel manage to end at the beginning?

It remains true that abstractions are a *result* of thinking. But once they have been arrived at, thinking does not have to go through the whole process of abstracting each time. In fact, thinking could not make any advance if it had to do so. When abstractions have been made, they exist, and henceforth they can be encountered ready-made. There can be no doubt about the existence of concepts like 'cat', or 'animal', of 'money', or 'state'. Nonetheless, it also remains true that they *are* abstract, empty. And this is why we can no longer be satisfied with merely forging more abstractions. We have to begin thinking about their meaning.

> The manner of study in ancient times differed from that of the modern age in that the former was the proper shaping of natural consciousness. Putting itself to the test at every point of its existence, and philosophising about everything it came across, it made itself into a generality that was active through and through. In modern times, however, the individual finds the abstract form ready-made. ... Hence the task nowadays consists not so much in purging the individual of the immediate sensuous mode, and making it into a substance that is being thought and that thinks, but rather in the opposite, in actualising and giving spirit to the general by removing [sublating, *Aufheben*] the fixed, determinate thoughts ... through this movement the pure thoughts become *notions*, and are only now what they are in truth ... (Phen, Preface, paragraph 22, p 19f)

Philosophy sets in when the community goes under, when the living whole is falling apart and generality is no longer lived. The first task for thinking must therefore be to create a new kind of generality. Philosophy is 'reconciliation of ruin'. 'When it appears with its abstractions, painting grey in grey, then the freshness of youth, of life, has already gone'. (See section I of this part.) When spirit has fled, and generality is no longer lived, thought can only follow spirit. The outcome is that thought can then only produce a generality which is based on the difference between the essence of what something is and the accidental shapes in which this essence might appear. Thinking first accomplishes this task by way of abstractions. They 'shaped' 'natural consciousness' by 'purging' it of the 'immediate sensuous mode'. In modern times, however, they are as spiritless as the world from which spirit has fled. The task for philosophy in Hegel's time is therefore a new one. It has to 'give spirit' to these dead abstractions. And it does this through 'sublating' their 'fixity' and 'determinateness', thereby transforming them into '*notions*'.

The shape of each of Hegel's works is not just suited to its particular subject matter and no other. It is the outcome of one and

the same method, followed throughout his works. Talking about method in the Introduction to his Science of Logic, he says: 'In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* I have set up an example of this method in application to a more concrete object, namely consciousness.' Later, he continued this sentence in a footnote: 'And subsequently [I have set up an example of this method in application] to the other concrete objects and corresponding departments of philosophy.' (SL, p 53f. By then, the Philosophy of Right was also to be counted among these examples of his method.)

Each of Hegel's major works takes its shape from the method of self-construing truth. They all, therefore, depend on the right beginning. Hegel always prepares it most carefully, claiming to take nothing for granted and not to depend on any presuppositions. Thus, it is absolutely vital to know how to discover this beginning. If the starting-point must not rest on a presupposition, or be one, what could the method possibly be? And if there is a way to find the right beginning, this path itself must begin somewhere.

In the Philosophy of Right, the beginning of the unfolding truth is the *will*. Out of this is going to be demonstrated the necessity of — among other things — private property, civil society, the state which guarantees that both of these survive, and the war between such reconcilers, where the ferocity that the state tries to contain, has to be directed outwards.

How exactly does Hegel find this beginning? In order to try to answer this question, we must look at the Introduction to the Philosophy of Right. Once we are in the main body of the treatise itself, setting off with the notion of private property, we find ourselves already in the middle of the unfolding, or the procedure, and the beginning is presupposed. The Introduction comprises thirty-two paragraphs. While the first three say something in general about right and its philosophy, the fourth introduces the beginning that we are looking for. After that, the remainder of the Introduction is almost all about the will. But the questions *why* the will is the beginning, and *how* this beginning was found, are conspicuously absent.

This is the whole of the main text of the paragraph which interests us, paragraph four:

> The basis [*Boden*] of right is, generally, the *realm of spirit* and, more precisely, its location and point of departure [*Ausgangspunkt*] is the *will*; the will is *free*, so that freedom constitutes its substance and determination and the system of right is the realm of actualised freedom [*verwirklichte Freiheit*], the world of spirit produced from within itself as a 'second nature'. (PhR, paragraph 4)

The German *Boden* is a more concrete word than the English *basis*. It means the firm ground on which something rests, on which we stand with our feet, and also the earth which plants need to grow. For right, this nourishing 'earth' out of which it grows, is the spiritual. Just as you could not have a field of wheat without the appropriate earth, you cannot have the development of right without its proper ground: 'the realm of spirit'. To speak about 'natural right' is, therefore, on this view, a concept of two components, one of which contradicts the other. Nature has nothing to do with right. Only the human being, as a spiritual being, can have, and must have, a realm of right. 'More precisely', Hegel goes on, within that 'realm of spirit', it is the *will* which is the 'point of departure' of right. Spirit exists in many forms; but, on the level of the individual, the energy to carry it out into the world, is the will. The will drives the subject to its actions.

Then, Hegel goes on to state what is the essence of the will: freedom. For Hegel, freedom is nothing like the mere possession of options, licensing any whim, good or bad. Freedom is active spirit, which only lives through actualising itself. Thus, the will is not only free at its root, but also in the fruit that it brings forth. The will also has freedom as its 'determination'. Freedom is the aim of the will's activity. Freedom actualises itself by creating freedom. This creation transfers freedom from its subjective into its objective form; from being a purpose in the mind, to its realisation in the outside world. Thus, if 'the system of right' is what the will creates, then this must be 'the realm of actualised freedom'. And if the will is the 'absolute beginning' to the realm of right, then this realm must be a *system*. For nothing that belongs to right can come to it from outside the process that unfolds from the absolute beginning.

'Actualised freedom' [*verwirklichte Freiheit*] reminds us of a passage in the Preface to the Philosophy of Right, discussed in the Introduction: 'What is reasonable, is actual; and what is actual, is reasonable'. Through the will, freedom is made actual. But not everything with which the will clutters the world will be actual. Only those actions which take place within the system of right are actual. All the rest, whether they stem from the beauty or from the ugliness of the human heart, are insignificant, nothing. Outside the realm of right, as actualised freedom, there is no reason and no actuality. But before we can make a decision as to whether any particular realisation of the will partakes in the actuality of freedom or not, we must know this whole system of right. Only knowledge of the whole system, of reason as a whole, gives us the measure whereby we can judge a single action. This knowledge is reconciliation. It is itself the means to decide between what counts and what doesn't.

At this point, we may or may not agree with Hegel that the system of right flows out of the will. But what we want to find out about here is how Hegel got hold of that beginning. How did he know he would be able to show the system of right as deriving from the will? Hegel does not offer any further assistance in answering this question. In fact, in none of his works does he disclose just *how* he found the beginning. He does, however, say that the *proof* of any preliminary statement will be the procedure and the whole system itself.

From the very beginning of the book, it is Hegel's aim to grasp the highest achievement of that actualisation of freedom. As he says in the Preface: 'Thus this treatise ... shall be nothing but the attempt *to comprehend and portray the state as something reasonable in itself*.' (PhR, p 21) Before Hegel knows the will as the point of departure for his task, he must know his task, his aim. It is only possible to find a beginning if one knows the aim: beginning for what? But this shifts the beginning away from what we first thought it was. Now the *aim* is the real beginning. To fix an aim comes first. Then comes the process of trying to get there. The problem of finding a beginning for the journey comes *second*. What, so far, we took the beginning to be, presupposes a prior beginning.

According to Hegel, his method consists of a) the absolute, or abstract, beginning, and b) the procedure by which this abstraction self-construes itself into concreteness, truth. His method unfolds the system of right from the will, as the beginning, to the state, as the result. This method, however, is silent about the vital step from the formulation of the aim, to settling on the point where you must start in order to realise it.

For many centuries, Western society has lived and developed under a state, in a state, with a state, through a state. The 'state' is an age-old abstraction. It is an abstraction lived; an abstract form, resulting out of how we live, and deciding about what form our lives take. The 'state' is also an abstract thought, representing our abstract life to us. In a way, in an abstract way, everybody 'knows' what the state is. But this 'knowledge' is an acquaintance which does not entail a grasp of its essence. When it comes to comprehending, explaining or demonstrating what the state really is, in its concreteness, when it comes to showing its necessity, common knowledge has to give up. Thus, out of itself, abstract life produces the need for philosophy.

When philosophy was first called upon, it encountered a community breaking apart into abstract forms. An abstract formalism began to reign over what once was a living generality. When spirit has taken its home somewhere else, people begin to perform what are merely spiritless abstractions. Obeying their command is indeed so devoid of spirit that, while they are being carried out, it is impossible to *know* them. Thus, philosophy, the reconciliation of ruin, had to

arise. It was then faced with abstractions lived, and its work consisted in forging corresponding abstract thoughts. After the destruction of the community had killed living thinking, thinking had no option but to operate with the dead bodies of abstract thoughts.

Modern philosophy, on the other hand, comes across these abstract thoughts ready-made. But it finds them in no order whatsoever; it encounters a gigantic, amorphous heap of abstractions. They claim to be the product of thought, yet they can make sense of our world no more. They say they are notions, yet they cannot even tell us about their own necessity. The function of philosophy in modernity, therefore, differs from that of ancient philosophy. In Hegel's time, philosophy had to transform abstraction and mere acquaintance into true comprehension or concreteness. Thus, the Philosophy of Right is Hegel's attempt to fill with meaning the emptiness of the abstraction 'state', to 'portray the state as something reasonable in itself'.

Now, again, the beginning has shifted further back. At first, it was 'the will', the starting-point of the Philosophy of Right. Then, it came to be 'the state', the apex of comprehension that the Philosophy of Right set out to complete, and for the completion of which it had found the will as its point of departure. Now, the beginning turns out to be 'abstraction'. Not any one abstraction, but the fact that thinking in general is clogged up with this heap of abstractions.

If we let our inner eye travel leisurely over some abstract idea of the realm of right, what will it meet? 'Law', 'police', perhaps, or 'money', 'wages', 'parliament', 'unemployment', 'human rights', 'property', 'state', 'duty', 'war', 'crime', 'family', 'citizen', 'prison' — all manner of things. What a monstrous heap this is! What sense are we to make of such random enumeration? To suppose that these sounds were notions, would be violence against thinking. To even hope that, with some luck, they might have outlined the realm of right, would be barbaric. They are vapour, empty words. Everybody can understand by them whatever they happen to have in their heads. They don't show anything, don't lead anywhere. If we are lucky enough to be able to define those abstractions, they can be used in syllogisms. But within that form, they only tautologically prove themselves. Even in this, their highest achievement, they cannot explain where they come from: the premisses have to be taken for granted, a given, coming from outside the form of the syllogism. The real meaning of the premisses, as of any abstractions, remains unknown.

Hegel's tremendous achievement was to have been able to place these abstractions in their own intrinsic order. Then, within the system, one abstraction follows out of the other. The will develops into 'person', as its embodiment. The 'person' has to realise itself in 'private property', without which it cannot be itself. Moving on from there, we get the 'contract', the first form in which two persons come

together and recognise each other. This they do, only through their property, or rather, each recognises the other's property, as something into which another person has put their will. From contract follows 'exchange', with which we have already become familiar through Aristotle. In modernity, which has created a whole social system, this leads to civil society. Hobbes' 'WARRE' described the consequences when private property, the possession of *things*, is the basis of how people relate to each other. Further on in the Philosophy of Right, these antagonistic interests are overcome through the state, whose *curriculum vitae* unfolds in world history and wars between states.

Early on, in the section on private property, Hegel made a remark, (to paragraph 46), briefly listing the most important topics which, of necessity, have to go along with private property: 'Private property: collision, envy, enmity, dispute, wars.' (These remarks are printed in the German Suhrkamp edition, but have not been taken over into the English translation by Nisbet.) Yet the *notion* of these abstractions will only become clear at their *proper place* in the unfolding procedure. The last one mentioned, 'war', finds its place towards the end of the book. Only after having traversed a long path, the procedure brings forth the notion 'war' as the necessary outcome of 'state'.

> The principle of *international law* [*Völkerrecht*], as that *general* right which, in and for itself, ought to have validity between states ..., is that *treaties*, as those entities on which the mutual obligations [*Verbindlichkeiten*] of states depend, ought to be *observed*. But since the principle of their relation is their sovereignty, they exist to that extent in a state of nature in relation to one another. And their rights are *actualised*, not in a general will constituted as a power over them, but in their particular wills. Consequently, that general determination [of international law] remains an *ought* [*Sollen*]. And the condition [of the relation between states] alternates between a relation in accordance with the treaties and their suspension ...
>
> Consequently, insofar as the particular wills do not reach any agreement, conflicts between states can be decided by *war* only. (PhR, paragraphs 333 and 334)

The problem with all these quotations is that they are taken out of the middle of an on-going process of derivation. Therefore, what in them is *a notion*, is for us more like an *abstraction*. To make up for this, we have to understand by 'the state' the *notion* of the state, the highest necessary form into which 'the will' unfolds, as if we had just read straight through the whole Philosophy of Right. The principle of states is sovereignty. That means that each state possesses its own

will and cannot be determined from the outside. This is similar to the first autonomous form that the will gives itself in 'the person'. Each person's drive to acquire possessions leads to 'collision, envy, enmity, dispute, wars'. However, these antagonisms only reign so long as people live in a 'state of nature', that is without a higher institution of right above them. This is the situation that Hobbes described when he said 'to this warre of every man against every man, this is also consequent; that nothing can be Unjust ... Where there is no common Power, there is no Law: where no Law, no Injustice'.

The relation between states, Hegel shows, will always remain in this 'state of nature'. For, above it, there is no higher power of right which may give law to those forms of free will comprised under it. Issues which relate to the interrelation between states, can, of course, be regulated by treaties; but there is no principle which can enforce these. From this it follows that adherence to any international agreements will always have to remain a mere 'ought'. And when the autonomous will of a state decides not to comply to this 'ought', then states have to wage war against each other: 'insofar as the particular wills do not reach any agreement, conflicts ... can be decided by *war* only'. There can't be anything wrong with this. It is logical. It follows of necessity from the notion of 'the state', which itself follows logically, with many intermediary steps, from the notion of 'the will'.

Abstractions are the raw material on which Hegel is working. His answer to their lack of spirit is not a one-by-one analysis, as if to dig out mistakes made in the past. Nor is he providing his own synthesis, sticking them together after his own prophetical insight, telling the world 'thus ought thou to live!' Neither is Hegel objecting to abstractions as such, nor is he trying to retrace how they became abstracted. And he is not offering his own investigation of 'the realm of right' as it is lived.

Rather, Hegel's work shows how those given, ready-made thoughts belonging to right, that have been fixed in the past, *relate to each other*. He does not impute their relation from the outside, but connects them according to their own internal order of how one follows, out of its own nature, from the other. Just as, in the syllogism, the conclusion followed out of the premisses, so 'war', for instance, follows from 'state'. In this this movement, Hegel sees the task of modern philosophy fulfilled, since it removes the fixity of abstractions and breathes spirit into them. (Cf the quotation given above from Phenomenology p 19.) Through this order, these abstractions no longer form a random heap, but a '*system* of right', in which a *logical* relation pertains between them. When it can be shown that they all link up logically among themselves, then each one of them has become *necessary*. We cannot fully grasp any one of them without all the others. Whatever, within the realm of right, is of

necessity, belongs to this system of right. Each notion, through its place within the system, contains this necessity, the knowledge that what it is, it is of necessity. The necessity gained from participating in a system is what turns former abstractions into notions. The movement, path, method by which this is achieved, is 'self-construction'. Nothing comes from without. This procedure flows with the same smoothness as does the conclusion out of the premisses.

What we have found, then, is that there are abstractions and abstractions. Abstractions do not possess a uniform logical status. All abstractions are a potential beginning. Anybody can come along and pick any of them out of the immense heap and begin thinking about it. In this respect, abstractions are all the same. However this is a beginning only in the *subjective* sense. The process of thinking cannot begin anywhere else; wherever thinking sets in, this will be an abstraction. However, thinking can only find the method of self-construction if its subjective beginning is, at the same time, also *a beginning in the objective sense*, and not every abstraction provides an *objective* beginning.

If one wanted to inquire into an abstraction such as 'state' or 'war', for example, then, in order to unfold their full truth and convert them into notions, one would have to begin, not with them, but *somewhere else*. 'State' and 'war', said like that, are a *subjective* beginning. Yet, because they are not also an *objective* beginning, they cannot as such be turned into notions. If you begin with them as abstractions, think hard about them, then even harder, they will not gradually transform themselves into notions. Rather, in order to gain the notions of 'state' and 'war', we would have to know their *objective* beginning, *the will*, and start there. This objective beginning of 'the will' lies somewhere 'before' the subjective beginning of 'state' and 'war'.

Thus, in order to know where to begin with thinking, one has to know *the whole system* to which the thing in question belongs. In order to get to know the notion of the state, one has to know that it is an entity belonging to the system of right. Then one has to know what the scientific beginning of this system is — that is, the beginning which is both objective and subjective. Once 'the will' is found as the true beginning of the system of right, one can finally set out to derive the notion of the state.

Why go through all this struggle, though? Do we really need all this apparatus of notions, logic, self-construction? Why can't we make do with abstractions? If the answer is that Hegel's philosophical system is needed to achieve reconciliation — why do we need reconciliation?

> If the objects are subjectively thought by me, then, my thought is also the notion of the thing ... The ordinary definition of truth is: 'truth is correspondence of representation [*Vorstellung*] with the object.' But the representation itself is only a representation, I am not yet in correspondence with my representation (its content); I represent to myself a house, beams, this is not yet myself — I and the representation of a house are different things. Only in thinking is there true correspondence of the objective and the subjective; *this is me*. (HPh, II, p 150)

The aim of thinking is truth; and thinking is the only way in which truth can be attained. Truth is 'true correspondence of the objective and the subjective'. 'The subjective' simply means 'me', the 'I'. And the 'objective' is whatever is being represented or thought about. Thinking brings these two into 'true correspondence'. When it has done this, you can say about your object of thought: '*this is me*', which is then no longer a representation, but a notion. A full correspondence can only prevail in thinking. Outside thinking, it would not be true for you to refer to an object and say '*this is me*'. A representation is nothing that is in correspondence with me, since it just delivers the world to me, just as it is. And this world is strange to me. However, this is not where things are to be left. This strangeness has to be overcome, so that I won't be a stranger to the content of my own head. And once I'm able to say '*this is me*', the strangeness has been overcome.

The direction of all thinking goes from 'this is not yet myself' to '*this is me*'. From the Hegelian point of view, whatever it is that I might come across in the world, it will always be strange to me if I don't think about it, even if it is only a house and its beams. As a mere representation, this house and its beams are so strange to me that I can't help trying to overcome this strangeness. But nowhere does Hegel go any further and actually carry out the transformation of their — or any similarly banal — representation into a notion. And I wonder what the *notion* of '*house*' and the notion of '*beams*' would be like? Be that as it may, the example highlights the complete strangeness of the world which has been deserted by spirit.

Thinking follows the strangeness of the world. Thinking comes in so as to overcome that strangeness. That is, thinking follows the *ought* that the strangeness *should not be*. I, and the world in which I live, we should not be strangers. We should be in true correspondence. Since, however, we do not live in true correspondence, thinking comes in to rescue life and establish the missing correspondence in thought.

With this, the beginning has shifted away once more. Now, the beginning is the 'ought', the demand that the strangeness in which we live ought not to be. Then, more precisely, we find abstraction as part of the strangeness. Then we set ourselves the aim of turning a particular abstraction into a notion, od discovering the whole system

to which it belongs. Finally, we find the point of departure from which alone it will be possible to unfold the system.

Hegel shows us that society is not quite so forsaken as it might have appeared to us when we first realised that spirit had fled and taken refuge somewhere else. If the world is strange to us, we don't have to leave it at that. Our forms of life are not completely destitute of the notion. Spirit has not really vacated our world: it is *implied* in it. Spirit is in the world in the same form as the whole of a plant is within its seed. Rather than having disappeared, spirit seems to have simply gone into hiding. And its hiding-place is called 'implication'. It is in some place which seems inaccessible to us at first. But through thinking, that is by transforming abstraction into notion, we are able to unfold spirit. Thinking, that is, is an activity which creates forms in which spirit can be present. 'Notion' means the presence of spirit; there cannot be a true notion in which spirit were not present. In the notion, spirit has become fully explicit. No strangeness is left, and I can say: 'this is me'. I know the notion of 'private property', 'civil society', 'state', 'war', when I can say about them: '*this is me*'.

The truth that unfolds along this method, comes out of the way of life to which I belong. But in ordinary life, which is building the world whose truth is attained by my thinking, this truth cannot be known under any circumstances. The everyday is the truthless world, where people live according to abstractions, in ignorance of what they themselves are doing. It is a world in which spirit doesn't show itself. The truth that philosophy gains, is a truth *post factum*, a truth about something *after it has been made.* That is, the making of this truth *must* have taken place in complete ignorance.

With our life activity, we all create this system of right. But we don't know that we do. And even if we knew, we wouldn't understand what it meant. The only thing with which we are acquainted in everyday life is strangeness, abstraction, and we do what it tells us to do. Our slavish acting perpetuates abstraction. And we will never have a chance really to *know* what it is we are doing, creating. Only the philosopher can turn abstraction into notion, ignorance into knowledge. Our way of life, which splits subject from object, me from my world, ensures that whatever we carry out will never really be known by us. Hegel's reconciliation is a kind of thinking. It rescues life in thought. It creates the last form in which spirit can be present. Spirit has fled from the community, and will never return. Thus philosophical reconciliation does not bring spirit back into real life, into real community with people, only into thought.

Both society and philosophy advanced with long strides, from Aristotle to Hobbes, and from Hobbes to Hegel. Hegel, as other German intellectuals, kept in touch with the developments yet to take place in German society, by reading about political economy in

the work of the Scots, Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson. They taught him that what he saw starting in Ancient Greece, and what had gone a long way from there by the time that modernity in Europe began, had since then developed much further. And, on the other hand, the French Revolution and its aftermath, taught him the danger when absolute reason proclaims itself and when attempts to fashion the world. Hegel's response was his philosophy of reconciliation: reason *was in* the world, already. It was not so weak that it needed either you or me to find its proper place in the world. The problem was not to institute reason, but to learn to recognise it as already present in the world. This task required an overall, watertight philosophical system.

After Hegel, and in the twentieth century particularly, history moved on further still. Hegel could represent history as a plant-like growth of unfolding principles. By the end of the twentieth century, history has become a wild gallop, at break-neck speed. Surprisingly, the horse has not quite collapsed yet. But it is significant that there is no longer any philosophy which can comprehend it. For, today's world has made it impossible for any system of thought to live up to its own inherent reconciliatory character. A philosophy worthy of the name must be built on the underlying assumption that reason is in the world, that the reason it discovers is the reason of *the world.* Hegel's own system was unable to hold its ground after his death. Today, such a philosophical grasp of the world is impossible, for philosophical reason can no longer cope with the unreasonableness of this century's world.

The reason for this failure is not that the right bright brain has not yet been born; as if it only required some university department to finish the job of solving one or two outstanding riddles, to attain the new comprehension. No. The task is no longer one for philosophy or scientific thinking. If Hegel lived today, he could not do what he did in his own time, nor could he provide an updated version of it. If he came around again with his former intention of reconciling us to our world, we can only guess his reaction to this century's insanity: to turn his head, and cover his face.

