

The Phenomenology of Spirit

By G.W. Hegel

A Paraphrase for Novice Readers By Seiji Takeda & Ken Nishi

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Foreword
(by Ken NISHI)

The Whereabouts of Freedom

The Phenomenology of Spirit, written in 1807 by G.W. Hegel while teaching at the University of Jena, is the philosopher's most celebrated work. It has had a strong influence upon very many noted thinkers, in particular on Karl Marx in his development of historical materialism. Since its introduction into France in the beginning of the 20th century, it has exerted considerable influence upon, among others, George Bataille, J.P. Sartre, Jacques Lacan, and Merleau Ponty. Indeed, if one were to name the five most important books of European philosophy, Hegel's study would deservedly be included in that list.

Despite its significance, however, few philosophical books have been as elusive in their true message as Hegel's, as his rather idiosyncratic style and use of language is painfully opaque, even more so than other difficult philosophers such as Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. Hegel is so abstruse, for most of his readers even the central issue he tackles remains obscure.

Hegel's text is essentially a study of consciousness and freedom. 'Consciousness' is (rather fancifully) imagined as an adolescent, undergoing a series of experiences as it (he) attains maturity. Into this account are woven diverse human philosophical concerns (reflections on nature, on self and others, on community, on God or gods, and so on) to provide what Hegel claims to be nothing short of a complete history of the human mind. In Hegel's expression, 'the history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom'.

Hegel's hugely ambitious book offers us numerous intriguing episodes. To begin with, he describes how two people fight each other, each seeking to coerce the other to recognize the first as superior. The winner of this potentially lethal struggle for one-sided recognition becomes a master or lord, and the loser a slave. This, Hegel argues, is the beginning of human history. We need existentially to have self-worth and to take pride in ourselves; yet this need requires us absolutely to seek a recognition and confirmation of this personal sense of self-worth by others.

Some of us (perhaps immaturely) may find this exact concern absurd, whereas in others it drives the ambition that is realized in romantic love, in rebellion, and in literature and art. One's view of Hegel's book is often formed in this fundamental way by the personality of the reader: is he writing about someone I recognize as myself or about someone I have heard of. As a writer and a thinker,

Hegel appeals to each of us differently, which is part of his genius. In this regard, one is reminded of Merleau-Ponty's remark that his book is quite as exciting as an exquisite novel. Intriguing as this issue of self-worth might be, it is not what most deeply concerns Hegel, whose real inquiry is only rarely appreciated. What this is, is implicit only in his full account; as while philosophical writings usually describe in their prefatory material the essence of the themes discussed, there is in Hegel no such concision. He simply begins with the manifestation of 'the experience of consciousness'. What Hegel sought to question may probably be understood only by thoroughly reading the text up to the end of the book. It is accordingly a most burdensome book! Even so, we believe the task is worthwhile. The present commentary is intended to simplify the task of reading and understanding Hegel's convoluted text, and to direct the reader to the core of his arguments: indeed, we are so bold as to suggest that, without such direction, the sense of the book is for most readers almost impossible to grasp.

The Inquiry into the Whereabouts of Freedom

What then, in a nutshell, is the dominant motif or subject underlying this major work of Hegel? One may say this is the quest for the whereabouts of freedom.

The modern age has thrown up very many individuals with inner freedom and who have in consequence been cut loose from former close ties with their own community. They question and are concerned with the best kind of life to lead in the future and how best to get along with other people; accordingly, they are often quite critical about the current rules and institutions in their society. They embrace their own values and causes, and in general tend to believe they personally are superior to anyone else; yet are often devastated by their relative helplessness in actual life. This is the person being talked about in the *Phenomenology*. Hegel was fascinated by the human drama played out by individuals blessed by and yet struggling with their inner freedom.

In the pre-modern age, there were few individuals with this freedom, save for a very limited number of intellectuals and tyrants. Old-time village communities in Japan, for instance, allowed their people to live only in the traditional, communal style of farming ancestral estates. First-born sons were taken for granted to be heirs and girls were to be handed over to other families for marriage. In short, everyone was given a precise role to enact within the community and family, making it difficult for someone to envisage any way of living other than given at the outset. This constraint is not merely an ancient one. Even in the 1960s, more than 30 percent of the Japanese population were self-employed farmers, fishermen and forestry workers living in the style mentioned. Hegel finds this manner of living, in which people dutifully enact their respective roles, exemplified in the polis of ancient Greece (see Chapter 4, IV: The Ethical Order). There, men fight as warriors to protect their home state. This is seen as natural. Women are meanwhile under the obligation of burying male relatives killed in war. This is likewise seen as natural. The community and its rules are so closely entwined they essentially exist for one another. Hegel observes how in the Greek world an innocent and beautiful harmony is thus established between the individual and an entire community.