IV

IT IS this uncomprehended reason, displayed so violently in our own century, which compels us to turn back to the story of the two soldiers.

We want to talk about those soldiers' war. Hegel showed us that 'war', spoken just like that, uttered like any other noun, is an abstraction, a mere 'name' he says; although we may easily pronounce it, to comprehend it is quite another matter. But now, we do not want to talk about forms of *words*, nor about their transformation into notions. The soldiers don't just enunciate the word 'war'. They don't waste their lives in a linguistic game; they live the truth of something that a word can only stand for. So, we must find a way of considering that reality which a word only represents. How can we get to what is a matter of real life or death, which abstract thought only pulls together under that abstract term?

It is impossible simply to decide against abstraction, to clear the heap out of the way, to uncover 'un-abstracted reality', 'real life', with no obstacle between you and it. For the reality to which the abstract word refers, is itself abstract. Abstractions can only correctly refer to a reality which is itself *abstract*. If we didn't make our lives follow abstract forms, there would be no reason for abstractions to exist. However, *life* that is dominated by abstraction is *more* than just abstraction. It is abstract, yes, but it is also *life*. And no abstract term can cover this life completely. The *soldiers'* war, *their* life-experience as living members of the war-machine, will never form part of the abstract meaning of 'war'. There is only one way of dis-covering the fire of life, and that is to find the movement *against* abstraction.

The *logical* content of abstractions might be a void without spirit. However, within this absence of logical content, life is struggling to carry out the commands of abstraction. These commands are not empty. To the soldiers living it, the abstraction 'war' has infinitely more to it than a philosopher, pondering over its logical derivation, could see. It wrests their life activity from them, using it as a means to carry out its own rule. It makes them kill; and it kills them. Even if their bodies survive, the war kills something in them. Which man did not return from the field mute, blind, mad, cold? For the soldiers, this abstraction is like fate, sharing out portions of life, and portions of death.

Abstraction can only be concerned with the welfare of its own generality, not with that of the individuals falling under it. It has to disregard their aims and wishes, their hunger for life, their hope, their sadness, their desperation. What they hold dear, is of no worth to the general rule of abstraction. Any human feeling on which it can't put its harness, is unproductive for abstraction and therefore irrelevant;

any human will stepping out of line is an obstacle for it to be overcome. Abstraction lives on the theft of life, the death of millions. How can we believe in a truth that has construed itself out of such an abstraction? How can we trust a method that reaches its culmination in its self-proclaimed truth, reason and good by building a ladder made of these abstractions? For, what abstraction hides from the philosopher is utterly *false* and *unreasonable*.

Abstraction is not a deadly experience which unfavourable circumstances force onto you, but which you might be spared if you are lucky. Abstraction describes our whole way of life, the life that *we all make and live*. The war wasn't fought by the two soldiers only. A state doesn't just consist of a handful of voluntary members. Millions and millions of free people are joined in these gigantic machines, one cogwheel fitting the other, transmitting its action to the other. This is only possible because it is the very same uniform unity of abstraction which holds the parts together, unifying the activity of them all under one purpose. The unity of this purpose defines the role of each part. The overall purpose is abstract to the part. In an abstract form, it is also the part's own purpose. Abstraction sits right inside all of us and governs us from within ourselves. We, 'free' beings, serve to maintain it and act according to its requirements. Within a general abstract form of life, this generality dictates the particulars from inside them. We constantly reinstitute abstractions, because within us, they take on the form of *our own* purpose.

The purpose is part of the individual's consciousness. The purpose *is us*. It sits in our head. It determines our time. It is that part which makes us do whatever we do. It is the object, big or small, to which we dedicate our activity. We cannot be active without the direction of a purpose. However, if we are but the life-blood of abstraction lived, then *our* purpose is *abstraction's* purpose. Our purpose is foreign to us, is not us, so that we are foreign to ourselves. Our purpose is abstracted from us. This alienation is not something 'out there' in the world, it is *within us, in our very being*. If we carry something that is alien to ourselves within us, we cannot be ourselves at all. We are only part of some other 'self', something that doesn't belong to us. There is another word for this: 'insanity'.

This unhealthy state is not confined to individual people's skulls. It is not a pathological condition, affecting an unfortunate few. It simply describes the form in which we all live. Foreign, abstract purposes rule our life. They are given to us by society and history. We learnt them from the way we all live together, from what is considered valid between us. Our relation to each other and our own history are alienated, incompatible with us, determined by a foreign self within us. Is 'insanity' too strong a word?

Life lived within abstract forms is a contradictory life, an inhuman human life. Insofar as the individual makes the subjective experience

of accomplishing a purpose, it must say about the result of its activity: 'this is me'. The subject recognises that it has put something of itself into the world. It has transmitted the purpose from a subjective into an objective form, from inside its head into the world outside its head. However, insofar as the individual is only a part and, as such, cannot shape its own purpose, but is determined in its activity from outside itself, it has to say about whatever it has done: 'this is not me'. The subject carries out the order of a foreign self, lends its life activity to an abstraction. When it looks into the world, it sees the realised purpose of this alien self. In the mirror of abstract forms of life, it sees reflected the abstract purpose of its own foreign self. Life which is led in the grip of abstraction cannot but be deeply contradictory. As a real life lived by somebody, it is a 'this is me'; as a mere outcome of abstraction's rule, it is a 'this is not me'. Both are true at the same time. So long as there are abstractions, there can be no end to this contradictory life.

For a thinker within the tradition of philosophy, however, that contradiction cannot arise. The activity of philosophical thinking is always already separated from any other real life-activity more directly dominated by abstraction. If a philosopher thinks about abstractions, he will only see in them a 'this is not me'. To thinking, abstraction portrays a content without any logical necessity. Abstraction is just a claim without a grasp of what it claims. For thinking, such arbitrariness is meaningless, a 'this is not me'. And because thinking, as a refuge of humanity, does not bow down to the cries of this unknown commander, abstraction can never at the same time also be a 'this is me' for thinking. As long as abstraction is not lived, but only thought, it is solely a 'this is not me'.

But for people who are not philosophers, the world can never present itself merely as an abstract object. The world is always full of themselves, they are always engaged in its making. Thus the world is a 'this is me', the 'object' is through and through '*subjective*'. What the world is for our two soldiers is how they experience it, right there on the battlefield, in the cold mud of the trenches, as the shells, whistling over their heads, play their death-fugue. For the soldiers to know themselves as 'soldiers', means that their whole being — what they see and hear, what they smell and touch, where they go and what they do, the way they think and the way they move — everything is defined by the abstraction 'war'. Every breath the soldiers draw is under the spell of that foreign power. For a philosopher, 'war' is completely external to him, like any other theme on which he might meditate; but for the soldiers, it is part and parcel of every fibre of their very being.

Abstraction means violence. War is not just violent because this is what the word 'war' signifies. 'War' is also violence because it is a rule of abstraction. And where abstraction directs life, violence reigns.

Abstraction is violence against the self which acts, against the other person, and against the world. Abstraction has always already defined the purpose for each and every role an individual might take on in society. The demand of human beings to form their own life and world according to their own purpose, out of human freedom, is strangled by abstraction. Abstraction grants humanity a kind of ready-made freedom, providing just enough room to carry out the ready-made purpose it has imposed on them. Humanity has become abstraction's agent, obligingly following the requirements of its superior, and ignorant of its own human needs. An action dictated by abstraction can never open the door to the other person, nor to the world. Abstraction violates the community and robs humanity of its commonwealth. Under abstraction's rule, the world can only show a foreign face because it has been forcefully moulded into that shape. Looked at in this light, all abstractions, 'war' as much as any other, are alike: avaricious divine rulers which, each in its own realm, prevent people from receiving each other's humanity and creating their lives out of their own freedom.

And yet, however strict a rule is imposed on life, its subjection can never be total. For this suppressed life, the world will always be a 'this is not me'. Life in this alien world, therefore, means living with the constant demand to change, to transform the 'this is not me' into a living 'this is me'. At any time the spontaneity of life can make this demand its own and free itself by the only means possible: rejection.

All at once our two soldiers break into that freedom. Suddenly, each of them relates differently to himself and at the same time to the other man. They jump out of the war, stop relating to each other in accordance with abstraction, break out of the grip of the foreign domination that reigns over them from inside them, overthrow the tyrant in their head, break loose from the grip of abstraction. All at once, the war is no longer recognised, all previous power of its rules, its logic has vanished; there is no enemy any more, no target to be shot at. *This rejection is the birth of the human.* That body in the uniform of the enemy, who was to be eliminated in the name of the fatherland, he is now another human being. He rises to show me that I am human, too. I am a life like his life. He is another myself. He proves to me that I am not a beast and that life is worth *living*. He has shown me something for which I will love him forever. In an instant, I knew that he was my friend.

And in an instant, abstraction is smashed. The moment I can recognise myself in the other person, abstraction has lost the power to determine our relation. To stop recognising abstraction means to reject it both inside and outside the head, both in its spiritual and in its material guise. Rejection must break out of both simultaneously. Each soldier could not have received the gift of the other's humanity while still considering himself the other's executioner. Only through

this mutual recognition of the other's humanity can the world become a 'this is me'. Then, humanity forms its own purpose, and can no longer be subdued by something foreign. The two soldiers could no longer be components of that gigantic juggernaut. They realised that living under the command of that abstraction was inhuman and they erased the squalid shine of its false truth.

The soldiers don't merely refute something, and then float in emptiness. Their jump out of what abstraction has laid out for them, does not make them lose their orientation. On the contrary, the jump gives them back their true, proper, human bearings. The demolition of abstraction brings into view what abstract living had previously hidden. The two soldiers dismiss abstraction by *asserting something else* at the same time; and only because they assert something else, is it possible for them to dismiss abstraction. Their 'No' is also a 'Yes'.

What they put in place of what they refuse, stands in total contradiction to the reality discarded. However, the two sides of this contradiction were, in some way, always simultaneously present. The rule of abstraction materialises itself only through human activity. Abstraction is the alien form in which humanity lives. Inside this alien form is buried the humiliated potential of humanity. The contradiction between abstraction and humanity imposes upon us the need to decide between them. Our dull giving in to the emptiness and inhumanity of our everyday lives decides for one side, while the soldiers' jump decides for the other. At every moment of our life, we are standing at a fork in the road and there is always another way. The beginning of rejection is right here, right now.

Since of two ways, one is chosen in preference to the other, this decision between the two contradictory forms of living, might be described as a *judgement*. The meaning with which this term is used here does not refer to the technique of hollow formal logic, which could never include any such jump for freedom. The judgement of the jump grows out of the experience of a whole human life. Only this experience of real life, made by the whole human being, can lead to that judgement. Only in life, only with human senses, can the contradiction between humanity and inhumanity be felt, and only out of that experience can it be thought. The judgement states that the former way of living simply can't go on. Even just to endure it, has become impossible. The suspicion, which at times befalls us, that there is something rotten in our way of life, has suddenly led to the clear insight that the mould lies right at its heart. At this moment the old forms, that so long seemed to be the whole and only reality, just crumble.

The jump means that the kind of life rejected *should not be*. How is it possible to say that something 'should not be'? How do I know that it shouldn't be? To say that something should not be, implies a comparison. If the comparison results in rejection of one of the items

compared, it must have been conducted according to a given measure. I reject something in favour of something else on certain grounds. These grounds are the measure of my comparison. Where is this measure? If all of a given reality, like the soldiers' war, should not be, where does that leave the measure? It *must* exist, for, otherwise the sentence could not have been passed. And it must exist within reality, since this is all there is. Thus, it exists in the very reality which is going to be rejected. The measure according to which a given way of life is discarded, this measure is given within that life itself. The measure is present in that form of life, but not in the way that the form of life is present. For, when that form of life is rejected, the measure is *not* rejected with it. The measure remains. Before it measures anything or is given any thought, the measure is there. But life does not move according to it; it moves against the measure that it itself contains. In rejection, the measure comes into its own, fulfils itself in a world formed according to it.

The permanent presence of that measure also shows itself in the form of *suffering*. Suffering shows that the given lived reality is deficient, that life is not as it should be. Whatever the abstractions governing life, however eternal they might appear, whatever sense or logic the philosopher may build out of them, suffering says: 'this is not how it should be'. The experience this life offers to a human being does not satisfy its possibilities. It deprives it of what intrinsically belongs to it. Our life mortifies the measure of humanity, and the result is suffering. This points to what should be, but only by implication. When the measure gains its vitality, it rejects its opponent, abstraction. This judgement and conclusion in the deed unfolds what is wrapped up in suffering. Both the jump out of the given and the suffering under it, make apparent the contradiction between our intrinsic humanity, that should be, and the inhumanity in which we live, that should not be. But, drawing a positive conclusion from suffering, the jump goes a step beyond it. The break-out resolves the contradiction of suffering by leaping out of the life which causes that contradiction.

A jump has to land somewhere, on some new ground. The jump of rejection takes us onto the unshakeable ground of the measure of humanity. It shatters inhuman abstraction and opens up the world of human freedom, in which we relate directly to each other, by *recognising humanity in each other*. This recognition is so much more powerful than any definition of roles, abstract purposes, forces of abstraction, that, faced by humanity, they crumble in an instant. The power of rejection lasts generations; it is captured in the ring and in the story; it gripped the son and the granddaughter and they passed it on ...

Philosophy's task is to demonstrate truth, revealing what is necessary in the way we live. The two soldiers show that this

necessity only belongs to abstraction. When freedom and humanity of life give in to the violence of abstraction, then that logical necessity arises. When philosophy demonstrates that this necessity is something that has to be, it puts a seal onto the lock of our prison. The two soldiers indicate that, with the liberation of humanity from the power of abstraction, philosophy will have lost its reason for being.

V

HEGEL WOULD not be too impressed, either with the two soldiers or with our account of their story. For thinking, the whole aim of which is to comprehend the general, it is easy to detect the flaw in the soldiers' feat. Their defiance appears heroic, no doubt, but the time for heroism has long since passed. According to Hegel, a hero was a hero because, as an individual, he had the power to determine generality, the course of history. And, he says, this relation pertained some time in Greek antiquity. If we celebrate the two soldiers' heroism, we celebrate an appearance. For heroes, in that sense of the word, they weren't; they had not the faintest influence on the generality around them. Their deed was futile. Like a swiftly passing puff of air, it had to remain without any consequence for the general climate. What stronger proof of their deed's total nullity can there be, than that *the war went on*? And not only this one, but all the other uncounted massacres of our century. The war, the state, the system of right, the course of world-history — what would they care about those two soldiers? Their break-out was just a drop of water on the hot iron of the war, evaporated in an instant. World-history cannot take note of such accessory incidents.

The two soldiers' jump is hybris. It is a thoughtless outburst of two individuals, who, all of a sudden, stand up in the midst of the surging maelstrom of world-history, shouting: 'Stop! Stop!' Philosophically speaking, the nonsense of this action shows itself in the contradiction of its content whith its form. On the one hand, the jump expresses the intention that there be no war at all, the intention, that is, that the general be different from what it actually is. On the other hand, the *form* in which this intention is expressed, belongs to the particularity of just those two individuals. Therefore, it is a content which is only *for those two*. This is why only the two soldiers are involved in the jump, while the general reality of the war just goes on, and has to go on, as if nothing big had happened.

Our picture of the times when heroes created the world has come to us through the modern reception of the Homeric epics (see Part III). However, the problem with which we are confronted has been developing ever since those heroic days were over. Society became an organism increasingly differentiated within itself. It became a whole, or general, holding together and determining the parts, the lives of individuals. From the point of view of the subject, the problem is that it cannot make the whole, generality. Now, where the individual can no longer shape the rules for the present, as did the hero, the only way to swing itself up onto the level of generality and to participate in it, is to get hold of the whole of which it is a part, by *comprehending* it in thought.

The two soldiers, like any other individual, are but subordinate parts of the whole. Yet, all of a sudden, they discard this whole. But how could their personal dislike for the generality going on around them ever alter that generality? As just said, the content of their action is the intention that the whole be other than it is. But this content is housed in the form of two individual wills only. What, then, relates these two subjects and the whole? The relation between parts and whole is always and for ever that of necessity. This is what the study of philosophy is about. That necessity, however, cannot be established by those parts. The necessity of the parts which flows into them is the necessity of the whole. Anything in the life of the part which is not the outcome of that necessity, is accidental, purely individual, and can, as such, not touch the necessity of the whole. In other words, *there does not exist any form adequate for the content of rejection*. The opposition of individuals to the whole cannot be a formal one. Form and content of rejection must always contradict each other. Therefore, the whole, the idea, doesn't give a damn whether or not some individuals feel the compulsion to stand up against it. It just swallows them up. '[T]he yarn that the individual spins out for itself in its own singularity, cannot be the law for general actuality.' (PhH, p 35) The individual cannot but spin out a yarn for itself if it ignores the whole. In the meantime, the whole remains unperturbed, for it does not depend on the individual's art of storytelling.

By definition, a part is incorporated in a whole; it is a part of the corpus, the body, of a whole, animated by the soul or purpose of the whole. *As part*, however, it cannot *know* that it *is* a part. To know this, it would have to go beyond its part-self. Conversely, *as part*, it cannot know that there is a *whole*, either. To know the whole, the individual must have completely left its part-self behind and traced the movement of necessity, linking up all the various parts in an entire system. Only when it has accomplished this, will it be fully self-conscious and, in Hegel's sense, free. But the part-whole relation is not perceptible to the senses. Necessity cannot be seen. Only the activity of thinking can soar up into that realm of truth. What creates the whole in an individual's head is the *logical* relation which holds the whole together. The war is bound by a *logical* relation to the state; private property is the logical result which follows from the will. Thus, only in thinking can the individual go beyond the restriction of being a part-self. Only thinking is able to grasp that logical reality which makes up the whole. Only in thinking, therefore, has the general content found its adequate general form. In the event between the two soldiers, there is not even an attempt to comprehend the whole. So it has to remain just one of the items tucked away in the drawer of family memorabilia, occasionally, perhaps, brought out to tell a tale.

The problem of the part-whole relation is the reason why, for philosophy, thinking is the only path towards freedom. The whole proceeds anyway. If the individual does not comprehend it, the whole cannot pause in its activity, it must go on despite this ignorance. The human being is then merely used by the whole. It is an unfree means to something else beyond it. Nothing can alter the way of the whole. Nonetheless, thinking can grasp this way, and this changes everything for the individual. For when the individual comprehends the whole, it has made the whole its own. The individual human being then no longer belongs to the order of unconscious tools, but is a knowing participant in reason. Only a human individual who is not being used as an implement is a free human being. As long as the whole is merely using the individual — who ought to be a free being — this relation works like a trick. In good faith, suspecting nothing, individuals go ahead with their own business and concerns, follow their 'passion', while in actuality it is reason, or the whole, which leads *its* life through them. Unwittingly, individuals pay for the maintenance of reason. This is Hegel's 'cunning of reason'.

> The particular interest of passion is thus inseparable from the active development of the general: for it is from the particular and determinate, and from its negation, that the general results. It is the particular which contends with its like, and of which a part is made to perish. It is not the general idea which exposes itself to opposition and combat, exposes itself to danger; it remains in the background, unattacked and uninjured. This is to be called the *cunning of reason* — that it lets the passions work for itself, while that through which it puts itself into existence, suffers loss and damage. For it is appearance, of which one part is of no value, one part affirmative. The particular is mostly too trifling compared with the general, individuals are sacrificed and surrendered. The idea pays the tribute of determinate being [*Dasein*] and perishability, not from itself, but from the passions of individuals. (PhH, p 32f)

When we look at history, the activity of the whole through time, we might regard it as

> the slaughter-bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of states, and the virtue of individuals have been sacrificed. (Hegel, ibid, p 21)

However, according to Hegel, such a view only reveals one's inability to differentiate between the particular and the general. For it is not the general which is being slaughtered. The general cannot be slaughtered; no human weapon can injure reason or logic. Loss occurs

only on the side of the particular. The particular is the form through which generality *appears*; but this itself is not the general, or the idea. For the idea, part of this appearance is 'of no value'. And therefore, rather than being lamentable, its loss only contributes to the idea working itself out. For the life of the idea, that loss is good. And, not being an equal partner, the particular can't haggle with the idea. If the idea's life requires the slaughter of nations, this is not too exacting a price. It is not even a question of whether the costs are justified. The general coming about through this bloodbath just can't consider the loss and suffering of those particulars; this is a logical impossibility.

In the philosopher's eye, what offends human dignity, is not that brutality. For him, the trouble is that the idea behind it is being ignored. And so long as we remain in this ignorance, reason has to *trick* us. If we really and essentially were tools, it would be easy to handle us as such, and the idea would not have to resort to tricks. But in order to use us as tools, we who are *not* tools, reason has to trick us. And the only way in which we can assert our freedom and essential being, and get out of this situation in which we are being tricked, is through the *comprehension* of the whole.

In the heroic times, there was no reason over and above the hero which used and tricked him. The hero determined the general. And when he flooded into the world, he could directly see that it was *his* world, the world *he* had made. In subsequent epochs, where the making of the world is determined for us by the cunning of reason, only the genius can directly grasp it.

> A great mind [*Sinn*], the mind of a Goethe, for instance, has great experiences when it looks into nature or history; it sees what is reasonable and expresses it [*spricht es aus*]. (Enc, paragraph 24, addition 3)

When the world has been made by the whole, it needs the creative power of a genius to grasp it directly. Only the disposition of a 'great mind' safeguards the individual from being tricked by directly grasping the whole through simply looking at reality. However, this apprehension can only lead to a mere *stating*, an 'expressing', of what is reasonable. But a statement is not a demonstration, it is unable to *show* what it states. It lacks necessity, the core of reason. It thus lacks precisely that power which can reconcile us to the world. What is required in order to overcome the problem of alienation, or the problem of the part-whole relation, is *thinking* and, in particular, that specialised field called philosophy:

> The most perfect mode of cognition [*Erkennen*] is that which takes place in the pure form of thinking. Here, the human being relates [to its objects] in a way that is thoroughly free. That the

> form of thinking is the absolute one, and that the truth appears within it as it is in and for itself — this is what philosophy in general asserts. (ibid)

The human being is thoroughly free only in thinking. In this mode, whatever it might be that the human being relates to, the relation will be a free one. In thinking, reason cannot trick the individual. For, reason does not trick itself. When thinking, the human being is not a tool used by a foreign purpose. In thinking, the whole is not only apprehended, but can be fully comprehended in its entire necessity. The noble task of philosophy is to grasp the whole, so that we may no longer be parts of reason's cunning plans, but be free. If philosophy achieves this, it enables us to see reason acting in the world, to recognise the world to be a reasonable whole. We then see the rose in the cross of the present, even if the present is a 'slaughter-bench'. When alienation is overcome in this way, everything has been achieved. Then the part, an individual human being, has acquired true self-knowledge, because it knows itself to be part and it knows the whole of which it is part. This knowledge, arrived at in an individual's head, is then itself the whole.

The soldiers' action is heroic only in appearance. It is not really a heroic deed because it evidently does not create their world. When they look into the world of the war, they cannot recognise it as *their* world. They are being used cunningly by reason, so that it may realise its own purpose through them. Even if they were geniuses, from their position as reason's implements, at the front-line of the war, they would hardly have had the leisure to contemplate 'what is reasonable and express it'. Least of all would they have been able to philosophise about it and thus 'relate' to the war 'in a way that is thoroughly free'. The two soldiers cannot get anywhere near freedom — that is, humanity — and nowhere near the whole — that is, truth. And as proof of the total nullity of their heroism, we need only the assurance of the course of events itself.

VI

THERE IS an important convergence between Hegel and the two soldiers, that is, between reconciliation and rejection: they both have the same beginning. Both reconciliation and rejection begin with the certainty that life, as it is given, is deficient, that it does not live up to the indelible ought of humanity.

This ought is always there. It belongs to what it means to be human. The meaning of humanity is always there. In relation to the real lived life between people, however, it is present in the form of *possibility*. It is always possible for human beings to live humanly. But the contrary is also always possible – that we live inhumanly. Thus, for us, the meaning of humanity is an ought.

This ought is a kind of knowledge. The ought expresses how something has to be, and that is only possible if, in some way, you know how it has to be. But as a possibility and as knowledge, this ought of what it means to be human can lie fallow. Even though it can never disappear as such, it can be neglected, covered over, forgotten. And, normally, our intrinsic ought does get covered by blinding forces within the way we live. These forces themselves are not part of the ought of humanity, and, however overwhelming the size to which they might grow, they will never have the strength to do away with the ought. At any moment, one might, all of a sudden, get reminded of the ought. Then, aware of the striking difference between the ought and the reality around us, the judgement of the deficiency of life is inevitable. Only through this judgement does the truth of our life come into the open.

This judgement might be called 'direct'. It is not a logical judgement in the usual sense of the word, not the result of *thinking*, but of living experience. This judgement is direct, because the ought itself on which it is based is a direct kind of knowledge. One's proper humanity is the only criterion for knowing whether life is human or inhuman. In the certainty of this knowledge, there is nothing between you and your own life-experience. Knowing that there is something essential missing in life is not derived from anything else, not arrived at through any form of thinking. It is an immediate certainty, the possibility of which lies in the kind of beings we humans are.

We honour our human senses if we make things so that they are a pleasure to them. We preserve the dignity of humanity, if we live so that our life is our joy. We cannot first train the humanity of our senses in the abstract, and then, education completed, go and apply it to things. We don't have to be able to define 'humanity', and 'beauty' in general, before we can allow ourselves to be certain about it. We are guided, not by the definition, but by our own intrinsic sense of what it

means to be human.

Both the knowledge of what it means to be human and the certainty of the judgement about life's deficiency are direct. But this directness is of a singular kind. We directly know about our humanity, but only when we are aware of it. When we let this knowledge become clouded over, then this directness is disrupted. The possibility for this direct knowledge is always there; and so is the possibility of its disruption. The disruption is caused by the forces which hold together the whole, and which drag us into our common kind of thinking. We helplessly surrender to the numb everyday, making cowardly adjustments to so-called requirements of the times. We go along with the judgement of the mass of our fellow humans. We betray humanity for a free highway and a few rotten sweets.

But whenever, despite all these tendencies, we manage to catch a glimpse of the ought of humanity, then we have no doubt. We are certain that this life, as it is, is deficient. This judgement begs for a change of circumstances, which would ensure that the judgement would no longer hold true. There are only two ways in which such a change can occur: reconciliation and rejection. They are the only consequences which flow from the certainty that our life is not fulfilling our humanity. But they carry us in opposite directions.

Here, reconciliation stands for philosophy. And philosophy can only proceed through the notion of necessity. In philosophy, nothing can be known directly, in the above sense, as well as necessarily. In philosophy, what we know to be of necessity, we know *indirectly*, we know it to be the outcome of something else. Thus, our certainty of the deficiency of life is not a philosophical truth. The knowledge that something is of necessity what it is, can only be the result of thinking. No beginning can show us necessity, can be a philosophical truth. And, in other words, for thinking every beginning must be abstract. For philosophical thinking it is precisely this abstractness of the world, of our life, which makes them deficient. In order to overcome this deficiency, then, that abstractness has to be transformed into knowledge which knows the necessity of what is. Thus, implicitly, Hegel is guided by a question like this: 'How do I have to think, so that what is given to me, abstractly, is shown to be necessary?'

Guided by this question, Hegel's thinking drives through the strangeness of the world, into its heart, transforming the abstractness into intimate knowledge through the grasp of necessity. Starting with the most abstract notion, and gradually becoming less abstract and more concrete, this necessity has the power to link up the whole of actuality. In this way, truth gets unfolded in form of a system. This system-truth is the truth of how we live, establishing the necessity of what is. It would be a craziness, impossible to endure, if we had to think that our world was what it was by an unalterable necessity, while, at the same time, it humiliated our humanity. If the necessity of the given has been

demonstrated, we *must* believe that it permits us to live up to the measure of our humanity, we must be convinced that it is good. For Hegel, the deficiency of our life turns out to be no more than the incompleteness of the beginning, or the meaninglessness of abstraction. And this deficiency may be overcome by thinking and in thinking. Thus, the world in which we live permits us to live according to the ought of our humanity. When we grasp the necessity of the world in thinking, we are free.

However, for whom can thinking thus rescue life? People live their real lives in that world which, to a philosopher, is only abstract. We live abstract lives; lives which are strange to us. What would have to happen if, all of a sudden, in the midst of our abstract dealings, we had a mind to get to grips with what we were busy doing all the time, without thinking? We would have to do the same thing as a philosopher does. We would have to recreate, in our head, our strange world as a whole held together by necessity. For that, however, a drastic change would first of all be required: we would have to cease being whatever we are and become philosophers. If the two soldiers had felt the urge to comprehend why on earth they had to do all this killing, they would have had to begin to study Hegel's Philosophy of Right. And, if ever they completed their perusal, they would only find that, after all, there was nothing wrong with their occupation. They would just go on killing.

The wish to see one's own abstract life in the light of reason leads us into a vicious circle. To fulfil this wish, one has to leave the normal forms of living behind. But then, if one is able to gain an understanding of those forms, they are no longer the forms in which one lives, but only those forms left behind. If the two soldiers had had that wish, they would have had to step out of the clutches of the abstraction, on whose behalf they were shooting. They would have had to create an object out of the war in which they were engaged, in order to bring its driving character to a halt. This 'war' would then quietly lie in front of them, at a safe distance. This war-object would be a sanitised abstraction, 'war' in a form which rendered it safe for the pondering mind to approach. But then it would no longer be 'the war that governs them' which they were considering. Then, it would only be an empty, lifeless, shrivelled abstraction, the starting point of philosophy, only a word. The war which they are actually involved in, which clutches at their lives, this is something they can never understand. In whichever way abstraction employs us, we have to remain strangers to the task it sets us. As long as we are immersed in the making of this abstract world, we are compelled to remain strangers to ourselves. Thus, for everybody other than the philosopher, this world does not allow us to live up to our humanity. The freedom granted by comprehending the necesssity of what is not actually attainable for any of us.

Under abstraction, we not only live in unfreedom, but under a rule

which has no concern for us. If 'war' requires 10,000 destroyed bodies today, and many more tomorrow, what does it matter? *Abstraction has no measure, no criterion.* Particulars are accidental to it. The extermination of people's happiness, the mutilation of humanity inflicted upon it by living in a world which is strange to it, these mean nothing to abstraction. Humanity is a meaningless word for abstraction. If human life gets into its way, it will be wiped out without mercy.

But why, then, does philosophy build a thought-foundation to this cold power? Contrary to abstraction, philosophy has an implicit criterion of humanity and freedom. Without this, philosophy's work of overcoming the abstract beginning would not be explicable. Philosophy knows that one can only live humanly if one knows the truth of one's life. How does philosophy know about the insufficiency of living abstractions? There is only one answer possible: it knows this insufficiency by comparison with what it means to be human. To be human means *not* to live abstraction.

However, despite itself, the criterion of philosophy gets lost. Philosophy has to deal with abstraction because this stands in the way of concrete truth. But by tracing necessity in our world of living abstraction, philosophy treats the given *as if this* was its measure. Philosophy considers its task completed when it has overcome the stage of abstraction by reconstructing the world as a concrete world in the head. It forgets that it only traces the necessity within an inhuman life. It is unable to keep its own beginning in view. It loses that certainty that the way we live is humanly deficient.

People who not philosophers and just go about their daily lives are placed right at the heart of this bewildering world. They have to live under the domination of abstraction, have to live the contradiction between the 'this is me' and the 'this is not me', between the fact that they participate in the making of the world, the real living world, and the fact that the purpose which they realise in doing so, has not grown out of their own free will. Their becoming aware of the 'this is not me' yields the ought to *live* a 'this is me'. And the only way for them to realise that is rejection. They have to jump out of abstraction, reject the violence of that almighty power. And by shattering the logical necessity of abstraction, they demonstrate that it is a human-made necessity. They know with absolute certainty that what abstraction forces them to do, is inhuman; and they draw the practical conclusion that it cannot be necessary. By throwing their life into the scales on the side of the criterion, they prove that humanity is possible.

There is no life without people relating to each other. In a life governed by abstraction, relations are given through those abstractions. They are pre-defined moulds through which we make our life, which can then only be an abstract life. People in these building-blocks of dead reality are just living fillers for ready-made functional positions. People

don't know what these forms are which determine their relations to others. Only seeing humanity as stifled and mutilated through these ill-fitting forms, they never get to know the other human being, nor themselves. Lending to the purpose of abstractions whatever is left of their energy, they never learn about their own power and freedom. The instant, however, that the unforeseen happens and one human being was able to reach out, across abstraction, to the other, abstraction is shattered and the relation between people is freed. Now, this relation has become the true human relation: recognition of the other's humanity. Life can now develop from within the freedom of this mutuality, according to its own purpose.

Philosophy, taking for granted the necessity and naturalness of abstraction, showd how they are all linked up together in one huge system. The freedom gained by the insight into this reality is not the freedom of self-creating humanity. Philosophy proves to rejection that rejection must fail, so long as it does not take this systematic character into account. Rejection proves to reconciliation that, with the method of philosophy, it is unable to get hold of the true generality of humanity hidden under abstraction.

PART THREE

ART AND LIFE

I

IN 'ART' and 'life' we have two key concepts of ancient Greek thinking. Here, in the first section, we want to talk about life more specifically as ethical life, which is bound to the meaning of 'the good of life'.

The English word *art* goes back to the Latin *ars*, which, assumed the Romans, was the exact equivalent of the Greek *techne*. The meaning of modern 'art' and ancient '*techne*', however, differ as much as the ways of living to which they belong. *Techne* is the knowledge of how to make 'things' – beds, shoes, health, tragedies. Even though all of these contribute to our well-being, are part of our wealth, yet 'the good of life' is not present in the concept of *techne*. However, it is the centre of the concept *phronesis*, the wisdom of relating to people. Whereas some might argue that with the word *techne*, its idea too, has come down to us, albeit thoroughly transformed, there is no doubt that *phronesis* has totally died out. This is not a random accident to a people's diction; rather, the history of these words goes together with a transformation of the ideas they express, and with changes in the way of life. The same development which extinguished the wisdom of relating to people, *phronesis*, was responsible for the reshaping of *techne*, the knowledge of making things.

In his Metaphysics and his Ethics, Aristotle deals extensively with both *phronesis* and *techne*. In both treatises, these concepts occur as part of his quest for the highest truth. From the lowest kind of apprehensive relation between an individual and the world, up to the highest, there stretches a whole scale of forms of knowledge. Only the one at the very top grasps what it is most desirable to know. Neither *techne* nor *phronesis* comes to stand at the highest rank, but

their place is somewhere in the upper half of the scale.

The basis for this thinking in general is a certain relation to truth, which pervades Greek culture as a whole. For the Greeks, what was directly given was not truth itself, but its *absence*. They were aware of truth not being present, so that its presence was ardently sought and desired. It was longed for in the very things around them, in the very life they led, not somewhere else. Thus, truth is absent, but not non-existent; real, but hidden; living, but beneath the surface. The search for truth tells us that truth is not here, but also that this is the place where it ought to be. So an unavoidable question ensues: why is the Here so weak that it is not able to hold on to truth? This question, however, lies outside the tradition of philosophy. The Greeks bequeathed us one method of countering the tendency of the Here to hide the truth. And so, while ordinary life is prone merely to glide along on the slippery surface of appearance, thinking, and only thinking, is able to gain a firm foothold in the underlying truth. *Techne* and *phronesis* are part of this Greek enterprise of finding how to stand firmly in truth.

While Aristotle provides us with two paths towards an understanding of *techne*, one in the Metaphysics, the other in the Ethics, *phronesis* is only dealt with in the Ethics. The question of the Metaphysics is: 'what is being *qua* being?' This question of what it means to be something, excludes a consideration of *phronesis*, or the wisdom of how to create good relations between people.

The criterion that Aristotle uses to build his scale, either implicitly or explicitly, is whether the highest truth is being grasped. *What* this 'highest truth' is, he had developed in a previous work, the Physics. There, his guide towards finding this truth was again the question 'why?' (We have already encountered the importance of this question for Aristotle in Part One, in the context of demonstration.)

> Knowledge is the object of our inquiry, and men do not think they know a thing till they have grasped the 'why' of it (which is to grasp its primary cause). (Phys, II, 3; 194b)

Aristotle finds that this question may command four different kinds of answer. After a very subtle discussion, removing the ground from underneath all previous thought on the matter, he can establish four first principles or causes:

> In one way, then, that out of which a thing comes to be and which persists, is called a cause ... In another way, the form or the archetype, i.e. the definition of the essence, and its genera ... Again the primary cause of change or rest ... Again in the sense of end or that for the sake of which a thing is done. (ibid)

These four causes, or, more precisely, how far they are being grasped, provide the criterion according to which, at the beginning of his Metaphysics (Book Alpha, Chapter One), Aristotle unfolds the following rising scale of intellectual activities: sense-perception (*aisthesis*), memory (*mneme*), experience (*empeiria*), art (*techne*), science (*episteme*) and wisdom (*sophia*). The relation among these forms is such that they naturally grow out of each other, the higher forms implying, presupposing, the lower, the lower 'producing' the higher. The scale describes a gradual transition from faculties which the animal and the human have in common, to those which belong to the human alone. Just as it belongs to the nature of animal life to have sense-perception, it is natural for the human being also to possess higher forms of knowledge. And these higher forms have something about them to be desired. As the opening sentence to the Metaphysics puts it: 'All men by nature desire to know.' Experience is the fluid boundary between the animal and the human; it belongs a little to the first, but mainly to the second. From *techne* onwards we are dealing exclusively with human faculties.

What does *techne* achieve which the preceding forms do not?

> Art [*techne*] is born when out of the many bits of information derived from experience there emerges a grasp of those similarities in view of which they are a unified whole [*katholou*]. (Met, I, 1; 981a)

The importance of *techne* as a step towards that desired knowledge lies in its grasp of 'a unified whole'. (*Katholou* is contracted from *kata holon*, 'according to the whole', or *holos*.) 'Memory' does not produce knowledge of the whole, but only knowledge of the individual, called 'experience'. Perceptions of a certain individual thing or being at different times are each separate perceptions in their own right. As such, there is nothing which links them together. 'Memory', however, produces this link, so that the object of perception is not a new one each time it is perceived, but the same one individual perceived in various circumstances. Yet 'experience', clinging to the particularities of the individual, cannot generalise and see behind the immediately visible. Only the knowledge of *techne* goes beyond the individual case. What enables it to do so is its knowledge of the 'whole'.

> ... that which is true of a whole class [*katholou*] and is said to hold good as a whole [*holos*] is a kind of whole and is general in that it embraces many things, because it is predicated [*kategorein*] of each and because each is an instance of one whole ... (Met, V, 26; 1023b)

The whole is that which may be predicated. It is knowledge

independent of individual cases. When it meets with a particular which it recognises to be an instance of it, then the whole is predicated of that particular. And then the individual case is not mere individuality, but is known through the whole, as exhibiting and belonging to the whole. *Techne* is born when the knowledge of this whole emerges, and this 'whole' of *techne* is the *eidos*. Aristotle, the physician's son, explains the relation between *techne* and *eidos* by a medical example:

> ... to have art [*techne*] is to grasp that all members of the group [*eidos*] of those who are ill of this disease have been helped by this medicine. (Met, I, 1; 981a)

A disease is known *as a whole*, and not as just this one malady of this particular person suffering from it, when each person affected by it is recognised to belong to the same *eidos*. Only then is it possible to know a general cure, and only then is there a *techne* of producing health.

What links together the 'bits of information derived from experience' is their *eidos*, which all these 'bits' have in common. *Techne* comprehends the individual in terms of the whole, or the *eidos*. This becomes visible for the first time in *techne*; within 'experience' it is still invisible. *Techne* is therefore considered 'more scientific [more of an *episteme*] than experience' (981b), and the 'technician' 'wiser' (*sophoteros*, more of a *sophos*) than the merely experienced (981a).

Techne opens the gate through the surface, towards a higher truth. By going 'back' to the *eidos*, this knowledge goes beyond the given, towards its principle or cause. By grasping the *eidos*, we have made the jump from the contingent and changeable to the necessary and eternal. Whereas things change, perish and pretend, the forms that they realise are unchanging and never make a false claim. *Techne* shows itself as belonging to a world which is given to us in an ambiguous way. The world is there with a presence that claims to be the whole in its entirety. Yet, at the same time, it continually cries out for explanation, begging to be understood as the shadow of its truth.

If *techne* is a form of knowledge which grasps the 'unified whole' and the individual case as an instance of this, there emerge two questions as to the relation between *techne* and science, *episteme*. First, how do they differ? And second, why is *techne* lower in rank? The first is easy to answer. For, whereas science is a theoretical occupation only, the point of *techne* is that its knowledge is bound up with making, or that it is a particular combination of knowledge and making:

> One phase of the productive process, therefore, is called 'thinking' [*noesis*], and the other 'making' [*poiesis*]: that which proceeds from the starting-point and from the form [*eidos*] is 'thinking' [*noesis*]; that which proceeds from the end-point of the thinking is 'making' [*poiesis*]. (Met, VII, 7; 1032b)

Techne consists of two phases: *noesis*, thinking, and *poiesis*, making. The two phases have to occur in that order, first thinking, then making. The making in *techne* follows the result of its thought; it is a forming according to the thought of the *eidos*. *Noesis*, thinking, is that 'which proceeds from the starting-point *and* ... the form'. Thus, the thinking phase of *techne* contains two items: the 'starting-point' and the *eidos*. The 'form' or *eidos* is the scientific knowledge of the whole belonging to the particular 'art' concerned. The other constituent of *noesis*, the 'starting-point', is the here and now from which any production process sets out. The knowledge of the *eidos* in itself is far from enough to produce something, for example, health in a patient. It is vital to assess the particulars of the given situation as well. When this has been sufficiently investigated, in view of the *eidos*, and the point has been reached where the 'technician' can bring his skill to bear, then the end-point of *noesis*, thinking, has been arrived at and *techne* has to move into its second phase, *poiesis*, making.

> Hence it follows that in a way health comes to be out of health, and a house, out of a house, that is, the material being, out of the immaterial ... (Met, VII, 7; 1032b)

The particular health of a specific individual, or a certain house on that particular spot, are secondary to what it means to be healthy, or to what it means to be a house. The knowledge of the whole, the *eidos*, is the cause and principle for any particular realisation of it in the world of matter and perception. The cause comes before its result. In the *eidos* of *techne*, a view is opened for the first time onto the highest knowable things, the four causes.

However, the whole point of this *eidos*, as it appears within *techne*, is that it be brought back into the material living world. And therefore *techne* is considered lower in rank than *episteme*. *Techne* does not go all the way towards the highest knowledge. It catches one glimpse of it and returns to the here and now. The 'technician' is not interested in the *eidos* for its own sake, but only because it provides the pattern according to which things are to be shaped. We will see later that even this making according to the *eidos* is not the whole purpose of *techne*, but that it is subservient to another purpose beyond that making. And with this subservience of *techne's* making to a further purpose, the *eidos* too, which guides the making, comes to be subordinate to that other purpose. But subjection to a purpose cannot be the characteristic of the highest truth.

Thinking as it occurs within *techne* has to adapt itself to each particular application. Each time *techne* is exercised, it is different according to the given at hand. In contrast to this, thinking in *episteme* has been freed from this world of appearance and is able to remain in the realm of truer reality. For its object of contemplation never

changes, never has to be brought into accordance with particular circumstances and never has to follow some purpose beyond itself.

> ... scientific knowledge is of things that are never other than they are ... So anything that science knows scientifically must exist by an unalterable necessity. It must therefore be eternal, because anything which exists by this absolute kind of necessity must be eternal. (Eth, VI, 3; 1139b)

Only *sophia*, wisdom, is yet nobler than *episteme*, science. It goes even deeper, is even further removed from the power of the surface, that deception and arrogance which assail us. *Episteme* is always a *particular* science, containing the richness of knowledge about its own well-defined subject-matter. But it is ignorant of the principles according to which it knows, and according to which all science knows. It is *sophia* which uncovers this shared foundation of the various sciences. These are determined by some truth which they can't get hold of by themselves. This highest truth is there, making them what they are, yet hidden to them. *Sophia*, drawing aside the last remaining curtain between us and truth, is the accomplishment of human knowledge, looking straight onto the eternal four principles.

> ... all men suppose what is called wisdom [*sophia*] to deal with the first causes [*arche*] and the principles [*aitia*] of things. (Met, I, 1; 981b)

The grasp of a whole emerged for the first time in *techne*. There, it occurred as the *eidos* of one particular kind of thing produced by a specialised branch of 'art'. But, on no account, does knowing this 'technical' whole mean to know all. The whole in *techne* is only a tiny part of all knowable things. The truly wise, however, know all, *pan* (I, 2; 982a). It is possible to know all, because this 'all' does not stand for every likely or unlikely accident or particularity, but for the principles of every possible thing. Only *sophia* knows about this whole, *holos*, in a complete sense.

When Aristotle talks about the four primary causes in the Metaphysics, particularly about one of them, the *telos*, the 'end', there is one important addition compared to the Physics. For, in the Metaphysics, he also expresses this cause with another word: *to agathon*, 'the good'. That is, that which anything tends to become, is, as the end, the aim of this becoming, good. What is good, is intrinsic to being, a necessary aspect of what it means to be something. Whatever has come to its own end, or conclusion, has realised what it intrinsically is, and this will, of necessity, also be good. The good is given anyway. It is already there, everywhere, in every thing. For, what anything is, is determined by the primary causes, among which is the *telos*, the good.

But the good is not superficially given to us. It does not belong to the surface of things; it is not perceptible. What our way of life shows us first is not the good. This lies far removed from the deceiving exigencies of the everyday. Only the highest form of knowledge, *sophia*, which traces everything back to its ultimate source, can behold the good. At this point we can directly see the link between Aristotle and Hegel. One shows us reconciliation in its initial, implicit shape, the other depicts it in its final, explicit form.

We have looked at 'art' as one of several forms of knowledge, ordered in a hierarchical scale, discussed in the Metaphysics. If we now want to turn to 'the good of life', we have to investigate another form of knowledge: *phronesis*. This belongs to another scale of 'intellectual virtues', treated of in the Nichomachean Ethics. This scale comprises five forms which are called the 'five modes ... in which the soul may arrive at the truth', the five ways of *aletheuein* (Eth, VI, 3; 1139b).