As history progresses, this innocent harmony is ruptured to give rise to free individuals in the Roman era, which is viewed in the *Phenomenology* almost as if it is the true start of the modern age. The individual of this era highly regards him/herself as independently valuable, yet suffers the anxiety and relative helplessness of being a solitary individual. With the coming of the more modern period the individual establishes him/herself as an independent and more self-confident adult, tries positively to understand nature and society, and accepts any given view or opinion only when it is truly convincing. We find this is generally how people behaved in the so-called Period of Enlightenment. As people thus grow free, independent and equal in their mutual relationship, the French Revolution breaks out to destroy the antiquated class system, thereby entailing the State Constitution with its codified guarantee of human rights. After this, people begin to question what the principles are that they should rightly espouse. This questioning leads to the examination and evaluation of morality itself, such as we find presented by Immanuel Kant and other German romanticists.

This brief summary of the Chapter of Spirit gives us the basic idea of Hegel's line of thinking. What kind of attitude should now properly and ethically be assumed by an individual, detached from his or her community, toward other people, society and self? This is the most important question raised by the *Phenomenology*: Mind, on becoming freer within itself, on seeking its own freedom, necessarily loses the original, if naïve, harmony it once found within its community. Yet this loss, Hegel suggests, will in time produce in individuals a momentum to renew relationships with others and with society through a new, distinct awareness. The question is, how does mind best proceed in restoring the bond with community once it has been relinquished? (Hegel's ultimate answer is given in the section of the

Matter-Itself at the end of the Chapter of Reason and in the section of Conscience at the end of the Chapter of Spirit.)

The Matter-Itself or 'die Sache selbst' in German is an important concept in Hegel's philosophy, but it is difficult satisfactorily or neatly to translate this term into English as the word itself is too simple, despite its profound connotation. Existing translations are the 'fact of matter', 'matter in hand', 'thing that matters', 'matter-itself' etc. It needs to be read in context for one to get a sense of what Hegel intended by it.

I will not enter here into details about Hegel's approach to an answer to this dilemma between pure self-assertiveness and pure concern for others, but I am confident the reader will find in due course just how thoroughly and profoundly Hegel speculated about the potential of the emergence, expression and refinement of this awareness of self-freedom to ensure a deep enrichment of our common human future.

The question raised by Hegel is of great relevance to us Japanese also, as we as a nation have been rapidly transferred from a classical, village-based lifestyle to a more deracinated and modern manner of living after an intervening period of booming economic growth. Once you have read our Guide, you will find that Hegel's *Phenomenology* is not an out-of-date and thus unnecessary book, but one that has an immense and immediate relevance to problems that we commonly encounter in our contemporary world.

The Phenomenology of Spirit: Hegel's Introduction

(Paraphrased by Takeda with comments in [→])

The Enigma of Knowledge in Philosophy

Since philosophy is a science (a discipline of studies) seeking to know what truly exists, it seems quite natural to suppose that it should first thoroughly investigate the method of knowing, for we generally tend to look upon knowledge as the instrument through or with which to grasp the Absolute (what genuinely exists).

In seeking to establish the validity of our inquiries into absolute truth, it is important to question the limitations (if any) of our means of knowing, and to discern what these might be. What is clear from the outset is that great confusion concerning knowledge arises from the idea of regarding it as a tool properly to perceive an object.

There are some exemplary theories with respect to knowledge. In one, there is posited a deep and unbridgeable gap between the knowing subject and the object to-be-known, [as is suggested by I. Kant by means of his notion of the thing-in-itself]. The instrument of knowing (our means of perception), on this view, necessarily alters (mediates or translates) the object of knowledge. When people see something, what is seen is something re-presented; it can never be the object as it really is.

There are other views. If we know precisely the nature of knowledge as a tool, some argue, the object itself will be left behind as it really is by subtracting the nature of knowledge from the something that is known. Otherwise, knowledge is something like birdlime that is able to catch the object itself without altering it.

All of these various propositions fail to appreciate the actual nature of knowledge.

The question whether the human instrument of knowledge can genuinely 'know' an object has long been one of the central themes in the history of philosophy. It is, on the other hand, obvious that the knowledge gained in the natural sciences has been firmly established as an objective knowledge. Why, then, is there such a serious mistrust of knowledge? This question must be examined first.

Such questioning about knowledge primarily arises from the belief that the subject of knowledge and the object thereof are two separate things in opposition to each other, with the faculty of knowledge considered as a vehicle to mediate the subject and the object. The subject stands on one side and the object on the other. This leads to the fear of knowledge, that is, to the fear that true knowledge may not be possible. This can be construed as a fear of truth.

Such a fear also comes from the idea that *the Absolute alone is true or that the True is alone absolute* (65, 54), or from the extreme claim that knowledge must know the Absolute or the Truth, and is otherwise nothing.