According to the dictionary, *aletheuein* means 'to speak truth', 'to be or prove true', and, as the result of reasoning, 'to arrive at truth'. However, we gain a much better grasp of the meaning of the word if we look at its morphological structure. The prefix a- is an 'alpha-privativum', turning the following word into its opposite (like the English un-). *Lethe* is 'forgetting, forgetfulness'. In the myth at the end of Plato's Republic, it is the name of the river from which all souls have to drink before they are reborn. 'To forget' means to lose the grasp of something which itself still remains in existence, just as 'to conceal' means to put something out of sight while not altering the thing which is being concealed. In the Greek sense, the path towards truth consists in taking away what stands between it and you, unwrapping or retrieving what was always there, but which had got out of your reach. We get to the truth if we 'un-forget', or, to use a favourite term of Heidegger's, if we bring into 'unconcealment' (*Unverborgenheit*).

Aristotle's five ways of unconcealment are: *techne*, *episteme*, *phronesis* ('practical wisdom'), *sophia*, and *nous* ('comprehension') (Eth, VI, 3; 1139b). Compared to the Metaphysics, the three lowest forms, *aisthesis*, *mneme*, *empeiria*, are omitted in the Ethics, and two other forms, *phronesis* and *nous*, are added. As the *eidos* does not yet show itself in the three lowest forms, they do not yet unconceal the truth, and therefore do not belong to the scale of *aletheuein*. *Nous* is a comprehension which does not make up a form of knowledge in its own right, but appears within other forms. It may be left aside in our present discussion. Thus, we are left with *phronesis* as the only additional form of knowledge. The relative order between *techne*, *episteme* and *sophia* is the same in the Ethics as in the Metaphysics. However, in the Ethics, *phronesis* is inserted on the second highest rank. We have to illuminate what *phronesis* is and why it is assigned this position in the scale.

Techne is not the only kind of knowledge whose objects 'can be

other than they are'. The other kind which can be so described is *phronesis*. Both their objects are of this changing nature because they belong to the real living world. But there is also a big difference between *techne* and *phronesis*. 'Making' (*poiein*) means putting a form into some matter, and this is the activity to which the knowledge of 'art' (*techne*) belongs. *Prattein*, 'to do', the verb which corresponds to *praxis*, is the activity related to *phronesis* (practical wisdom). We must be careful not to conflate the Greek meaning of '*praxis*' with our common understanding of the term 'practice', which is crudely opposed to theory. *Prattein*, by contrast, refers to the act of relating to a human being. As such it is opposed to *techne*, which is about things.

The two together, as dealing with 'objects' in the external world, which can be other than they are, are opposed to *episteme* and *sophia*. For these latter are forms of knowledge which are not linked to any activity other than thinking, and they only think about things that cannot be other than they are, eternal things. The common translation of *phronesis* as 'prudence' is quite misleading; 'practical wisdom' is rather better. But because our 'practice' is very unlike Greek '*praxis*', there can be no proper English term for the wisdom in *praxis*, or the wisdom about how to relate to other people. In our way of life today, we know as little about Greek *praxis*, as we do about *phronesis*. Our language has no word either for the activity or the wisdom of relating to other people. In our world people are dealt with like things; and for that no wisdom is required. This loss goes together with the loss of *techne*. And the disappearance of both *phronesis* and *techne* is mirrored in the emergence of the modern meaning of 'art'.

In one way, the difference between *prattein* and *poiein* (or between *phronesis* and *techne*) is that the second produces a thing or object, the first doesn't. This is of great importance as regards the relation between each of these two activities and their *telos*, end. In *prattein*, relating to people, the end is entirely comprised within that activity itself. *Poiein*, however, is dominated from the outside by an end that is not at all part of it. In the Metaphysics, Aristotle did not highlight the relation of *techne* and the *telos*; which he discusses only in the Ethics.

In contrast to the 'doing' in *phronesis*, Aristotle emphasises that the making of a thing in *techne* is always subservient to something else.

> For when a man makes a thing it is always to serve some purpose; the process of making it is not an end in itself but only the means to an end and is subordinate to something else. (Eth, VI, 2; 1139b)

What is the end of making a thing? Is it the enjoyment of producing it? No. 'The process of making it is not an end in itself'. At first, it might seem as if, since the making itself is not the end, its end will have to be the thing that it makes. However, the thinghood itself also is not the end of the production process. Rather, the end is the purpose which

the thing being made is going to serve. 'For when a man makes a thing it is always to serve some purpose ...' The making of a thing is not done for its own sake, nor does it serve the purpose of the thing-being-made itself; this thing is intended for some purpose beyond itself. The making of a thing 'is subordinate to something else'. This 'something else', then, directs the activity from the outside. This outside purpose, however, does not really have a part in Aristotle's definitions of 'making' and '*techne*'. The reason why a certain 'technician' makes certain things, lies beyond the consideration of that individual maker, and outside the process of making. And yet it determines the process. That is why the process of making things can't have, or can't be, an end in itself.

What is the relation between that foreign purpose and making? In Aristotle's analysis of exchange, we met one shape that might be taken by this purpose external to making. The shoemaker does not keep manufacturing all those shoes for his own fancy wardrobe. Rather,

> [i]t is required that the builder shall receive from the shoemaker some part of what the latter produces, giving him at the same time some part of what he produces himself. (Eth V, 5; 1133a. See Part One, III.)

The shoemaker, who knows the *eidos* of the shoe, who is well-versed in assessing the 'starting-point', or the givens at hand, and who possesses the manual skill of putting that shape into leather, giving form to his material, does not execute his craft either for its own sake of making, or for the sake of all those shoes. Through his trade, he serves some purpose beyond it, for he manufactures all these shoes for exchange, in order to 'make a living'.

It is, however, an altogether different matter with the *telos* of *prattein*. Here, the end is part and parcel of the activity itself.

> [A]n action, a piece of human conduct, is an end [*telos*] in itself. For 'doing well' is here the end, and the end which desire seeks to attain. (Eth, VI, 2; 1139b)

'A piece of human conduct is an end in itself.' When I do something towards you, then my 'conduct', my behaviour towards you, 'is an end in itself'. I act towards you with the sole end in mind of 'doing well'. I do it for the sake of the good. I don't act in order to achieve something else which lies beyond this action. I can only relate to you by wanting to do something which is good, to create the good between you and me. This is the case, not because my particular soul is overflowing with all this bounty, which other people lack, but because this is the nature of 'human conduct' as such. And so, the converse of my relation towards you must hold true as well. Your only aim, too, is to do something good towards me. When the good is aimed at in this way,

then there can be no further end over and above it. Only here, in human relations, can the good really exist. In *techne* it is subservient to a purpose outside the activity. Thus, the good in an action can only exist if the action is not part of producing an object. Aristotle even puts it the other way round: when the *telos* is purely to execute something well, then we know that we are dealing with *praxis*. The only place where this good is to be found, the good which is realised for its own sake, and not with any further aim in view, is in relations between people, in what I do towards you, and you towards me.

Yet, here too, there are restrictions. For it is not at all the case that wherever people relate to each other, the good will shines in their actions. The good of *phronesis* lies, for example, outside exchange-relations, that is outside the reason why, the Greeks believed, people form associations. When my relation towards you is defined by 'commensurability', then I will never be able to do anything either *for your sake* or for the sake of the good. When I provide your family with a pair of shoes each, because you have built my roof, then what I do towards you is simply determined by the market-price. Also, when society predefines relations between people, then there is no room for the good to live. Aristotle himself was struck by the contradiction between friendship and slavery, by the fact that a slave *as a slave* cannot be your friend. Similarly, we have to say, you cannot engage in exchange-relations with a friend *as a friend*. People come together for exchange. And this is incompatible with true friendship, which is the living good itself.

The good, *to agathon*, which does not recognise any power beyond itself, is 'the good of life as a whole'. It is the same for everybody, the same for you as for me, and the same throughout the whole life of a human being.

> A sagacious man [a *phronimos*, somebody who practices *phronesis*] is supposed to be characterised by his ability to reach sound conclusions in his deliberations [*bouleusasthai*] about what is good [*agatha*] for himself and advantageous to him, and this not in one department of life, in what concerns his health, for example, or his physical strength but what conduces to the good life as a whole. (Eth, VI, 5; 1140a)

The good in *phronesis* is a whole. It is not a fancy, a whim, not a selfish advantage over others, not the benefit of one particular part. It is the good which is good always and for all, for the whole of life. Aristotle alternately talks about what is 'humanly good and bad' (VI, 5) in general, as well as what is good for one particular person. Whether I look at my life as a whole or at somebody else's, what it means for it to be good is the same.

But how does this good get into an individual action? In principle,

the movement is the same in the two kinds of activity the objects of which can be other than they are, that is, in *poiein* and in *prattein*. In making a thing, *poiein*, the general form of what it means to be that thing, the *eidos*, is first in the head of the maker. The production process is then the action which transfers this mental picture into matter, forming a thing of the kind the maker had in mind. 'The material being comes out of the immaterial being.' And so, too, in human conduct, the action carried out in the world outside the head, comes from some form of knowledge inside the head.

But the similarity between *poiein* and *prattein* does not go any further. We have seen that in the making of a thing, the most commanding *telos*, or end, of the making does not lie within this production process, but somewhere beyond it. In *prattein*, however, in relating to people, there is no purpose lying anywhere beyond; the whole end is comprised within the activity itself. Or, perhaps, we should rather say that, in *prattein*, the end is completely intertwined with the activity carrying it out. For there is no part of the activity where we could say: 'this is the bit containing the good', and none which we might disregard saying: 'this is just a useless part of *prattein*; it does not comprise the end.' Just as the *eidos* according to which matter is formed, is first in the head of the maker, so this whole end, which is actualised in human conduct, comes to be out of the mental form. In *prattein*, however, in contradistinction to *poiein*, the beginning and the end of action are the same. 'The first principle [*arche*] of an action is the end [*telos*] to which the action is directed.' (VI, 5; 1140b) What is good for life as a whole, the human good, which is the end, is also the beginning of *prattein*. The principle in the head of the 'doer', that which guides the action, is the good of life as a whole. And, in contrast with *techne*, there can be no further end to which this principle is subordinate. Nothing is bigger than the good of life as a whole.

The highest knowable things are the four principal causes. One of them, the *telos* or end, is also called the good, *to agathon*. *Prattein*, then, is action in which one of the highest things we can ever know of is present and lived. In the way in which we relate to people, the good, one of the four highest causes, can be alive. However, the clarity of this *telos* may become blurred; or something may get in our way and render us incapable of keeping it in view. Then, with the true *telos* covered, our actions will be prone to a different aim, one that does not intrinsically belong to it, a false aim. Aristotle calls the obstacle concealing the good 'vice'.

> Now, the supreme good appears such only to the good man, for vice gives a twist to our minds, making us hold false opinions about the principles of action. It is therefore obvious that a man cannot be practically wise [wise in *phronesis*] unless he be good. (Eth, VI, 12; 1144a)

In *phronesis*, there obtains an intrinsic relation between being, knowledge and action. In order to *act* well, one has to *know* the good; and in order to know the good, one has to *be* good in the first place. One cannot know the good, without being good. One cannot act according to the good, without knowing the good. Action is the actualisation of the *telos*. In action, the end that dwelt in the mind is carried into the living world outside the head, reaching out to others. As long as the *telos* had not yet begun its journey into the world, it existed in a form of knowledge. Thus, the inseparability of knowledge and action is evident. But what is the relation between knowledge of the good and being good?

> Yet it would not be correct to describe practical wisdom [*phronesis*] as a purely rational quality. That it is not is shown by the fact that such a quality can be forgotten, whereas to forget practical wisdom is worse than such an inability to remember. (Eth, VI, 5; 1140b)

Some things one may forget. To forget other things, however, 'is worse than such an inability to remember'. A 'rational quality', may slip out of one's grasp. But to forget how to act humanly, is much worse than a failing memory. What has been learnt, can be forgotten again. A 'rational quality' is among the learnable things. Somebody who studied geometry, for instance, may find later that she has forgotten some of the theorems, which she once knew so well. To forget about the good, however, is much worse. It is impossible to create the good in human relations, without being good to begin with. How to *be* good cannot be learnt. It is unlearnt knowledge. To be good is rather being human itself. To forget this kind of 'knowledge' is a monstrous aberration; it is like forgetting oneself, or forgetting that one is a human being. When the ex-geometer forgets her theorems, she does not, by that, forget herself, nor that she is a human being. If, however, human beings forget how to relate to others according to the good of life as a whole, then they have forgotten themselves, they have forgotten humanity.

When knowledge previously learnt is forgotten, this does not, in itself, impinge on the unlearnt knowledge or being. To forget a theorem does not disturb the knowledge of the good. But the converse holds true as well. To forget the good, does not, as such, disintegrate any 'rational' knowledge. Humans who have turned into beasts, may still very well remember the particular science or trade they learnt.

> We must not imagine that pleasure and pain destroy or distort every belief, such a belief, for instance, as that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles, but only beliefs about what is to be done. The first principle of an action is the

> end to which the action is directed. But a man corrupted by pleasure or pain cannot see this at all, he cannot see that everything he chooses and does must be chosen and done as a means to this end and for its own sake. For vice produces a kind of moral blindness to the principle. (Eth, VI, 5; 1140b)

There exist two kinds of knowledge, one liable to be disturbed by vice, the other indifferent to it. Vice has no influence on such knowledge as geometry, on scientific knowledge that is, nor, we might add, on 'technical' knowledge, such as house-building. But by ruining the human being vice ruins the knowledge of the good. In order to accord one's action to the good of life as a whole, one must already be good, one must not have forgotten one's humanity. One must not have let vice take a hold on oneself. But the knowledge of *techne* and *episteme* are not connected to the good in any way. Vice cannot dim their *eidos*. They possess their own intrinsic rules which are the same in humanly good as in humanly bad circumstances.

To agathon, the good, is just another expression for *ho telos*, the end. Vice conceals the good. Yet, it does not encroach upon any scientific knowledge, it does not hide the *telos* with which science deals. In a way, then, we might say that *episteme* splits the end from the good, the *telos* from the *agathon*, whereas practical wisdom, *phronesis*, keeps them together. Practical wisdom only obtains when the end is the good at the same time, when it is the humanly good that is aimed for.

The thing being produced by *techne* is always subservient to some other end. In producing it, the producer submits to that purpose beyond the process of making. Within *techne*, there is no room for the producers to set their own purpose for what they are doing. *Phronesis*, by contrast, is the human purpose, set by the human beings for themselves. Only where the human beings set their own *telos*, can the good live. Somehow, when the purpose is outside the activity, the human being and the knowledge of the good for humanity also come to stand outside the activity. The activity comes to be disconnected from the one doing it. When the purpose, however, is that of the good of life as a whole, then this is also the purpose of the agent, it is your purpose, and you put yourself out in the activity which realises it. But whenever the activity is the making of a thing, the purpose realised can never be your own, human, purpose.

Phronesis, practical wisdom, is a kind of *aletheuein*, an 'un-forgetting', because it keeps remembering the good of life. It keeps in view the good, against all those currents within life which place an obstacle between the good and life. *Techne*, too, is one of the ways of *aletheuein*. It 'unconceals' the *eidos*. The *eidos* gives us the 'what it means to be' of something, the true meaning of a shoe, of health, of poetry. This truth is a kind of whole, comprising every particular belonging to it. However, this whole within *techne* is a restricted one, the truth of

one kind of thing only. In *phronesis*, however, the good being unforgotten is an all-embracing whole. The wisdom of how to act according to the good is, therefore, higher in rank than the knowledge of how to make certain things.

Why, then, is *phronesis* not the highest of the ways of *aletheuein*, unconcealment? The answer arises from the huge gulf that yawned for the Greeks between appearance and essence. Engaging in good practice, in a wise action, does require more than just being good and knowing the good. An action has to make its way in a world of appearance and ever-changing circumstances, knowledge of which cannot be taken for granted. It must continually be re-asserted and re-formed. Knowledge of the unchanging good, therefore, has to be combined with knowledge of the particulars at hand.

> Observe, too, that practical wisdom [*phronesis*] is something more than a knowledge of general principles. It must acquire familiarity with particulars also, for it is practical, and practice is concerned with particulars ... Practical wisdom [*phronesis*] being concerned with action, we need both kinds of knowledge; nay, we need the knowledge of particular facts more than general principles. (Eth, VI, 7; 1141b)

Somebody who knows the good as a whole, but is not sufficiently acquainted with the particular circumstances, will easily fail in practice. So will somebody who knows all the ways and means of the world, but has been blinded to the general good. A *phronimos* must be a *bouleutikos*, somebody who is good in deliberating, *bouleusasthai*. (See quotation from Ethics VI, 5 above.) Good action towards others is the constant reaffirmation of the good among the fleeting moments of life, as well as amidst the forces which tend to blind the eye for the good. In order to be ready to meet the challenge of life, its ways must be known.

As with *techne*, in which the knowledge of the eternal *eidos* has to be constantly brought back into the world here and now, so in *phronesis*; the knowledge about the general good must be linked to knowledge of how this may be actualised in the real relations between people. Both forms of unconcealment, *techne* and *phronesis*, remain tied to that world away from which the search for knowledge leads. *Sophia*, however, never has to come back to the particulars, nor be faced with the tendencies which hide the truth. It is the fulfilment of *aletheuein*, enjoying the presence of unshakeable eternal truth, the result in thought of the search for a life of goodness and joy. Such a life, the Greeks found, cannot be led in company with one another, or in the course of an ordinary working day. Thinking must come to stand higher than making and acting.

Aristotle sets out the scale of intellectual virtues. But he never feels any need to ask just why there is such a scale, why *techne* cannot know about the good, why keeping in view the good of life as a whole, and the making of things, are mutually exclusive.

As we have already noted, Aristotle believes that people do not form associations because of their mutual friendship, but for the exchange of things that must have been produced in some way. The knowledge required for their production is *techne*. This knowledge guides the making of things for exchange. Exchange is about giving this much for that much; it is not concerned with the good of anything or with anybody's sake. And thus, a consideration of the good does not belong to the making of things for exchange. That is, when people don't make things for each other's sake, their making can't bear any affinity to the good of life as a whole. The making of things for exchange is the realm of a lower truth than the general good. The highest truth knowable within it is the *eidos*, the what-it-means-to-be of the particular thing produced. And in this context, the definition of 'making a thing' can only be putting that form, that *eidos*, into matter; and the definition of 'thing' must be a particular combination of form and matter. All of these exclude the good and the other human being, testifying to the absence of the highest truth.

In ancient Greece, despite this concealment of the good, it was still visible outside the department of life connected to exchange, in direct relations between people. And the wisdom working to keep it in view was *phronesis*. Outside the disregard for the other human being in exchange, people knew that they belonged together, were members of the same whole, and strove for the good of life as a whole.

In modern times, however, both *techne* and *phronesis* have been destroyed. In the first section of Part Two, we encountered one of the aspects of our life which makes it impossible for *phronesis* to exist: the warfare in civil society as described by Hobbes. Private property has made us into each other's enemies. The 'whole' of society is a battlefield; the 'good' is ownership; 'life' is fighting for more against everybody else. A good of life as a whole can no longer exist. Gains aimed at in the form of private property only accrue to the individual proprietor. It belongs to the very meaning of the concept of private property, rather than to individual malignity, that its owner will much sooner fight to the death in defence of his riches than submit them to the development of some good beyond his own person. There is hardly any similarity between the concept of the good of humanity and the horror-bearing form of private enrichment. We are cut off from each other. The sake of the other human being is invisible, concealed from us.

Techne, too, has lost its grounds for existence. A century and a quarter after Hobbes, another feature of modernity had become topical:

the increased division of labour of the manufacturing system. Now, people no longer merely specialised in a single trade, a man was no longer cobbler or mason, as in Aristotle's Greece. In the factories, people specialised in the most minute operations into which a manufacturing process could be divided up. Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, two contemporary Scotsmen, were the first to attempt a theory of the division of labour. Ferguson's 'Of Civil Society' appeared in 1767, and, nine years later, Smith's far more celebrated 'An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations'. Hegel, who was born between their two publication dates, studied them closely when they came out in Germany, and they provided the basis for his thinking on political economy and civil society.

We must refer to the famous case-study of pin-making, which introduces Adam Smith's work. He provides us with a concrete outline of a workshop with ten workers. The production process being divided up into eighteen distinct operations, each of the workers was bound to either a single one of these or to two or three at the most. The ten workers produced 'among them about twelve pounds of pins in a day'. And since 'there are in a pound upwards of 4,000 pins', they 'could make among them upwards of 48,000 in a day', or more than 4,800 each. 'But if they had all wrought separately and independently ... they could not each of them have made twenty, perhaps not one pin in a day'.

Such a kind of making was not only unknown to Aristotle, it could not even have been imagined by him. It is so different from *techne* that, in fact, neither modern art, nor modern manufacture fits under the ancient Greek concept. For, according to this concept, the maker has the *eidos* in mind and produces the thing after this image. But what could the *eidos* of the eighteenth part of a pin possibly be? Unlike *techne*, modern manufacture cannot be a way of *aletheuein*, unconcealment of truth. For the labourers, reduced to living machines, there is no whole, no truth to be seen in their work. Only creative making cannot be submitted to this kind of division of labour. A symphony cannot be produced on a conveyor-belt. Changes in the way in which things for exchange were produced, had to set free creation apart from any other kind of making.

The idea of free creation of things as a special activity was an aspect of the death of *praxis*. In Aristotle's Greece, *praxis* was the only realm where people realised their own purpose which they set for themselves. This purpose consisted in the creation of the good among them, so that life be led in truth. In *techne* this was not the case. Its purpose lay outside itself. The form of truth belonging to *techne*, the *eidos*, was a subservient truth. But when society has turned into a mechanism, then humanity has lost its capability of creating its own common good. *Praxis* is dead.

And yet the human being needs truth as it needs food. Life without

free creation is impossible. When the most human belief, the belief in the other person, has become so immensely difficult to maintain, then free creation takes refuge in the making of things. Art became the only way of realising the purpose of humanity, of creating the good of life as a whole, of being close to truth.

II

PETER ILYICH Tchaikovsky entertained a friendship by letter with his admiring sponsor, Nadezhda Filaretovna Frolovskaya von Meck, which lasted over fourteen years. This correspondence is considered to be one of the most remarkable of its kind in history. In it Tchaikovsky left behind a number of first-hand accounts about his understanding of the process of artistic creation. Like his music, the letters are written in a direct manner, attempting, without any theorising, to express his soul or inner life.

For Tchaikovsky, creating simply means existing as a living human being.

> Work ... [ie composing] is as necessary to me as the air I breathe. As soon as I succumb to idleness I begin to feel melancholy, ... to fall victim to the tormenting thought that I am a useless creature and that only my musical activity redeems all my failings and raises me to the level of a *human being* in the proper sense of the word. (132. This and the following quotations are all taken from: Tchaikovsky. A Self-Portrait. Edited by Alexandra Orlova. Oxford University Press, 1990.)

Breathing is a necessity for the animal organism. This is easy to see because it is a natural necessity. For the human being, there also exist so-called 'higher' necessities. But because they are not 'natural' in the same way that breathing is for animal nature, it is much more difficult to recognise them. Physically, as we know, it is still possible for humanity to survive without recognising its proper necessities. In one way or another, these 'higher' necessities are all reducible to freedom, or free creation. Human necessity derives from freedom. When Tchaikovksy says that composing was 'as necessary to me as the air I breathe', then this 'necessity' is not forced upon him from the outside. One could not even say that natural necessity was forced upon us, or upon the animal organism, from the outside. It would not make sense to say that we wanted to liberate ourselves from the oppressive obligation to breathe, imposed on us by the force of nature. Creating is the spiritual necessity of human life, the necessity of our own human freedom. It is a necessity for us to be free and to live our freedom. But where in our way of life is this possible? Where can we find those people who have not been destroyed, people with whom freely to create our lives? Where would the good created between people not

immediately be destroyed by other features of life? In the way we live, free creation of our lives is impossible, and the power to create has taken refuge in the making of things, in art. For Tchaikovsky, free creation could only take the form of music. Only through music was he able to live his humanity.

In the above quotation Tchaikovsky uses the term 'work' to refer to his writing of music. In other places, however, the difference between 'work' and 'creation' is an important one for him. For example, referring to a particular composition, he says:

> From the first moment that the right frame of mind came to me it has never left me. With one's inner life in this condition composing ceases altogether to be work: it becomes unalloyed pleasure. While you are writing you do not notice how time passes and if no one came to interrupt you would sit there and never leave your work all day. (116)

'Work' and 'composing' contradict each other. What is the criterion for this contradiction? The criterion itself is not overtly stated, but the reason is given why composing cannot be work. This reason is 'pleasure'. It is impossible to regard composing as work, because composing is pleasure, and, we infer, work contradicts pleasure. If pleasure can indicate the opposition between work and creating, it must be an essential, rather than an accidental, characteristic. However, this does not yet make clear why pleasure is essential to creating, composing.

Still, it is exactly in line with the modern definition of art, as formulated by Kant (Critique of Judgement, paragraph 43). He contrasts two kinds of making things: art and craft. The first, he says, is pleasure, play and freedom. The other is dependent upon its remunerative result, and attractive only because of it. Craft is toil, one of the necessities of how we live. It is just a particular kind of work, an occupation of the dull everyday, forced upon us by the constraints of our way of living together, by the necessity to produce for the 'market' so as to 'earn a living'. It seems, then, that the opposition pleasure/non-pleasure, can be replaced by freedom/constraint; and this second pair is really the primary one. Freedom means that you are yourself in your activity. Constraint means that your activity is a means for something else; and therefore, it is this 'else' which is in the activity, but not your self. In constraint, your self is set aside, concealed, forgotten, humiliated. The criterion, then, which opposes art to craft, or to work, is this: whose purpose is being carried out in the activity? If it is your own purpose, then it is a free activity, and so art and pleasure. Otherwise, whatever the appearance, it is work, activity constrained under a foreign purpose, and non-pleasure.

We can see the relation between Greek *praxis* and our modern 'art'.

Our idea of art could not have existed in ancient Greece, where the relations between people was the realm for the human purpose to realise its own freedom. When the way towards the other person has become blocked, then humanity realises itself along a path which does not link human to human, but human to things. Thus 'art' has come about.

But how is it possible to follow the necessity of freedom, even only in the creation of things, when the principles of ordinary life stand in opposition to it? One cannot just sweep these contrary principles out of one's living room, to clear the space needed for one's free creation. Tchaikovsky has to escape from everyone's everyday in order to follow his own purpose. For him, art requires another *life*.

> [T]he artist lives a double life: the normal human life and the artistic ... the most important requirement for composing is, I repeat, the opportunity to get rid of the cares of the first of these two lives, if only for a time, and to devote oneself entirely to the second. For compositions of the first category, [this means 'works which I write on my own initiative, consequent upon a spontaneous inclination, an irresistible inner need'] no effort of will, not even the slightest, is called for. One only has to obey one's inner voice and if the melancholy contingencies of the first life do not overwhelm the second, the artistic, then work proceeds with quite unbelievable ease. You forget everything, the spirit throbs with some quite incomprehensible and inexpressibly sweet excitement, you will certainly not manage to keep up with it as it rushes off *somewhere*, time passes literally unnoticed ... It is quite impossible to recount what these moments are like. When one is in this state what comes from the pen or merely sinks into one's head ... is always good and if nothing, no external jolt, takes you back to the other, normal life, then it should emerge as the perfect representation of what the particular artist has it in him to achieve. (129)

There are two lives; one is the 'normal' life, the other that of art; and they mutually exclude each other, are irreconcilable. One of the two, normal life, seems to be the more powerful one. For it is this which hinders the artistic life. The life of art has to find shelter from normal life. Normal life, on the other hand, couldn't care less about artistic life. This disequilibrium between the two lives is inevitable, as normal life is the life of the many, while the artistic life is led only by an isolated few. Artistic life cannot rely upon itself; it is entirely dependent upon normal life, from which it rescues its short hours of freedom. The artist, then, has to live a 'double life'. And, although he suffers under these painful conditions, splitting up the unity of his own life, he does not think about how to transform the normal life so that it may

comprise what is now separated from it in the artistic life. For the artist, to be free from the oppressions of normal life means to be free to create in the artistic one.

The most astonishing fact about creation is its relation to the good. As long as that 'other, normal life' does not thrust itself back in, the form which freedom creates for itself 'is always good'. If it is not being interfered with, the creative power simply cannot produce anything 'bad'. Freedom *is* the self-creating good. The good can only grow out of freedom; whatever freedom creates, must be good. And 'normal' life, inhibiting freedom, creation, the good, is not a free creation.

This is again reminiscent of *praxis* in Aristotle. There, human non-contemplative activity and the good are linked in the activity by which people relate to each other. The aim in these relations is to keep the good in view, to un-forget it, to do well, to create the good in human action. Other than the good, and beyond this human relation itself, there is no further end involved. This good is the thoroughly human purpose. However, the good is not secure in relations between people. It is constantly in danger of being obfuscated and subdued by a false purpose, arising out of other forces in life. This is why human relations stand in need of a wisdom of un-forgetting.

The wisdom of un-forgetting the good in human relations is defunct in modernity. Instead, we now have to look for the relation between the good and human activity in a special field of making things. The sole outcome of true, that is unhampered, creation of things is the good. But here too, the good is fragile; it is permanently threatened by 'normal life'. And it may only give itself shape, if the obtrusive everyday has been successfully shut out, forgotten. We might say, therefore, that it is now art, that particular making of things, which is the wisdom of un-forgetting the good. However, the idea of *praxis* is that the good is being created within day-to-day life. The creation of the good in art, by contrast, needs another life, apart from the 'normal' one.

What kind of good is it that art unconceals? It is not enough to say, as we did before, that art is a relation which goes from human to thing. For the end of art is not this thing, or the thinghood. Art creates a thing so that it will be perceived by the human senses. And it is only here that the good comes in. The criterion of whether an artistic creation is good, does not lie in that creation itself, rather in the human senses which perceive it. We do not give up the humanity of our senses, or their criterion, as we enter our turbid daily normality. But in that life, their purpose has to remain unfulfilled.

The purpose of the human senses can only be satisfied in art. The human senses need art. And, since art is a creation in freedom and of freedom, the human senses need freedom. When the human being is able to make according to its own purpose and need, the outcome will always satisfy the senses, that is, be good, beautiful. The senses are not

'applied' to the finished work from the outside, like a measure, in order to see whether it passes the test. The criterion of the senses is already intrinsic to free making. The senses are not only honoured in the perception of art, but in the making of it too. This is why creating is accompanied by 'inexpressibly sweet excitement', 'unalloyed pleasure'. We must not be misled by the way such words as 'pleasure' and 'excitement' are used nowadays. This stale taste, this stench, they have acquired by being used to make us take falsehood for truth. Nothing but freedom leads to those feelings in their true sense. Nothing in the bleakness and haste of the ordinary, therefore, can afford them. Pleasing the senses in some superficial meaning only lulls and deceives and erodes them. It belongs to the essence of freedom to create a human world, where 'things' don't speak the language of 'raw' nature, but the language of humanity. In a human world, freedom forms 'things' so that they speak to the human senses in their own indigenous language.

The way out of normal life, however, becomes increasingly obstructed. It is so hard to clear a road. The falsehood of our life spreads such darkness that we can't see the path. The pitiful effusions which some (well-fed) people today present as artistic creation only betray the degree to which our own way of living mutilates us.

As opposed to *techne*, there is no *eidos* involved in the making of art. For a work of art, there does not exist any 'what-it-means-to-be'. Its making cannot be described as 'putting a form into matter'. The *eidos* was always known beforehand, and the making of a thing consisted in actualising it in some matter. The realisation of the *eidos* formed a *thing*, not the good. Freedom, then, can only create itself where there is no *eidos* involved to determine the form.

The question then is this: how can a work of art be understood? Artistic creation is a solitary process. How can it create something which makes sense to another person?

> It is not for me, of course, to decide the value of my works, but I can say with my hand on my heart that (with very few exceptions) I have *lived through and experienced them all myself* and they come straight from my heart. It is the greatest joy to me to know that there is a kindred soul in the world who responds to my music with sensitivity. The knowledge that she will experience everything that was in my mind when I wrote a particular work always warms and inspires me. (210)

A true creation has been 'lived through' by its creator. The process of creation is the experience of the work of art being created. A creation is the form of freedom that has been actually lived through. The peculiarity of art is that this freedom can only be lived in the making of a certain kind of object. And it is this object, then, which becomes the basis for another person to re-live the experience of the creative process.

No object that is not a work of art can be re-lived in this way.

Thus, this kind of production, guided by freedom, rather than by an *eidos*, 'makes sense'. It does so in the free experience of giving form; and this freely created sense can then be conceived in the re-experience granted by perception. Thus, art shows that what freely pours out of me belongs to the whole of society. *My* activity is social activity. *My* free creation is, potentially, everybody's free creation. *My* good is everybody's good. In what *I* have made, somebody *else* will recognise their own inner being. The delight I enjoyed in forming it, will be the source of pleasure for another person contemplating it. The ordinary everyday, being an obstacle to creation, is, therefore, at the same time, a barrier between me and others. The retreat of the artist into solitary creation is the refuge for a kind of sociality shut out from ordinary life.

What is it that guides free making? Tchaikovsky's answer is that its principle of inspiration cannot be explained.

> How can one recount those imprecise feelings which one experiences in writing an instrumental work without a precise subject? It is a purely lyrical process, a personal confession in music which boils up for a long time then, by its very nature, pours itself out in the form of sounds, just as a lyric poet expresses himself in verse. The only difference is that music has incomparably more powerful resources and a more subtle language in which to express the infinite variety of human emotion. Usually the *germ* of a new work appears suddenly and quite unexpectedly. If the ground is fertile, i.e. if one feels disposed to work, this seed puts down roots with incredible strength and rapidity, starts to show above the ground, pushes up a stalk, then leaves and branches, and finally flowers. This comparison is the only way I can describe the creative process. The difficult thing is getting the germ and ensuring that this seed falls on fertile ground. All the rest happens of its own accord. There is no point in trying to describe in words the measureless bliss of the feeling which possesses me when I have the main idea and when it starts to grow into distinct shapes. You forget everything, you become almost demented, you tremble and throb inwardly, you can scarcely manage to get the sketches down as one idea piles upon another. ... Only one thing is essential: that the main idea and the general outline of all the separate parts should not be arrived at by a process of *looking for them*, but should suggest themselves through the supernatural, inscrutable power called *inspiration*, which no one has ever explained. (106f)

The creative process, can be expressed either directly or indirectly. Its direct expression is the work of art itself. It is expressed indirectly, when something is said *about* it. What is *about* something can never be

the thing itself. The closest Tchaikovsky gets to saying what inspiration is, without actually being involved in it, is to use a metaphor: the growth of a germ. In this use, three kinds of creative processes overlap. First, he uses one creative process, the poetic device of metaphor, in order to express another one which he can't put into language in any other way. Then, the content of the metaphor conveys the idea of natural creation, organic growth. Through these two, he hopes to communicate the idea of free artistic creation, composing in particular.

Tchaikovsky's *metaphor* seems to be *the most accurate* form possible to convey something about inspiration. How else could inspiration be described? It can certainly not be logically demonstrated. This would mean that it necessarily followed out of the definition of something else, making free creation dependent on that thing outside itself. Evidently, creation would then no longer be free, but only dependent. The nature of freedom or inspiration, therefore, is such that it is impossible to demonstrate it.

Once the beginning is found, creation grows 'of its own accord'. Creation possesses its own inner, independent force and necessity which drive the shaping of its form, like a tiny seed which contains the energy to grow and differentiate itself into a whole plant. How do you get hold of such a potent beginning? Tchaikovsky emphasises that it must not be 'looked for'. This is related to the indemonstrability of inspiration. I am looking for something if, for example, I have misplaced it. I know exactly what it is, but I am unable to find it; I can expect to find it, and so, knowing what it is, I go and look for it. 'Looking for' something suggests previous acquaintance with it. But of the beginning of a new creation, of something that has never yet existed, that nobody has ever experienced, no previous knowledge is possible. One cannot look for the creative beginning, but when one has got it, one knows it without doubt.

In opposition to this, the beginning in logical thinking must be earnestly looked for. It sets out from a more or less well-known given and looks for another, more firmly known given, from which the first can be derived. This beginning entirely depends on previously-possessed knowledge. It lies in thinking and, as such, comes *after* the reality that it is about. This reality belongs to the normal life which is opposed to art. Logical thinking is about the world that we make, neither the making nor the perception of which can fill us with joy and delight. Demonstration belongs to a world in which the humanity of our senses has to remain unrecognised. And alas, thanks to the syllogism and the beginning, there is a way of making this world appear to be necessary. The beginning of the creative process, by contrast, is a *real* beginning, the beginning of a new actualisation of freedom. It cannot be got hold of by looking for it, and nothing can be demonstrated from it. This beginning precedes the object that is about to grow out of it. If the freedom of its growth is not interfered with, this work of art will

always be good. It will have the proper character of the human world, something not to be found in our common everyday.

III

THE TIMES of Goethe and Hegel would be nothing without classical Greece. Thinkers of that epoch were grappling with modernity, which had finally come to shake up the backward German countries. Changes in the order of things were not threatening to intellectuals, but liberating. They seemed to bring close to hand the possibility of forming a more human society. It looked as though history could be consciously made, created. Thus, to some, the deadening gulf between art and life appeared to be bridgeable. Life could accord more with human dignity when it became more 'artistic'. But how to shape humanity's new residence? And if humanity had led its whole life in prison, how could anything be known about freedom? Ancient Greek culture was the criterion which gave thinkers of the time their bearings. They brought past and present into a continuous dialogue, in the course of which the two epochs shaped each other. From the modern point of view, the past was perceived so that it came to be the ideal. In this way, the past proved that the ideal was not a mere 'idea', but could indeed be actual and lived. This conviction was carried into the present, and was the backbone of thinking about how to mould modern life.

Kant did not think along those lines. But through Schiller and Goethe, the modern German version of the classical ideal was accomplished. Its key notions were taken from neither one culture nor the other, but grew out of both. Already, however, for the slightly-younger Hölderlin, the enterprise had become unreal: old Greece was not to be brought back to life and the ideal was not to be resuscitated. Hegel might be considered the culmination of that epoch, and at the same time, also its tragic end. His thinking proves the actuality of the ideal, but an actuality attainable only in thought.

The purpose of the ideal, formed by looking back into the past, was to rescue the present. But what rescue is available, if the present is seen as Hölderlin saw it?

> It is a harsh word, and I say it nonetheless, because it is the truth: I cannot conceive of any people more torn apart than the Germans. You see craftsmen, but no human beings, thinkers, but no human beings, youngsters and established people, but no human beings. Is this not a battlefield, where hands and arms or any parts of the body lie chopped to pieces, one on top of the other, while the spilt life-blood trickles away into the sand? (Hyperion)

Hölderlin sees a 'people' so 'torn apart' that he cannot recognise any 'human beings'. Surely, would not anyone with common sense know that what Hölderlin perceives, 'craftsmen', 'thinkers', 'established people', *are* 'human beings', rather than spiders, owls or lions? Hölderlin, however, does not use 'human being' in a zoological sense. He speaks of 'youngsters' and 'established people', 'craftsmen' and 'thinkers' as separate particulars, opposed to universally formed 'human beings', concerned with general humanity. This opposition is most clearly seen with regard to the professions. They are defined specialisations into which a society cuts up infinite, powerful humanity, replacing its unity with a heap of dead bits, where 'hands and arms or any parts of the body lie chopped to pieces'. People in professions produce for exchange and relate to each other through exchange. They do not keep present in their mind the good of life as a whole, to use Aristotle's expression, and therefore they cannot relate to each other according to what is humanly good. Without this, they are not really human beings. And, when human beings relate to each other in that inhuman way, they can no longer constitute a 'people'. There is nothing that may hold them together in one whole unified from within; the people is 'torn apart'. So Hölderlin equates this to a 'battlefield', where only severed limbs and blood are to be found. It is a heap of wasted humanity.

Hölderlin was one of Hegel's best friends. They had lived and worked in close contact as students in Tübingen, and later in Frankfurt. 'Battlefield' might well have been one of the words they shared in their discussions. We have seen that Hegel uses it to characterise civil society. To this extent the poet and the philosopher are unanimous. Hegel writes: 'In civil society, each is his own purpose, and all else is nothing to him.' (PhR par 182, addition) Thus, for individuals in civil society, the human good can only be nothing. These civil individuals cannot see beyond their own purpose and concern themselves with what is good for the other person. Yet, they produce for each other, exchange with each other and so form a kind of whole — a 'people', 'civil society'. But it is a 'battlefield', a whole which is 'torn apart'.

Hölderlin and Hegel are both concerned about the destruction of wholeness in the way people live together. The underlying conviction is that the true meaning of life is union. And from this it is derived that the union 'ought' to actualise itself. But what is to be done about this 'ought'? From here the two friends go in different directions. One poetically depicts society as an unarticulated, monstrous heap. (Who will not be tempted to speculate on the relation between the despair evoked by this sight and his later madness?) But this portrayal seems to be a dead end, it does not lead on to any change, either in actual life or in the poet's understanding of it. The philosopher would not leave it at that.

The aftermath of the French Revolution had taught many thinkers

in Germany that history cannot be made after a purpose that human beings set for themselves. But Hegel is not led to conclude from this that history is therefore devoid of *any* purpose. On the contrary, that is a thought impossible for him to think. History has a purpose, an almighty purpose which nothing has the power to withstand. And instead of grafting a purpose onto history, the intellectual task is to read out of it this grand purpose which it already contains. Only then will the present be seen as a form of the overall purpose, the unfolding idea. Looked at aright, the heap of wasted humanity will be but an appearance of the rescued idea.

The search for unity in the idea arises at a certain point in history. In one of his early works, 'The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy' (1801, 'Differenzschrift'), Hegel has a chapter entitled: 'Need of Philosophy' [*Bedürfnis der Philosophie*]. In it, he writes:

> When the might of union [*Macht der Vereinigung*] vanishes from the life of the human beings and the oppositions [*Gegensätze*] have lost their living relation [*lebendige Beziehung*] and reciprocity [*Wechselwirkung*] and gain independence, the need of philosophy arises. (Diff, p 91)

Philosophy, then, answers a need which came about in people's 'real' life. What is a need? Need belongs to the movement of organic life. It directs activity outwards onto an object with the aim of making it part of the subject. Need is embedded in the very essence of living. It is not overcome by its satisfaction. Life continually recreates its needs, and also produces new needs. Once they are in existence, they will be recreated until further changes in the organism of life make them obsolete. Thus, at a certain period in history the need of philosophy arose naturally out of the way people lived. From then on, philosophy has to keep answering that need, until — but this is no longer Hegel — new developments of life remove the need for it.

The organism that brings forth the need for philosophy is 'the life of the human beings'. Despite its grammatical vagueness, the meaning of this formulation clearly refers to the life which belongs to all the human beings together, the life that is formed by, and consists of, their living together. A change in this living together brings forth the need for philosophy. 'The might of union', which used to hold the separate human beings together in their joint life, vanished and by that their needs changed. Fifteen years after the Differenzschrift, in his Lectures on the History of Philosophy, Hegel referred to the splitting up of the whole social body of the ancient *polis* by the division of labour and the separation into estates. (See our p 74f.) From the standpoint of philosophy, then, Hölderlin's picture of disunion is but an expression of the need of philosophy.

The life that brings forth the need of philosophy is an 'organism' only by analogy. When it loses its 'might of union', this does not mean that peoples' physiological bodies fall apart. The relation that holds life together is of a spiritual nature. In the paragraph following the one from which the quotation about the need of philosophy has been taken, we find 'art' instead of 'might of union'. Times when the cohesion has been lost, are times

> ... when the more profound, serious relation of living art [*lebendige Kunst*] cannot be understood. (Diff, p 92)

What is 'living art'? In what way do the two words in *'lebendige Kunst'* bring together the ideas of life and of art? *Lebendig* is derived from the present participle *lebend*, 'living'. The proper meaning of the derivation is somewhat stronger than that of the participle. It refers to the activity of life, 'to have and express life' in an emphatic sense. A *'lebendiges Kind'* ('living' child), for example, would not refer to a child that is not dead, but to one who expresses the activity of life more than others. *Lebendige Kunst*, 'living art' (or should we say 'art alive'?) is no more a metaphor than *lebendiges Kind*. It is art which has and expresses life in an emphatic sense. Hegel's meaning of 'art' thus evidently differs from the common one. Asking the meaning for ordinary usage would lead to a recitation of a list like 'temples, tragedies, statues, vases, paintings' to try and convey the meaning of 'art'. And in the form of the corresponding artefacts, this meaning seems to have all the evidence on its side. But on what grounds do we call these objects 'art'? If it was *lebendige Kunst* which, at one time, allowed union in human life, holding differences together in one unity, this is incompatible with that usual meaning. For Hegel, art was lived, it was the life of people, their union was a living work of art, and their history was art alive. In themselves, apart from that union, those objects are not alive, they rather represent *'un-lebendige Kunst'*, 'un-living art', 'dead art'.

Loss of 'understanding' of 'living art', 'art alive', only expresses a loss of this art as a 'might of union' in real life. The new ways of relating to one another no longer grow out of direct living creativity. From this loss of underlying union stems the new need for unity: philosophy.

When living art dies, the need of philosophy emerges. But who feels this need for philosophy? Who is the subject of that need? We find a hint at an answer in a later work, the History of Philosophy.

> From the point of view of spirit, one may posit philosophy as precisely that which is most necessary. (HPh I, p 51)

Philosophy does not emerge just by chance, it is 'necessary'. This is the case because it answers to an essential need. But this need and

necessity exist only when looked at 'from the point of view of spirit', or for spirit. The form of life in which human beings partake is of a spiritual nature. It is one spirit in which they are all joined together. And for this spirit, philosophy becomes a necessity when it can no longer appear in the form of living art. The human being as a spiritual being needs philosophy as the only way to overcome the disunity of actuality and to regain life in thought. In the form of philosophy, spirit overcomes the break-up in actuality.

Spirit's need for philosophy, or the fact that philosophy is a necessity for spirit, derive from what, more precisely, spirit is. It is from what it means to be spirit that its need and necessity logically ensue. This nature of spirit gives birth to the necessity and need of both art and philosophy. And so Hegel's explanation of the 'general and absolute need' of art is one of thinking as well.

> The general and absolute need from which art (on its formal side) springs, has its origin in the fact that the human being is *thinking* consciousness, i.e. that it makes what it is and what is in general, out of itself *for itself*. Things in nature are only *immediate* and *once*. Yet the human being as spirit *duplicates* itself, in that it first of all *is* as things in nature are, but then it is just as much *for* itself, it looks at itself, represents itself to itself, thinks, and is spirit only through this active being-for-itself. (Aesth, p 30f)

The human being is spirit, or 'thinking consciousness'. This is an activity of a particular form: the human being 'makes what it is and what is in general, out of itself *for itself*.' Thinking consciousness, spirit, is nothing if it does not think, if it is not conscious *of* something. Consciousness cannot be empty; it can only be more or less developed. The content, that which is being looked at by consciousness, is the product of this consciousness itself. 'Spirit *duplicates* itself.' Thinking consciousness makes the thought which it thinks. What consciousness is about, is not poured into it from the outside, as if it were an empty receptacle, but has been made by itself. In other words, spirit is the active relation between subject and object. The subject is the source of activity, consciousness, 'I'. The activity of the subject makes the object 'out of itself *for itself*', so that it may 'look at itself'.

This duplication of itself is a 'general and absolute need' for spirit. Spirit lives in and through the activity of making out of itself for itself. One form which the activity that 'springs' from that absolute need might take is art. If the subject of the activity is the unbroken general life of a people, then the activity will take the form of *living* art. When, however, the home of living art, the original unity, breaks up, then two new forms of spirit's activity come about: what we normally call 'art' and philosophy.

The aim of spirit making out of itself for itself is to recognise itself,

to be self-conscious of itself. It makes *for* itself, so that it can look at itself. And when it sees what it has thus made, it will recognise it as the product of its own activity. It will say 'this is me'. This also precisely describes Hegel's meaning of freedom and reason. Formally, there is freedom when the object does not determine the activity of the subject as a foreign power. It does not matter what this dominating object is. It could be a thing made, or a thought, it could be domesticated or undomesticated nature, or society and its institutions. The object cannot reign over the subject when this recognises its own self in the object. Recognition of oneself is reason and freedom.

> Thus the general need for art is reasonable in that the human being has to elevate the inner and outer world into its spiritual consciousness as an object in which it recognises its own self. On the one hand, it satisfies the need of this spiritual freedom by making within itself what is [into something that is] for itself, but also by giving outward reality to this being-for-itself, and thus in this duplication of itself by bringing what is within it into sight and knowledge for itself and others. This is the free reasonableness of the human being in which, as all acting and knowing, so art too, has its ground and necessary origin. (Aesth, 31f)

There are *two* ways in which spirit can make something. Its making may either take place entirely within itself or be directed into the outside world. The human being can make 'within itself what is [into something that is] for itself'. This is thinking. Thinking is about 'what is'. But it does not leave this given as it is. Thinking makes what is into something *for* itself, for thinking; it makes a thought. Secondly, the human being can also make 'by giving outward reality' to something, 'by bringing what is within it into sight and knowledge for itself and others'. This is art for Hegel. The human being has the power to transform the given material world by remaking it according to its own human design. The two ways of making, then, have this in common: in both, the making subject produces a human form in front of its (inner or outer) eye to look at it and recognise itself in it. When this self-recognition is the aim of making, then it answers the need of spirit, and the subject is free. Making is then 'spiritual freedom'. This free relation between subject and object is also what Hegel calls 'reason', 'free reasonableness'. There is also the opposite kind of making, unfree, forced making, in which self-recognition is not the purpose, and the intrinsically free subject is used as a slave. If recognition were to occur here, it would mean that the enslaving force, under which the subject had to make, deluded by false recognition, would have been broken.

There is only one kind of making which is *lebendig*, living and alive. This making is that of 'living art', *lebendige Kunst*. This is the unbroken, uninjured life of the whole community. The kind of things which we

usually mean by the word 'art', Hegel never calls *'lebendig'* – a thing, as a thing, can never be alive, nor does he ever award philosophy that honour. We will see below, however, that the whole effort of his life's work aims at reviving the fire of life in thinking, in the notion. The grief about the death of living art is to be overcome by giving birth to living thinking.

Hegel was convinced that this living art existed historically at some time in ancient Greece. In his works, we find three references to it. The first, chronologically, comes from the Differenzschrift. Above, we have studied the passage from this work, where we learnt the expression 'living art'. The description of the more specifically historical features to which Hegel might have wished to refer with his coinage occur in two later works: the Aesthetics and the Philosophy of History. Hegel lectured on both of these topics for over a decade until his death (November 1831). His lecture-notes were transformed into book-form and published only posthumously. Already in 1805, however, he had expressed (to Voss) his wish to lecture on Aesthetics, a wish which not realised until his time in Heidelberg (1816-1818). In Berlin (from 1818 onwards) he held four courses of lectures on Aesthetics, and five on the Philosophy of History. They emphasise different aspects in their depiction of living art in ancient Greece. Overall, we might already be struck by the extent to which Hegel's philosophy is explicitly all about life.

Hegel's aim in the section on Greece in the Philosophy of History was to grasp the *notion* of Greece. It consisted in a special relation between nature and spirit (PhH p 238f). For Hegel, this notion has a threefold way of expressing itself: in the 'subjective work of art', in the 'objective work of art' and in 'the political work of art'. Hegel talks about them in this order, but he does not explicitly state what the relation is between them. While under the 'subjective work of art', he refers to Homer's heroes, the 'political work of art' is the *polis*. Thus, it seems that, both logically and historically, Hegel's subjective and political work of art cannot exist at the same time. They simply belong to different historical epochs. He thinks that the heroic days were historical reality at some time, but came to an end soon after the Trojan War; whereas the *polis* only developed afterwards. And, looked at logically, it appears that the hero cannot be tied to a constitution, to any given objective law; for a constitution can only bind citizens together in a democracy, while the hero creates his own historical objectivity.

The 'subject' referred to in 'the subjective work of art' is the bodily appearance of the human being itself.

> This is the subjective beginning of Greek art, in which the human being elaborated its physical being, in free beautiful movement and vigorous agility, to a work of art. (PhH, p 242)

The human being is also a 'physical being'. By nature it has a body. This body is given to us as human nature only, not as a work of art. In ancient Greece, however, according to Hegel, this natural human body was made into a 'work of art', nature, in other words, was made into an element of freedom. Thus the human body became an 'organ of spirit' (p 243), an 'accomplished organ for the will' (p 241). It had become nature freed. The human body was a nature which had shown itself to be open for freedom, to absorb the human purpose. No necessity of nature led to the art of discus-throwing or to any athletic game. Nothing but the free human will was involved. Art intertwines necessity and freedom, nature and spirit, so that spirit shines through every bit of its physical element. The body becomes a 'work of art', because the subject makes its own body the object of this making, and recognises itself in this body that it has made. The human being makes its own physical nature for itself.

By the 'objective work of art', Hegel denotes the 'content' of the 'notion of Greek spirit', or the 'object' [*Gegenstand*] into which the 'notion of Greek spirit' has been turned (PhH p 244). Hegel sees this 'object' or 'content' in religion. Here, Greek spirit is beyond any individual effort; it is eternal truth, holding as such for everybody; it is 'objective'. The underlying notion of art, however, is the same as in the 'subjective work of art': the relation between nature and spirit, 'naturalness shaped into spirituality' (PhH p 239). This is the basis for the Greek Gods having to appear in human form, 'for out of this the spiritual beams forth' (ibid p 249).

Finally, the inner meaning of Greece finds its third expression in what Hegel calls the 'political work of art'. Right at the beginning of the section in which he expounds this, he calls it *'lebendiger allgemeiner Geist'*, 'general spirit alive' or 'living general spirit' (PhH, p 250). The 'political work of art', the way in which a society shapes itself, its way of life, is 'living spirit'. A work of art is living and alive, when it is lived by people. Corresponding to what we said earlier, discussing the quotation from the Differenzschrift, 'living general spirit' does not refer to a spirit who has not died yet, but a spirit which is living and expressing its life, forming and enjoying it, in some fuller and higher sense. Such a life, as 'common', everyday life, is unknown to us today. What we ordinarily call 'art' is the closest we might come to it. However, if we are acquainted only with today's experience of art, the character of the *living* work of art must be very difficult to grasp for us. Today, art is isolated from ordinary life, while a living work of art is general and social. It is the 'might of union' between people. When this work of art dies, then the need for philosophy emerges. But specialised thinking cannot itself form the living union between people. At best, it can only grasp aspects of those new forces and forms which now hold society together in an 'un-living' way.

For Hegel, the political work of art, or, in brief, 'the [Greek] state',

'unites' the subjective with the objective work of art. For in it, the 'living general spirit', mentioned in the paragraph above, is at the same time also 'the self-conscious spirit of the individuals' (PhH, p 250). The political work of art is objective in a similar way to religion – the objective work of art. The general living spirit holds true for the whole of the community; it is the truth, objectively valid. The state rests on law as a necessity which ties everybody together. But again, this is not a blind necessity, a frightful, inscrutable power over and against the powerless individual. It is human-made necessity; a necessity created by humans in order to allow for freedom. On the other hand, this political work of art is also *subjective* insofar as it is alive in the consciousness, knowledge and will of each individual. 'To the Greek his native country was a necessity, without which he could not live.' (PhH, p 253) The individual knows himself only as member of a particular state, he wills the life of that state because it is objectively valid. The individual does not carry any differing private opinion or conviction, or a voice of conscience, directing it against the general. What we have thus outlined as the meaning of 'political work of art' is most fully realised only in 'democracy'. For Hegel, a 'political work of art' cannot but be a 'democracy'. For, here, it is living spirit which animates the general whole as much as each individual. The purpose of the individual is the objective purpose of the whole. And so, the concern of the whole can safely lie in the hands of individuals.

These are all living works of art. They are living because they are not about making a certain kind of thing, but are the way in which the community creates itself. Art is the process by which the subject gives 'outward reality' to itself. But the subject here is a people, the Greeks. They thus 'brought what was within them into sight and knowledge for themselves and others'.

When Hegel talks about ancient Greece in his Aesthetics, however, he emphasises different aspects from those in the Philosophy of History. To begin with, in the Aesthetics he only takes into account the heroic times. Furthermore, he does not relate them to the 'subjective work of art', as he did in the Philosophy of History. Finally, he concentrates on the hero's making of *things*. That he still is discussing *living art*, however, is evident from the way he describes the meaning of this heroic making. He mentions, for example, that the heroes slaughtered and roasted the meat they consumed, broke in their own horses, made their own weaponry. But what matters is not the particular objects being made. What is important is rather what it means to the producing subject to make and have made them.

> In such a mode of life, the human being has the feeling, in everything it uses and everything with which it surrounds itself, that it has produced it out of itself, and therefore, in external things, has to do with what is its own and not with alienated

> objects lying outside its own sphere, where it is master. Then, of course, the activity of collecting and forming the material, of necessity would not appear as painful drudgery, but as easy, satisfying work, and no hindrance and no failure can get in its way ... In brief, everywhere the first joy in new discoveries breaks through, the freshness of possession, the capture of delight; in everything the human being is at home, in everything the human being has present before itself the power of its arm, the skill of its hand, the cleverness of its own spirit, or a result of its courage and bravery. In this way alone have the means of satisfaction not been degraded to a purely external matter; we see their living origin ourselves, and the living consciousness of the value which the human being puts on them; because in them it has things not dead or killed by custom, but its own closest productions. (Aesth p 261)

It is part of human life to produce things. In an 'artistic' way of life, these things are *'external'* only insofar as they stand as material objects outside the subject. In terms of their meaning, however, they belong to the subject, are 'its own'. How can I know that some external object belongs to me? It is not because I possess the deeds to this property, or because I can produce a receipt for them. Such items belong to an entirely different world, in which I can indeed only 'externally' acquire things. But here, we have to talk about the inner meaning of ownership, according to which something is my *own*, if I can recognise my *own* in it. This 'ownership' is very unlike the possession of private property, to which I am related only abstractly. Normally, that is in our reality, I acquire things in return for money. Before this exchange brought them into my hands, they were totally foreign to me. I externally make them my own first by acquiring them through the abstract mechanism of exchange, then using them. I might even, for want of any other possibility of expressing my humanity, try and find myself in them. Although there is nothing of me there, I might mistakenly identify myself with them.

But true ownership portrays myself to myself, shows my own to me as I am. The world into which I look, in which I live, is then my 'home', something that I have made for myself. The world is myself; I am the world. Of course, the making of this world cannot be called 'work' in the sense of the ordinary 'drudgery' by which we earn our so-called living. For, the making of the world as our home is the source of true satisfaction and self-expression, the self-forming of our humanity. The opposite of this relation is called 'alienation'. When I don't find myself in the world, in the things around me, then this world is alien to me, is not my home. It does not belong to me and I don't belong to it. The production to which it confines me is my continued alienation from myself, because I can't find myself in what I produce. I neither

understand the purpose of this world, nor the purpose of my own life.

The process of creating our own world is not a means to an end. It cannot result in lifeless things, kept in a box, to be taken out for use when needed. Nor does creating your own world mean that you build yourself this smug dream-home, a place for 'leisure', where you sit in your armchair and watch television all day. The world that we make for ourselves is our life. The objects that we produce are our life-process in objectified form, bits of the continuous creation of our life. Today, trapped within alienation, these objects take on the forms called 'things'. But making them humanly would be the joy and pleasure, the realised freedom of our life, the realised possibilities of our mind, body and senses. The shaped matter is not an instrument but the material reminder of these possibilities. Looking at or holding this shaped matter continues the process that brought it into being, reliving and recreating that experience.

Our world today is overcrowded with 'things'. They continually shout out 'look at me!', 'have me!', 'buy me!' They are ready-made to be used by us, made in some process extraneous to us, independently of our need. Yet they want us to discover our need of them. As soon as we have taken possession of them, their attraction begins to wither. We cannot have an essential relation to such things, standing outside us as self-contained, complete and independent little pieces of organised matter. Thus our 'means of satisfaction' have been 'degraded to a purely external matter.' In artistic life, or living art, the opposite is true. In relation to this truly creative life, we really need different words for 'thing' and for 'use'. It is only *things* that can be *used*. And it is only the *use* of a *thing* which makes it into a *means*. 'Things', 'use', 'means' and 'ends' all belong to the loss of the living relation, to the impossibility of creating our own life.

Hegel was keen on living art because it showed him a relation between subject and object opposed to the one prevailing in modernity. For in the idea of living art, the subject is free, or, which is saying the same thing, the subject is able to grasp the whole of the object. This grasp, occurring within a living relation, gets hold of the object directly. And this direct living relation with the object is a making of it as a whole. Thus living art is a relation of freedom. In modernity, the exact opposite seems to hold. Hegel's task, however, is to show that this is, indeed, only an appearance, by demonstrating that the subject-object relation can be restored. In thinking, they could become an analogue of their relation in living art. In 'living thinking', the subject can make the whole of its thought-object, can recreate the whole as an object in thought, and, as a result of this kind of abstract making of its world, can be free.

In modernity, the relation between the individual and the outside world in which it participates has turned into a relation of part and whole. From here stems the dissatisfaction of the individual and its

sense of being lost. But from here also originates the modern task of philosophy. We have seen that, in antiquity, philosophy emerged with the disappearance of union among people. With the complete splitting-up of society in modernity, the work of philosophy became ever more urgent.

The part-whole relation is actually prevalent in all forms of life. But it is in the world of spirit that it poses a problem. The part-whole relation is a relation of dependence, of the parts on the whole, and of the whole on the parts. However, these two dependencies are of different kinds. The whole is dependent on the parts for its realisation. The parts, however, are dependent on the whole in all their activities, in their entire being and meaning. The whole determines the parts, but not the other way round. As long as this determination occurs outside spirit's own realm, spirit remains indifferent towards this asymmetry. When, however, the determination does occur in the spiritual, then it is something against which spirit opposes itself. Determination is against the principle of spirit, barring it from its own self-recognition. And so it will try and find a way of overcoming it.

> True, even immediate human actuality and its events and organisations do not lack a system and a totality of activities; but the whole appears only as a mass of individual details; occupations and activities are sundered and split up into infinitely many parts, so that to individuals only a little particle of the whole can accrue ... (Aesth p 149)

The 'free reasonableness' of the human being consisted in duplicating itself, putting itself out through the making of its own object in order to recognise itself. In modern society, by contrast, the object into which the activity of the subject flows is not the 'own' of that subject. For the object is simultaneously being formed by an infinite number of similar contributions. So that 'to individuals only a little particle of the whole can accrue.' When people do not live together in a form of living art, then the individual cannot directly know the whole, cannot recognise itself in the whole. For, how could the subject, which is itself a whole, recognise itself in an object which is only a minute contribution to the objective whole? Where is the individual going to find itself reflected? How is it going to recognise itself?

The main thought which guides philosophy's effort to overcome the division between part and whole, is that of appearance and essence. According to appearance, there may be no whole, no sense, no truth. In essence, however, they are always there. Just as in the division of labour, 'occupations' are 'split up into many parts', but, despite this multitude, they 'do not lack a system and a totality'. For the particular contributions join up in the whole, parts will be stuck together to form

useful things, and these will be exchanged on the market, through which – so scientific wisdom has it – everybody's need will be served, to one degree or another. In modernity, all 'organisations' and 'activities' function in this manner. They are 'split up' on the surface, yet underneath, there still is the 'whole'.

In normal everyday life, however, this hidden whole's thousandfold determination tears us apart. We are choked by its imposition on us. Looking at our 'community' with the eye of the poet, we see the field of a lost battle, cut up bodies, no one to mourn us. Without knowledge of the underlying truth, we have to make do with the humiliation of our free humanity.

> For the individual human being stands in dependence on external influences, laws, institutions of the state, civil circumstances, which it finds given to it, and it must bow to them whether it has them as its own inner being or not. (Aesth, p 149)

Human society is a whole, given to the individual – but not by an external nature. The way people live together is human-made. The account Hegel gives us of ancient Greek life, showed it to us as much more in harmony with human nature than life in modernity. Human nature was free to flow into the world. And in the humanly shaped world, the human beings recognised their own nature. They had made the world into their home. Their life and their world were a direct expression of their humanity. In modern life, by contrast, the individual stands in all-sided dependency upon the whole. And any attempt to escape its determination must be futile. Thus, it looks as though modern life was against human nature. It humiliates human freedom which has to 'bow' helplessly to it.

The relation between part and whole would be of an entirely different character, however, if the individual had the whole 'as its own inner being'. It would then find that this 'inner being' was also in the world, and so it would recognise this its inner being, itself, in the world. This would then be similar to the relation in the living work of art, the political work of art in particular. The whole is the objective truth. Insofar as this is known and willed by the individual, it is also at the same time subjective. Or, there is no cleft between the object and the subject, the whole does not determine the individual and the latter does not have to bow to an extraneous hidden force. Part and whole in the modern sense do not exist. We know this as the relation of living art; and we will see that, for Hegel, it can become the relation of thinking, and by that, of a thought-existence, too. But in our daily lived reality, which is so 'un-artistic', the subject is a minute, determined part within a whole that it cannot comprehend.

Therefore, the individual, as it appears in this world of prose and

> everyday, is not active out of its own totality, and is not understandable out of [in terms of] itself, but out of [in terms of] something else. (Aesth, p 149)

The individual is a 'totality' because it is a subject. As such, being itself the origin of its activity, it is free. The results of its actions have to be seen in the light of their origin in freedom. Free actions cannot be explained by deriving them from somewhere else. A life created of them would be like a work of art moving through time, a work of art pulsating with true human life. Each new day is new indeed, a creation, is a living a poem. Against this, every day of *our* life brings more of the same; it is 'everyday', it is the pedestrian 'prose' of the grey mind which was never allowed the space to create. In this life, the origin of an individual's actions lies in perverted freedom.

Determined by what is not itself, what is outside itself, the subject is rather like an object. Whether or not the individual imagines something as its own purpose, is irrelevant. What it is actually carrying out is a foreign purpose. Only with reference to this determining subject, can the individual actor be understood. The subject is then just a 'means'. A means is the 'middle' between a purpose in its 'ideal', that is its unrealised form, and its realisation; a means is the tool of the purpose which uses it. A human being which is a means, has unwittingly relinquished its free humanity. This un-free free being is first of all a means to the purpose of the whole. But this must imply a second means-relation. If the individual is a means in that large sense, it must be a means also in a smaller frame. If the individual is a means to the whole, it cannot strip off that 'means-cloak' in dealing with its fellows; to them it must also be a mere means.

> Here is revealed the whole breadth of prose in human existence ... the individual human being, in order to preserve itself in its individuality, must in many ways make itself a means to others, must subserve their limited purposes, and likewise it reduces others to mere means in order to satisfy its own narrow interests. (Aesth, p 148f)

A means cannot create anything. It is opposed to art and belongs to the 'prose in human existence'. This 'prose' of our life forces the means-relation upon us: 'the individual ... must in many ways make itself a means'. A means to what? To somebody else's purpose. However, people living together are not partitioned into those providing the purpose and the others, the means-class, carrying it out. Everybody is both means and purpose at the same time. This is like relations in exchange, which we have analysed before. For a shoemaker to get his bread, he needs to make so many pairs of shoes; and for the baker to get his shoes, he has to bake so many loaves of bread every day. In order

for each 'to preserve' himself, to fulfil his needs and wants, he has to submit to the means-relation in two ways. Firstly, in order to 'satisfy' his own 'narrow interests', each makes *others* into his means, 'reduces others to mere means'. But at the same time, while using others, people also have to 'subserve' to others' 'limited purposes'. In order to use the other as means, they have to make *themselves* into the other's means too. They do this by carrying out something unsatisfactory, something they don't want to do, but have to do: they work.

The means realises a purpose which cannot directly realise itself. In fact, this means-relation is doubly indirect. The shoemaker cannot obtain his bread directly, but only from somebody else, the baker. The baker is the shoemaker's means. But again, the shoemaker can use the means of the baker only indirectly. For he has to make himself into a means, too, into a means for the baker. Whenever people relate to each other through institutions, they are subjected to the means-relation. The individual is but a knot in a huge net of means spreading into all directions. From within this network, the whole world is only accessible through the means-relation. Unless suicide was an option, there is no way out of this means-network for any individual. If you decided to 'liberate' yourself from the means-relation, others would still have no way of relating to you other than as a means to their purposes. On the other hand, let us be sure about this, to say that no *individual* by itself can break free from the means relation, does, of course, in no way mean that we can't do it *together*.

This is the 'doubly indirect' means-relation between individuals. However, this is only being carried out in order to actualise the purpose of the whole. Thus, we live determined by a triple means-relation. Making each other into a means is the double means-relation. And this itself is embedded in a third means-relation. For, it is only the means by which the whole is realised.

In line with Hegel's Philosophy of Right, we have illuminated the means-relation with an example of exchange that hardly goes beyond Aristotle's conception. In today's reality, the network of all-sided means-relations is actually much tighter than this example suggests, first and foremost because the example does not include money.

The individual human being is a subject. As such, its nature is contradicted by its actuality. For, as a subject it ought to be free. However, reality holds it captive within the inescapable means-network. Even though an individual subject might have passed its entire life within that captivity, so that it never actually experienced any freedom, it will still remain an essentially free being. Otherwise it would not be a subject, not human. In spite of all experience to the contrary, the individual human being, in some way, knows that the given way of life *ought to* be different. By its very nature, the individual knows something which it has never experienced, which is un-learnt. There is an irreconcilable contradiction between what ought to be and a

reality which denies what ought to be. The individual will never fully resign itself to lifelong subservience; it will always struggle against what contradicts its nature, and Hegel calls this struggle 'war'.

> The struggle to resolve this contradiction does not get beyond an attempt; it remains a continuous war. (Aesth, p 150)

Why is the means-relation against freedom? It is the meaning of freedom, or spirit, to create, to make something out of freedom, so as to recognise itself in what it has made. But in the means-relation, no self-recognition is possible. The individual 'struggles to resolve' the contradiction between the imposed means-relation and its innate freedom. To the individual, therefore, this contradiction does not appear to be 'natural'. Rather, it appears to be in contradiction with its nature, and therefore a contradiction that should not be, that should be overcome, 'resolved'. Yet how could the individual resolve the problem of all of us living together? Its individualised fight can have no hope of succeeding. 'It remains a continuous war.'

The individual, then, fights a war on two fronts. It struggles against the means-relation in which it is enmeshed and, as we have seen in Part Two, as a member of civil society, it is also in a state of constant warfare against its like for private property. The modern conditions of life could hardly be more inimical to beauty and freedom.

> In all these respects the individual in this sphere does not offer the look of independent and total life [*Lebendigkeit*] and freedom which is the ground of the notion of beauty. (Aesth, p 149)

The individual is a minute cog in the whole interlocking work. It is a means to others, others are a means to it and both are a means to the whole. This individual does not live according to its innate freedom and its *Lebendigkeit*. Wanting normal everyday life is not a 'ground' out of which beauty can grow. Beauty is not a purpose the will sets for itself and then goes about implementing in the world. Beauty 'grows', comes about as though by a natural process, when conditions are favourable to its growth. The plant does not grow out of the seed because some will set itself this purpose. The seed simply grows because, by nature, it contains this energy to unfold. In a similar way, beauty grows as a natural unfolding of free human life. When people can live together in freedom, without having to treat each other as means, then their life is living art. Then, life is true, is as it ought to be, because it corresponds to the nature of the human being; and when life is true, it is also beautiful and creates beauty.

Our life prevents us from recognising ourselves in what we make. With increasing constriction of freedom, the need for self-recognition grows. One way in which this need can try and satisfy itself is art — an

art concerned with the making of particular kinds of things. This art is not a form of life, but it has the task of portraying life to an alienated world in a dead object. In modernity, the possibility of a truly human free life is imprisoned in a cage called 'art', and we are convinced that this is where it belongs. But even art cannot *live* in a cage. It is not alive, it is dead art. Our art is only the image of freedom, tantalisingly dangling before us prisoners, shackled and starved. The more art shows us the ideal of freedom in that unobtainable, unliveable, form, the more likely we are to give in to the deadening, self-proclaimed necessity of the prose of ordinary life.

> Thus it is from the deficiencies of immediate actuality that the necessity of the beauty of art is derived. The task of the beauty of art must be settled so that it has the calling to display [*darzustellen*] externally in its freedom the appearance of the fact of possessing life [*die Erscheinung der Lebendigkeit*], and especially of possessing a spiritual soul [*die Erscheinung der geistigen Beseelung*], and to make the external correspond to its notion. Only then is the truth lifted out of its temporal setting, out of its straying away into a series of finites. At the same time it has won an external appearance through which the poverty of nature and prose no longer breaks; but it has won an existence worthy of truth, an existence which now, for its part, stands there in free independence since it has its determination in itself, and does not find it inserted into itself by something else. (Aesth, p 152)

Hegel knows well that 'immediate actuality' is characterised by 'deficiencies'. If something is 'deficient', it is not as it *should be*. If you moved into a house where the roof was leaking, so that, while at work, you could only keep yourself and your books and papers dry by opening an umbrella over your desk, you would know that this house was characterised by certain 'deficiencies'. You would be aware that a house as it should be would be equipped with a roof that does not leak. And from such a discrepant state of your dwelling place, you would 'derive' the 'necessity' of *repairs*. Now, from 'the deficiencies of immediate actuality', by contrast, Hegel derives 'the necessity of the beauty of art'.

Mending the roof is the practical answer to the leak. But the display of *Lebendigkeit* and the notion are art's answer to their lack in the prose of the everyday. We might say that art has to make *Lebendigkeit* 'appear' in a thing, only because art itself is not alive in and among people. In art it is possible to 'display' a world without those deficiencies; and it is this possibility which makes art a 'necessity', a necessity for deficient actuality. In living art, the living creative powers of the individual subject are unimpaired. It creates a world in which it recognises itself, with which it therefore is 'in correspondence'. It is the

task of the art of dead things to make this free relation appear in things. In the above quotation, Hegel expresses in three different ways how unliving art achieves its task. In the last of these, art has 'to make the external correspond to its notion'. What does this mean? Art has *to make* this correspondence, because it is one of the deficiencies of normal life that it lacks this correspondence of the 'external' and the 'notion'. So in our everyday life, the external, 'things' with which we are dealing in day-to-day fashion, do not appear to have any notion, or to correspond to any. Our ordinary makings and doings seem to be notionless, devoid of reason. As a deficiency, this is how things should *not* be. But everyday life is what it is; it can neither be changed into something else, nor, within its ordinariness, made to appear as something other than it is. Yet spirit cannot give in to that deficiency. Spirit needs the correspondence between the external and its notion. In the appearance of art, portraying that correspondence, the need is satisfied. Through this appearance, we are led to see that the external is actually not dead, but alive, we see that it 'possesses life', a 'spiritual soul', holding all externalities together in one unified organism. Now, the external lives through its soul, has 'its determination in itself'.

Living art, in which the general is lived by the individual and the whole object made belongs to the individual maker, is no more. It is opposed to the whole way of life after the ruin of the living community. The only art compatible with ruined life, is the art of dead objects. The production and contemplation of this art can only take place outside the everyday unartistic ruin. This art neither participates in means-related generality, nor can it ever grasp it. The correspondence, portrayed in art, of the external and the notion, is not sufficient to make us comprehend our own general life. Thus the correspondence between our normal life and its notion still remains an unfulfilled need for spirit. Un-living art leaves us in our alienation from the general, so that we have to follow it along its grooves without recognising ourselves.

This is where philosophy comes in. Its task is to achieve in thought what was formerly *lived* in living art. After the destruction of the living art of the community, there is only one way open by which self-recognition of the individual subject in a world that it has not made, was possible: through thinking. And philosophy is the specialised form to which thinking restricted itself, so as to fulfil this task.

How can self-recognition be achieved through thinking? The figure through which we grasp self-recognition is always the same; the same in art as in thinking. I recognise myself in what reflects *me*, not in something which is not me. But, in thinking, in contrast to art, appearance cannot be a solution. Thinking has to produce thoughts in which there is nothing alien to me. Its method for doing so is necessity. If I can derive the whole truth of something with necessity, then none of its parts stands against me any more as uncomprehended. As long as I

suppose I know the truth, without having actually derived it, my knowledge is dependent on things about which I do not know anything. I am the prey of whatever they might happen to be. I am, therefore, determined by something that is obscure to me and not me. Only when my knowledge of truth is so thorough that it no longer contains any presuppositions, am I no more dependent upon some power outside me.

Like making, thinking is an activity of the subject. The product of both activities is an object. If the subject can freely make, out of itself, it will make an object in which it recognises itself. And likewise, if the 'I' is free from any oppressive power outside itself, it is free to follow the necessity of the object. Thinking will produce a *thought* as the object in which the 'I' recognises itself, and about which it will say: 'this is me.'

Nonetheless, even though both satisfy spirit's need of self-recognition, there are major differences between making in art and philosophical thinking within a destroyed community. We have seen in Part Two that 'the moments of the speculative method are (a) the beginning ... (b) the procedure' (Enc, paragraphs 238, 239). Once the beginning is found, thinking can follow the unfolding of its object of thought. This is the philosophical procedure in which truth comes about with objective necessity. For the subject to trace this path of necessity is a protracted arduous effort. But when it reaches its end, it will be rewarded with self-recognition, the full 'this is me'. In contradistinction to this, there is no such procedure involved in the self-recognition through free making. In art, the object is directly at hand, and immediately speaks the human language of its maker. All sides of the individual, its feeling and senses, its mind, its needs, are at home in the work of art. However, in a world of crushed humanity, a procedure is needed to guide thinking towards self-recognition, to a human home, which can be erected only in thought.

With the *presence* of self-recognition in art, the need for reconciliation cannot arise. More, it would not make any sense to speak of reconciliation with regard to art. For in art, the object does not stand in the way of self-recognition — it is the mirror of the self. There is no barrier between subject and object. They are united in one process of freely lived life. When, by contrast, the subject is under the yoke of the means-relation, when its power to create its own entire life is reduced to making a miniscule contribution to an overwhelming, uncomprehended whole, then a gulf separates it from the objective world. This world confronts the individual with a cold, aloof fixity and seeming invincibility. It is a general truth which was established without asking for the consent of the individual. The maltreated human being cannot feel at home in this world. It stands in great need of humanity, and philosophy answers this need by *reconciling* the individual to this unfriendly world.

From the outset of his philosophy, as well as from the beginning of

each of his works, Hegel knew his aim: self-recognition, freedom, life. For him, philosophy is the only way to attain these from within a general life which seems to lack them. And he will find them in the highest forms of thought, in the notion or in the idea. Just as it was art's task to make the notion appear in the external, so now it is philosophy's task to comprehend the notion and thereby show that reason is in the world. For Hegel, life, self-recognition, freedom are the very nature of the idea and the notion. And his whole effort consists in finding the thought form in which this nature can truly be what it is, the form which is 'adequate' to the nature of life, freedom and self-recognition. The only adequate thought-form for this content is also the form which most deeply grasps what is. This is why Hegel knows that philosophy is reconciliation.

Already in the Differenzschrift Hegel states that the proper task of philosophy should be to render life.

> But the task of philosophy consists in ... positing [*setzen*] ... the finite in the infinite, as life. (Diff, p 93f)

We might state this even more concisely:

> The task of philosophy consists in positing life.

If we want to understand Hegel's notion of 'positing', we have to forget *completely* the usual English meaning of the word which is 'assuming'. An assumption simply sets up something arbitrarily, which may or may not be true. Hegel's *Setzen* is quite the opposite of that. His *Setzen* is the movement in which truth is solely being 'placed' by *necessity*, or by the movement of the object. The premisses of a syllogism, for example, of necessity yield the conclusion. And we may say that the truth of the conclusion has been 'posited' by the premisses. The conclusion was already contained in the premisses, but has now been made explicit, set, or placed, outside, or posited. Each notion within Hegel's philosophy has to be posited in this manner, as the necessary outcome of what preceded it. Positing is the only way in which his procedure moves forward.

> ... quite generally, the whole procedure [*Fortgang*] of philosophising as ... [a] necessary [procedure], is nothing else but merely the positing [*Setzen*] of what is already contained in a notion [*Begriff*]. (Enc, paragraph 88)

If 'the task of philosophy' is to *posit* 'life', then 'life' will have to be the necessary outcome of the philosophical procedure of positing. 'Life' will be brought forth logically and of necessity. Since positing is also the method which leads thinking to the notional core of what is, positing will show that this innermost reason of anything actual is life. Life will

be shown to be the explicit form of what was already contained, in a hidden form, in the beginning. The philosophical procedure demonstrates the notion in the external by 'positing the finite in the infinite'. The meaning of 'positing the finite in the infinite' is positing life.

We will follow this better if we see what 'finite' or 'infinite' signify, and what it means 'to posit the finite in the infinite'.

> Formally put, 'finite' means whatever has an end, what is, but ceases to be where it connects with its other, and is thus restricted by it. (Enc, paragraph 28, addition)

'Finite' is what 'has an end'. If something 'ceases to be where it connects with its other', then this 'other' is its end. And both the something and the other are finite. Hence, when something is not restricted by its other, but remains free in relation to it, then it is infinite. Freedom is infinite. When the object confines the subject, so that the subject cannot see itself in 'its other', the object, then the subject is finite, unfree, and not living. But when the subject comes to recognise that this object is really its own self, then the subject is infinite and alive. For, in 'its other' it has to do only with itself. The object is only part of the relation through which the subject relates itself to itself. We recognise this infinite relation as precisely the relation between the subject and its object which it has made.

When there is no living art, the only free relation possible is in the notion. The notion results from the philosophical procedure of positing, placing the finite in the infinite. The notion 'is that which is *free*, relating itself only to itself' [*das sich nur auf sich selbst beziehende Freie*] (SL, p 597). It is 'the absolutely infinite, unconditioned and free' (SL, p 601).

> The general ... even when it posits itself in a determination, *remains* therein what it is. It is the *soul* of the concrete which it indwells, unimpeded and equal to itself in the manifoldedness and diversity of the concrete. It is not dragged into the *process of becoming*, but *continues itself* through that process undisturbed and possesses the power of unalterable, undying self-preservation. (SL, p 602)

A notion is not some 'idea' freely floating about. It is the objective truth of the actual world. And this world does not stand in opposition to the notion; the notion does not have its end in the world. On the contrary, the notion is *in* the world; it is its 'soul'. Thus, when the notion looks at the world, it sees itself in it, continues itself in the world. Or, looking at the world, the notion knows that, in the world, it has to do only with itself. Through the world, the notion relates itself

to itself. Thus the notion is free and infinite.

To place the finite in relation to the infinite, then, means to see that the soul of anything is its notion. The merely finite is nothing to us. It only acquires meaning for us if we grasp it. And in grasping it we see the general, or the notion, in it. This placing of the finite in the infinite is the way by which philosophy accomplishes its task of positing life.

> The determinate and abstract notion is ... be-spirited [*begeistete*] form, in which the finite, through the generality in which it relates itself to itself, kindles itself in itself, is posited as dialectical and is thereby the beginning of the manifestation of reason. (SL, p 612)

The merely finite has no significance, it is spiritless. But as soon as it can perceive the general within itself, it participates in spirit. Then, the formerly finite loses its finitude, its limits. It sees itself continued in what, before, lay beyond it. And the notion, on the other side, has ceased to be limited by the concrete. It sees itself in the actual world. And by this self-recognition, it has become infinite. And the spark which has been kindled through this meeting of itself in its other, is the spark of life. This is the point where we can see that the lost life of the community and of living art is resurrected in the notion.

Hegel is preceded by over 2000 years of philosophical tradition. And what he calls the 'Subjective Logic' comprises the matter of the whole of logic, as it existed before him, and as it had been founded by Aristotle. In the short Preface to that section, Hegel can therefore say that the tradition provides one with this part of the logic ready-made. However because it is 'solidified' and 'ossified',

> ... the task is to render it fluid and to re-kindle the living notion [*den lebendigen Begriff ... wieder zu entzünden*] in such dead matter. (SL, p 575)

Fire is one of the four primary elements of everything there is. The notion has to be as alive as fire; as powerfully burning and creative. And the notion is as primary as fire, a necessary constituent of every possible being. The history of thought has bequeathed us countless notions. But as long as we can't think them as infinite forms, they are dead and fossilised for us. It is only when we learn to see that they are what holds the world around us together, that their life is 're-kindled'. And then the concrete too catches the spark of true spiritual life. And in looking on, in contemplation, we recognise ourselves in the thought which we have made. By thinking the notion in the concrete, we have breathed life into that dead matter; and by placing the finite into the infinite, we have lifted it out of its spiritless insignificance. We are in free relation to our object which we are thinking, because we have given it the form of

our thinking. Our thought-object is not a limit to us, does not confine us as a foreign power standing up against us. We are in infinite, free, living relation to the world. For we recognise the life-giving notion in the world, and in the notion of this be-spirited world we recognise ourselves. The world shows us who we are.

Thus is fulfilled the task of philosophy to posit life. It has been achieved in the only way possible after the death of living art. Only philosophy can rekindle life, by positing 'the finite in the infinite'. When living art is no more, the need of spirit to be itself, to be free, that is to recognise itself, becomes the need of philosophy. For, the relation between the actual living subject is no longer one of actual freedom. When the community has broken up, and life is 'un-art-like', then philosophy is the only means to establish a relation which permits the subject to recognise itself in the object, and thus be 'free' in thought. In a way of life which is unfree, 'from the point of view of spirit, philosophy is that which is most necessary'.

How is it possible for the philosophical procedure to reach its goal of freedom in thought? How, starting from the most abstract, the emptiest, most limited, most lifeless form of thought, can it keep unfolding until it arrives at true spiritual freedom and self-recognition? How can it avoid taking a wrong turning and getting stuck in a logical quagmire?

The twofold end-point of the procedure is known from the very beginning. On the one hand it is the given, on the other it is self-recognition, or spirit, freedom, life. However, these are only two sides of the same result of the procedure. On the one hand, this result grasps the given world in which we live; on the other hand, through the procedure, the given is seen *in the form of the absolute*, where the absolute comprises the meaning of the highest truth, freedom, spirit, life. The given is there directly in the form in which it confronts us in everyday life. But then it is only in the form of abstraction, spiritlessness, the form of unfreedom. The procedure is needed in order to live with the given in freedom. The task of the procedure is thus to overcome the split between the I and the object. Today, nothing can be known in our ordinary lives. Spirit has abandoned it a long time ago, and it could never bear to live among us now. The procedure of philosophy has to recreate the kind of relation that pertained in living art. It has to bring us as close to truth and freedom as we would be if our community were not split up and shattered.

It is precisely the knowledge of this result which guides the procedure. The result presupposes the procedure and the procedure presupposes the result. Each stage within the process of unfolding is looked at from the point of view of the absolute. Until that full concreteness has been achieved, every previous form of knowledge will be found to be incomplete. The absolute end-point, which has not yet been arrived at, serves as the implicit criterion against which every other

form is compared. It is in the light of this measure that the preceding stages are criticised and pointed towards the next form-to-be-criticised. The procedure moves on, until the inhumanity of the given can be grasped in the form of human freedom, so that in it, humanity may recognise itself.

IV

TCHAIKOVSKY FOUND that the best way to explain the coming into being of a work of art was to compare it to the growth of a seed into a plant. The possibility of this comparison rests on what the two processes have in common: a wonderful power to grow and unfold, an invisible energy which cannot halt before it has completed the production of a whole.

Let us expand this comparison a little further. The peculiarity of the art-plant is that it grows in the cracks of normality. The narrow veins of freedom in the massive rock of ordinary life are the place for art to grow. Where the steady, oppressive, solidity of normal life is fractured, that is where the dead weight of its petrified life is negated. From there the creation of freedom grows into the light. The flower in the rock only grows where the rock stops, beyond the stone and its principles. The flower is where the rock is not. And art is where ordinary life is not. The fire of art cannot burn in the tepid waters of the everyday. In this sense we might say that art *rejects* ordinary life.

In normal life, people spend all of a normal day at work. This work is situated in the middle of an overall network, in which each person is a means to others; and the outcome of the effort of each, however minute, contributes to the upkeep of the whole system. This whole defines its own requirements and dictates them to the individuals. The criterion for the individuals' activity comes to them from outside themselves. Before they even get to work, the purpose which has to be fulfilled by their activity is defined for them. The individual just serves the machine. In this context, the making of the individual is forced making. The given purpose of the whole, its laws, time-tables and definitions, enslave the creativity and freedom of the individual human being. It is a kind of enslavement that can partly work without the use of brute force, but not entirely. The invisible prison-bars are all those given functions and definitions which don't allow the individual to step outside their frame.

Following philosophy, however, within this stultifying normality there is a kind of making which is free, not just some activity at the margins, but at the heart of how we live. I mean the formation of private property. But its freedom will turn out to be no more than a semblance. In the Philosophy of Right, Hegel expounds how private property derives from the activity of the free will. By its own nature, the will is driven to leave its abstract state, that is the individual's head,

and go out to seek its fortune in the world. With all its freedom, there is something the will *must* do: it must put itself into some matter. And for philosophy, speaking from within the system based on private property, this putting into some matter *is* the formation of private property. By fixing itself on a particular material object, the will has made that object into its own, appropriated the object. The first act of the will is to *form* [*formieren*] private property. Thus, out of the supposed natural necessity of what the free will is, philosophy makes the human being into an *owner*, and the world into an agglomeration of chunks of private property.

What does this so-called free forming form? Well, what it forms are only limits. The activity which forms private property is the most empty and limited kind of forming possible. It only sets up the limit beyond which the world does not belong to you. It erects a tight borderline around you, and nobody is allowed to trespass. We know that whatever the will creates is a reflection of the creating self. So, if the will exhausts itself in 'creating' those limits, then, it can also only ever recognise itself in those limits. The self is, then, the most limited and hollow being. When it looks into the world, its whole interest lies in finding out which objects fall within, and which without, the boundaries of the realm it owns. And about those objects that come to lie within that realm, the self will say 'they are *mine*'. Looking at its 'creation', this does not offer any content, and the subject can find nothing about which it might say 'this is *me*'.

Within the way we live, then, the will, anybody's will, goes out into the world in order to form its own 'this is mine'. The consequence is obvious. Potentially, the formation of one will clashes with that of another. In our way of life, the *free* will has no option but to realise itself in private property. The object into which it puts itself, is thereby taken out of the reach of others. Somebody else's private property does belong to our world, but only as something from which we are excluded. The realisation of the so-called freedom of one excludes that of the other. We are excluded from what should be our shared world. And if a particular exclusion cannot be mutually agreed upon, a battle over who will have the right to say 'this is mine' must ensue. Freedom is granted through violence and un-freedom. And this un-freedom reflects back onto the 'freedom' which it defines, making it into an 'un-free freedom'. Private property is a piece of dead world. As the 'free' will puts itself out to form its property, it kills the possibilities of all life, its own and those contained in its object. Having formed that dead, soulless mirror of itself, it has come to its own termination. It is itself dead.

Only art can rescue human freedom from within these narrow walls of normality. For, only in artistic creativity is human making free making. Only art can satisfy the free will's need to make freely. Art's formation is the free forming of an entire object; it is not a delimitation

of the empty 'this is mine'. Nor does art keep in stock its own store of forms and definitions; it is not a whole subduing the individual; it does not prescribe functions which people simply have to fulfil. In free making, there is no alien ready-made purpose sitting in people's heads and driving them to transfer it from their head into material reality. Each making of a work of art develops its own form in the very process through which it is made. Thus, 'form' is not really the right word any more. For, in an artistic production, there is no way of separating the 'form' from the matter in which it lives. A work of art is not a copy of anything, an idea, a form, a purpose. It is a unique expression of freedom, complete in itself. It does not depend on any dominating power outside itself.

Free from servitude and domination, a work of art is not a *thing*. A thing is never able to free itself from its subservience, to undo the spell cast over it by the foreign purpose. A thing is born in a means-relation, from the seed of a foreign purpose. It does not know any other life, and it will never wish to change its own way of being. Things only show us how we treat ourselves and each other. They cannot exist outside our relations of means and use. But in art, human will and hand, human voice, eye and ear, body and mind have been saved from such relations of subjection, and therefore have been set free for beauty. A work of art as such can never be a means to any outside power. It can never bow to being used. It is indomitable, its own free world. It is not a thing; it cannot be handled as a thing. If you regard something as a thing, you cannot conceive of it as art. Out of every pore of the work of art flows the freedom in which it originated.

And the freedom flows over to the perceivers of the work. But this freedom of another person 'confronting' the receivers, does not act as a restriction to their freedom. Quite the opposite. Enjoying this freedom of another person's creation is an absolute necessity for developing your own freedom. When the community is extinct, true freedom is only in art. For only here is the freedom of one also the freedom of the other. Freedom which has gone into a work of art will be alive forever. The 'this is me' that the artist creates, may become a 'this is me' for anybody prepared to receive it.

It is true that every creation is peculiar to the one who created it. Just as no two people speak in the same way, so artistic creative expressions of two people can never be the same. In this sense, each creation and its 'this is me' refers to its one particular creator. However, the freedom in which this 'this is me' was brought about, makes it a 'me' of general humanity. In the particularity of the work of art, generality is directly present. The expression of freedom by one particular person is open to be experienced by everybody. Each work of art is a particular expression of *general* humanity. Its 'this is me' is at the same time a 'this is everybody'. Thus, only a world where no incomprehensible power dominates over our lives and nothing infringes

on our humanity, is a world in which we can recognise ourselves in each others creations, is a world in which the freedom of others enhances our freedom, a world in which everybody is at home.

Insofar as the artist creates, puts into the world something that it has never experienced before, the creative power of that particular individual is proved. However, this particular power created a 'this is me' for everybody, a general 'this is me', a 'this is humanity'. And so, the new work of art is open to anybody's direct grasp. We absorb the work through our senses by re-making it. Through re-creating art in us, we learn about general humanity, re-experience the bliss of creation and the joy of freedom. Thus is it proved that art is the expression of a general creative power, a universal capacity that belongs to all of us.

Art does not have to undergo a fight against some powerful monster to free itself – it would be totally unfit for that. The artist does not first work out a special method by which to reach beyond merely subjective particularities and attain to general humanity. It is the very meaning of art that this freedom is directly given. As soon as it is lost, the whole of art is lost as well.

In the Introduction, we looked at the implied judgement of an expression like 'an inhuman human life'. The 'human life' was a notion of how humans should live. However as the 'should' already indicates, this notion is not in correspondence with the everyday life of our experience. Nonetheless, owing to the mere fact that we are still human beings, we do possess the notion of 'a truly human life'. Yet blinding normality is run on principles which directly contradict that notion. So, for the time being, the notion of a truly human life has to gain its scanty living within the narrow bounds of our heads. And we, despite all our struggles and hardships, must try and keep this notion in view, not to let it be obscured by our rage, or depression, or urge for revengeful self-assertion. Then we will be able to use the notion of a truly human life as a *criterion* against which our real living experience can be compared and judged. And then we arrive at the judgement that our life is not as it ought to be, that it is an inhuman human life.

In art, all this is very different. Art *begins* with the doors shut to whatever conceals our humanity. In art, humanity is free from the start. It is not repelled by a contrary world, and it does not hold itself back to become a mere notion in the head. Unhampered, it goes out to create its own world. And so, right in that world of its own creation into which it has flowed, humanity is directly present. Life can be inhuman; art cannot. Humanity can be inhuman; but art cannot be un-artistic. In art, art is directly present. (We must not let ourselves drown in the postmodern confusion of language, in which some nauseous object is called 'art', awarded 'prestigious' prizes and sold for a large amount of money.)

In art, then, we do not have a notion in our head which is contradicted by the world outside the head. The 'notion' or 'form' in

art is made in the process of making itself, in the process through which freedom shapes the world. A work of art is a shape which freedom has given itself. In the artistic way of making, there does not remain some notion in the head which cannot realise itself because its principles are opposed by the world. If the 'notion' is only 'formed' in the creative process itself, this 'notion' cannot, at the same time, be left outside the process of making. And if this 'notion' is always present in the making, it must be present in the product *made* as well. Thus, in a way, we cannot speak of a criterion in art. Artistic making does not leave a pure 'notion' behind, in the head, which can then confront the creation from the outside and judge over it. If you insist that there is a criterion in art, we would have to say that art was its own living criterion.

In art, humanity is all alive, flowing into the world, creating itself. In art, therefore, humanity is beautiful. But in the grey of the everyday there is no beauty. Here, humanity is subjugated and coerced by seemingly invincible powers, the purpose of which is not that of humanity. The irreconcilable opposition between art and the everyday is one of first principles. And this is the reason why art rejects normality as such, the whole of life as it normally is, and not just one or another particular aspect of it. Between the free humanity and beauty of art, and the subjection and ugliness of normal life, no reconciliation is possible. One is the realm in which we can recognise ourselves in each other's making, and in our own; the other is the sphere of mutual exclusion and unrecognised humanity. One is characterised by the sign: 'All Welcome'; the other by the legend: 'Keep out. Trespassers will be prosecuted'.

Implicitly, though, art does much more than just contradict everyday dullness, it points beyond it. For, art always tells us, we whose normal lives must be opposed to it, that the world need not be as it is. As it never tires of reminding us, a truly human way of making *is* possible. It shows us that for the human being making something does not have to mean loss of freedom, subjection to a foreign purpose, inability to recognise oneself, separation from others. There is a human way of making, in which the human being is not humiliated and turned into a means, a making which alone is joy and creates beauty. Art tells us that there is a better life. By that simple statement it gives us hope that, perhaps, one day, our daily life will be beauty, and our normal experience joy.

V

FOR HEGEL, rejection can never be a valid answer to the world. It might stem from the most praiseworthy disposition of the heart, but it is incompatible with logic, and therefore with the world too. Of course, this is not to say that the human being is the blinkered pack-horse forced to carry the load of world-history, urged on by the whip of world-spirit. The human being ought to be free – an 'ought' given through the spiritual nature of the human being. But this nature is only a potentiality. Hegel's entire work might be seen as an effort to show how this potentiality for freedom is transformed into its actuality. And for him, this transformation can certainly not be achieved through rejection.

Art is intrinsic to the development of freedom. As this historical process moves on, other forms replace art as the highest form of freedom. However, the core and purpose of spirit remains always the same through all history: its own self-recognition. From Hegel's interpretation of this self-recognition, there follow two main objections against rejection's assessment of art. First, art is part and parcel of our life and can therefore not be viewed as a rejection of it. Second, rejection has not grasped that there is a form in which the truth of how we live can be adequately present, a form in which we are free.

What does self-recognition mean here? The self is a subject; it is the source of activity. Without activity, there is no self; if there existed some inert, passive kind of self, it would not be able to recognise itself. Through its activity the self goes outside of itself, into the world. More precisely, the activity grows out of a purpose that the subject had set for itself. Without any activity ensuing from it, the purpose is lame, it does not really exist for anyone, or it exists only potentially. But when it flows into the world, the purpose is made actual, put into a form in which it exists for any consciousness to look at.

In one sense, what the subjective purpose creates is something other than the subject. What the subject creates is its object, and this cannot itself be a subject, cannot freely form its own purpose and shape the world according to it. In another sense, however, what the subject creates is itself. The subject is not only the general ground for the being of what it creates. The particular essence of its creation is a particular purpose set for itself by the subject and placed outside

itself. Thus, in its creation, the subject looks at what it has placed, posited, in the world, views its own inner being in a realised form. It looks at itself and recognises that what thus stands 'opposed' to it, is itself. This looking at itself in its own work is not something which the subject may or may not happen to do. It is an 'absolute need' for spirit, that is for the subject as a being with thinking consciousness. Self-recognition is a need without the satisfaction of which the subject cannot be truly alive.

The making of the subject goes out into the world and partakes in the forming of objectivity. Whether its forming of objectivity will allow the subject to recognise itself in it, depends on the historical stage of this objectivity. In order for me to recognise myself in what I have made, the world must be such that it can receive my purpose, must be sufficiently open to receive the realisation of my purpose. There are two essentially different forms of the objective world: living art and the already set-up whole. In the first, whatever the hero makes, will reflect his own inner being to him and to others. But in the world of the already set-up whole, no making at the hands of any individual can realise that individual's purpose.

When life was living art, the hero lived in freedom, and his real living relation to the world around him was free. He gained his freedom, neither by submitting to the world, nor by turning his back on it, but by going directly forth into the world. This was possible because the world was open, as though waiting to be conquered by him. There was no objectivity to compel him to do anything in particular, nor to judge over what he had done. What he did was truth in itself. And no other power existed to conceal this truth from him and alienate him from it. When the hero looked into the world, he directly saw its truth, which was himself.

But in modernity, the world is no longer open to be created by any individual or heroic purpose. Objective reality is now always already set up, and the individual has to subserve the workings of the whole. Any purpose that the individual were to set to itself, specifying how to create the world, would be totally futile, without any effect upon the whole. Looking at this given, 'sundered and split up into infinitely many parts', the individual, constricted into a diminutive function, can experience neither truth nor itself. However, this state of objectivity does not remove the 'absolute need' of spirit to create and recognise itself. This need is intrinsic to human life and is answered within the way we live, not by rejecting it. Both art and philosophy respond to the need of spirit. Only philosophy, says Hegel, provides the form in which it can be fully satisfied after the extinction of living art.

The way in which the individual is made to contribute to the whole in ordinary life, leaves the whole in a state of deficiency. The 'absolute need' of spirit to recognise itself through its making has to remain unsatisfied in the means-relations of normality. Whatever answers this

absolute spiritual need is an absolute *necessity* for the human being. And art is such a necessity because it leads us nearer to freedom, albeit only in its own proper form of appearance. Representing an independent whole as the free creation of spirit, art shows an existence entirely determined by the subjective purpose.

Now, if art is the necessity which answers the need for freedom, and this need is produced by the way we live, then art and our way of life belong inherently together. Their relationship is comparable to the way in which hunger, the need for food, and eating, its appeasement, belong together. Need and its satisfaction are the two sides of only *one* essential relation. One cannot cut this relation into two halves, and then pick one of them and cast the other away. It is impossible to live with satisfaction alone, without the corresponding need. Thus, art and normal life are linked together in an unseverable union. Art is the attempt to satisfy the spiritual need for freedom produced by the way we live. Without our way of life, which leaves our human needs unsatisfied in normality, there would be no art in the modern sense of the word. Therefore it is utterly false to think of art as somehow being, or signifying, a way of going beyond our common life. As if eating indicated a way of going beyond the ever-recurring need for food.

This is the first rebuttal of philosophy against rejection, concerning art. The second is that rejection totally ignores the essence and task of philosophy and therefore tries to achieve something in its own mistaken way which may actually only properly be accomplished by philosophy. Rejection struggles to find freedom and assumes the preposterous and ineffectual attitude of a combatant of the whole. Philosophy, however, demonstrates that freedom and the good are *contained* within the whole, outside of which there is nothing. The entire system of the Logic, which is the heart of Hegel's philosophy, and in particular its second half, which he calls the 'Subjective Logic', is the process of that demonstration, making the Logic at the same time into an ontology.

Even though philosophy shows that art is *necessary*, it also states that it is not *sufficient* to satisfy the need for freedom. For, by giving us the *appearance* of freedom, art does not actually *make* us free. Merely perceiving a representation of freedom, still leaves us standing outside it. Hegel unfolds the only way of thinking which demonstrates that freedom and the good are actual. What does philosophy do to achieve that? How can thinking make us free?

The form of freedom, of the true living relation of spirit, and therefore of truth, is the same whether it is present in art or in thinking. When we come to modernity, where the ways and dealings of the individual member of society are most strictly determined by forces outside its control and knowledge, the fundamental notion of freedom is still the same: The subject makes according to its own purpose and recognises itself in what it has made. But who is the subject? What is the object?

In a free relation, or in truth, the object is that which is fully grasped when seen as the realisation of the subject's purpose, when there is no need to refer to any other source of origination. The object shows the subject to itself and others. Yet whatever the individual human being makes in modernity, this can never be grasped out of the individual's purpose and efforts; rather it can only be grasped if seen as a fitting part of, and therefore as determined by the whole. Thus, the purpose of the individual bringing forth that subsidiary object, can only be understood through the whole, is itself subordinate to the whole. In order to attain the relation of freedom, then, a relation which is not conditioned by anything from the outside, it is necessary that this *whole* be grasped. There is nothing outside the whole on which it is dependent. The only possible object, then, in which the subject can truly recognise itself, the only object to which it can stand in a free relation, is the whole.

Of course, we know that no individual makes, or would ever be capable of making, this whole. So, who then is the subject? Who made the whole, the way we live, our world, society, the state? In a free relation, the subject is that which is shown, in a realised form, to be the purpose, essence, meaning of the object. When we know the essence, or most precisely the notion, of the whole, then we know that this essence comes from the subject which set itself the purpose to actualise it. Simply knowing the notion of something is not enough. In this form of truth, knowledge and the reality to which it corresponds are still separate from each other. If we just form notions in our head and then compare them with reality, we will not know why there may or may not be a correspondence between the two, and if there is, whether there should be, or how it came about.

We still don't know who is the subject of the whole. But we do know that the notion of the whole is to be seen as the subject's realised purpose. Who is the subject who would set itself the purpose of the whole? Hegel's answer is: the idea, or spirit. And what is the idea? We might say that the idea is the notion understood on a higher level than we have reached so far. For, the subject who posited the notion is the notion itself, but the notion *as a subject*. Thus, before it has been realised, the notion is in the form of a purpose, set by the subject for itself. When that purpose has gone into the world and shaped it according to itself, then, the subject, looking out into the world, sees it formed according to its own measure, recognises itself in there.

> ... the actuality found as given is at the same time determined as the realised absolute purpose; but not, as in questing cognition, as merely objective world without the subjectivity of the notion, but as objective world whose inner ground and actual subsistence is the notion. This is the absolute idea. (SL, p 823)

At the culmination of the system, we have received the proof of the statement, discussed in the Introduction, that 'what is actual is reasonable and what is reasonable is actual'. For we now know that what makes our reality into what it is, is the realised purpose of the idea. And the 'idea' is just another word for 'reason', *active* reason. The purpose of this reason is being realised in reality, so that reality is reason made actual. And this holds true for whatever we might find in actuality: it is the realised purpose of reason. The meaning of the absolute idea is that what is actual must be reasonable, and the other way round.

With Hegel's Logic, reason implies the good. The absolute subject, reason, cannot be bad. Whatever it makes actual, must be good. And the good cannot come from anywhere else. For the substantial can only result from spirit. As little as it makes sense to reject what is reasonable, does it make sense to reject what is good. The good might take either position of the double-equation discussed earlier, stating that actuality and reason are the same. Both new equations thus gained are true: 'what is good is actual, and what is actual is good'; 'what is reasonable is good, and what is good is reasonable'.

VI

ART HAS TAUGHT us that humanity can make *itself*. It has proved to us that we can relate directly. Out of our own inner, yet social, creativity we can make something new; and we can grasp whatever we have freely made without the guidance of definitions and abstractions. Not only that, it has shown much more, that human development can only take place outside the realm of abstractions and definitions, only through free making. Art is only a refuge to which the proper way for humans to make has fled; just as philosophy is the haven to which spirit had to evade following the destruction of the community. The free making of art is not just the outcome of the freedom of its maker, but depends on the freedom and creativity of the perceiver. Art is only a special case of free relations between people. When making is carried out in freedom, we can recognise ourselves in what we have not made just as in what we have made. That is, only a world of freedom can be our living home. And in a world which is our living home, everything is a creation, in everything, we recognise humanity, everything participates in a human world. The human relation to the world is the relation of joy, the relation which creates what is humanly good, where there is no longer any abstraction, or definition, or idea determining our action from the outside. Only this free relation is human. It is the only relation in which I freely go out into the world and freely give, where I don't require your thanks and don't keep an account. Only then do I know that the world is my home and that your kind hand is always there. Only in this world can I freely make 'things' which grow out of my heart, and so are no mere 'things'. Making them is my joy, because their beauty is our shared human experience. Denying private property, they belong to us all, a part of our free, human life-process.

This is the life to which rejection points, not the life actually lived by us. It is our life only potentially, and it can be transformed into actuality only through rejection of our whole way of life. However, it is impossible to reject the *whole*. This, I hope, has been made amply clear throughout the book. Yet it is also impossible to endure the whole. The whole that we make and live cannot be borne. This may perhaps not be so obvious. When we say that the whole cannot be rejected, then the evidence of the hard material world, which simply never let itself be rejected, backs up the logical proof provided by philosophy. So how can we say that this world, impossible to be

rejected, cannot be endured? Did not all 'rejectionists' go on living? Yes, they did, of course they did. Now, however, we have to become more specific. Today, in this century, most certainly in its latter half, we live in a different epoch. For, after Auschwitz, everything has changed. Living after that devastating deluge in history, we can no longer reconcile ourselves to the whole. So both rejection and reconciliation fail in the face of the challenge of our time.

Auschwitz is not just a few years of history gone wrong, which now that they have passed, even if less silently than others, can be left comfortably to themselves. The world has not recovered from Auschwitz. Auschwitz is not like a slight illness, a minor accident from which the body recovers by itself, without special attention. It is an injury lastingly affecting every part of humanity. It has distorted our relations to each other, stolen our trust in the world and in life, fractured our language. Nothing we can say can in any way be 'adequate' to our history. Every word feels wrong, and some are like chewed bits of that indigestible reality which we have to spit out again.

In religion, reconciliation was granted by God through His mercy; He, and only He, could take away the sin which had contravened the divine order. On its side, of course, human action could not inflict any damage upon the Almighty, whose power to cancel past human aberrations, however bad they may have been, never diminished.

Philosophical reconciliation, however, is not granted out of mercy, but through the inner form of that kind of thinking itself, and only to those with the strength of mind to think philosophically. What this thinking 'cancels' is not sin, but incomprehension, the foreignness of the whole. And this cancellation ends with seeing oneself in the world and recognising it as the actual idea, the constant self-accomplishing of the good. This does not mean that everything in the world *is* good. There are aberrations, crimes, malformations, bad accidents. But they cannot touch the whole, the notion, ever. An accident is not general. Crimes draw their own punishment after themselves. Wars are inevitable periods in the life of a state; their notion can be logically derived. And for this notion it does not matter in which way they occur, nor which children lose their fathers, wives their husbands, mothers their sons. These losses are mere accidents, misfortunes only on the personal level, not on the level of the idea, of world-history. The idea is above getting itself involved in any accident.

This highest achievement of philosophy, the grasp of the subjectivity of truth and history, belongs essentially to the nineteenth century. It could have been accomplished neither before nor after. With Auschwitz, everything changes. For, there is no method which can lead us to see the purpose of the idea in such insane horror. Thus,

today, there can no longer be any philosophy in Hegel's sense. This perplexity of thought shows itself in the almost complete absence of anything worthy of the proud name of philosophy. Anything remotely akin to spirit and to the good has disappeared even from the thought-haven to which it had fled, many centuries ago, when the community broke down. However cunning reason might be, it would not be able to play this trick on us. Aristotle's *telos*, his *agathon*, his syllogism, the method of demonstration, Hegel's entire work on the self-construing logic, which traced the activity of the idea, none of these can any longer make explicit some latent reason and good. We are faced with an absolute evil, and it is already in the open for everybody to see.

We have studied rejection, and from it we have learnt about humanity imprisoned by the whole. We have studied philosophy, and it revealed aspects of the system of the whole; but it also showed us that humanity implies knowing the objective world in which we live and which we create. Rejection could never free humanity, because it is ignorant of the whole. How could anything free itself of what it can't even conceive? But today, rejection is no longer the same, it has taken on a new dimension. For today we know what no previous rejection knew, that *what has to be rejected is the whole*. And this is both more than mere rejection, and also more than philosophy.

We need reconciliation more than ever before. Just as our history can't be thought of as the unfolding of spirit, the actualisation of the good, so no-one can believe that it is the outcome of divine providence. God cannot wipe out Auschwitz. He has no might which can remove it. Following Hans Jonas we might say that should He exist, He would be waiting for us to overcome our sin so that He can look at us again. And similarly with reason, it will never be deluded into recognising itself in this, the worst and utter un-reason. Neither religious nor philosophical reconciliation can work today. The kind of reconciliation that we need is that of one human being to another. What we need is a healing of the community, the real, living, community within itself, the freeing of the lived life of real people.

If we were to try to think about the whole today, the idea could never surprise us by revealing its purposeful acting to us; never again can our pondering efforts end with the relief of recognising the good as, after all, the result of the activity of the idea. We have seen too much of the whole not to know that it has to be rejected. Rejection, however, cannot get to know the whole, and so must always fail to do what it intended. Philosophy was the only way of thinking which led to a grasp of the whole - but only by simultaneously showing that it is good, only by at the same time reconciling us to it. Is this not a perfect and tragic *aporia*, a situation of life from which there is no way out, in which none of the opposing forces will yield? We need reconciliation of the whole, yet, today, the only way to reconciliation

would be rejection. We have to reject, yet rejection can never reject the whole, and therefore cannot reconcile us to that whole.

We have not engaged in a discussion with philosophy with the mistaken aim of proving it wrong in some way. Rather, we have examined it with the greatest respect, knowing that there would not have been any other 'discipline' to turn to in its place, none which would equally have disclosed to us the inner structure of how people live. This way of living is bound to time. As there is a process of history, there also must be a history of philosophy, as Hegel was the first to make explicit. Hegel could not foresee the Nazi state, with its public departure ramps to the death-camps; or a 'civil' society where the passer-by would refuse, even furtively, to tend you her handkerchief when you are spat on; where, as Jean Améry said, the neighbour will not raise his hand when they come to get you.

In the face of our unforeseen reality, philosophy had to collapse. The way of philosophy, to gain freedom and to recognise oneself in the world, is no longer passable. The result is that we do not possess a philosophical account for today, for the system of how we live. All that we know about the present-day whole is that it has to be rejected. While this already places rejection onto a higher level than where it first appeared, it still leaves us not knowing what this whole is that we reject. It is here that philosophy retains its irreplaceable position. For, even if the future cannot be foreseen, we are able to look into the past. And this offers us a chance to study our own past, previous stages of development of our own present, a past which is not past and gone, but which is contained in the present. And whatever the present contains are further unfoldings of what we can already see in the past. About our present, we don't just know that it, as a whole, needs to be rejected, but also that the essence of the past is still the essence of today. And this leads to our study of rejection, telling us what it is that we reject if we reject the whole.

All rejection converges on the rejection of domination, resistance to the deprivation of freedom, when the subject can no longer bear being subjected, is no more prepared to give its life-blood to dead definitions, to obey the orders of abstraction. It cannot sustain the tension of the contradictory life between the 'this is me' and the 'this is not me', the fact that it is engaged in the making of the world, but only as the tool of the idea. The subject has found that it is not the insignificant replaceable tributary, carrying out a foreign good. It has discovered that it can see the good itself, can keep it in view with its own inner eyes and itself act so that it actualises the good.

The opposition between reconciliation and rejection shows us, not that we are in a situation with no way out, but, quite the opposite, that we are at the beginning of a new era.