The fact is different: knowledge necessarily progresses step by step. It may capture the truth in a certain fashion, though it may possibly not be capable of grasping the entirety that truly exists (the Absolute) all at once. Once this limitation is accepted, there will be no concern for the fear of knowledge mentioned above.

As will be shown, the enigma of epistemology in philosophy can be resolved when the appropriate distinction is made between the knowledge (truth) of the Absolute and the knowledge (truth) of the Relative.

The Inquiry into Apparent Knowledge

As suggested above, viewing knowledge as a means or instrument entails the idea that the subject of knowing and the object to be known stand at irreconcilable poles. The case, however, is that the conventional notions of the Absolute (what truly exists), of knowledge, and of the object have not been properly scrutinized, but these can yet be so via some authentic science. [By this Hegel suggests his own philosophy.]

Anyone can insist that a given idea is authentic, is science, so the mere assertion of authenticity makes little sense in resolving the above issue. What is essential is that the genuine science imagined above must confront the problem of the apparent (phenomenal) way of knowing to overcome the apparent (phenomenal) science regarding knowledge.

Some people rather questionably contend that their own science or philosophy alone is true, or that there is a premonition of a better knowledge to come in their science. [Hegel is implicitly criticizing J.G. Fichte and F.W. Schelling.] Such people cannot be taken seriously. What we should do, rather than boldly stating 'here is a genuine theory of knowledge', is first to examine the different forms of apparent or phenomenal human knowledge and to inquire into their significance.

Skepticism as Determinate Negation

Knowledge, we argue, appears as apparent phenomenon, and thus proceeds in a way distinct from what is described in other theories of knowledge. We must therefore adopt the method of describing all the steps of the progression in which an innocent consciousness experiences the diverse ways of knowing things, as it gradually elevates itself, in nature, to a stage where it grasps its Self and a true and authentic knowledge, before it reaches the ultimate dimension beyond which there is no further progress. [→Hegel often uses the phrase "from our standpoint" or "for us" (in German: *für uns*), which means "from the philosophical standpoint of a person who has gone through all the processes of experience of consciousness", that is, from the viewpoint of one such as Hegel himself.]

Or it can be regarded as the path of the soul, which is traversing the series of its own forms of embodiment, like stages appointed for it by its own nature, so that it may possess the clearness of spiritual life when, through the complete experience of its own self, it arrives at the knowledge of what it is in-itself(67,56).

Once our knowledge arrives at this ultimate stage, it becomes aware of how insufficient our previous knowledge had been, but the innocent consciousness in its novice stage is unable to notice this. To such a developing self-consciousness, the knowledge at a particular time seems misleadingly to be negative and self-losing. Specifically, knowing comes forth as a process of overcoming earlier doubt and despair.

In the midst of these experiences, the knowledge once considered true may repeatedly turn out to be wrong. The burning zeal of pursuers for truth takes the form of determination to thoroughly re-examine all things without relying on any authorities other than themselves, but this attitude may rather invite a profound doubt.

A firm determination to do so is not enough to reach the truth. A certain adequate method is necessary to arrive at the ultimate dimension. We offer exactly such a method that completely specifies all the stages (forms) of consciousness from utter naïveté to a state gradually heightened as it passes beyond many difficulties and comes eventually to the ultimate dimension of knowledge.

This kind of conception (of *evolving knowledge*) makes us readily understand how skepticism of different types arises in our efforts to attain universal knowledge.

Skepticism is a consciousness *which always sees in the result only pure nothingness*: there is, it insists, no certain knowledge attainable despite our attempts at knowing. Opposed to this, the apparent identity of such nothingness with negativity of knowledge emerges as a necessary step in our process and, in this sense, may be the product of a certain truth. When we suppose the uncertainty of knowledge in skepticism as determinate negativity, a gate will open to a new possibility (to a new transition).

The goal of this evolving and enhancing knowledge at its different stages may be expressed as a place where *the notion corresponds to the object and the object to the notion* (69, 57).

What makes humans crucially distinct from other animals is their specific ability to thoroughly objectify themselves and then objectify the relationship between themselves and other beings. People are therefore incapable of shutting themselves off in immediate self-consciousness, and instead always have a dual perspective: the particular and the beyond, or the individual and the universal.

Whereas contradictions in terms of knowledge always arise from this duality, human consciousness by its nature perpetually strives to surmount these contradictions. *This fact is the essential ground for human endeavors to expand their world experiences to a higher and more universal level.*

By what method, then, will the progress of consciousness ensure true knowledge? How is the phenomenal and thus incomplete knowledge given to us validated? Usually, what is used is some criterion or standard to measure the validity. A criterion is always necessary to be certain of the truth about something. The question here is whether or not this criterion and the object to be measured are correspondent with each other in general, that is, with how much the object coincides with the criterion.

There thus arises a question whether or not the criterion is due and adequate. This question can be readily answered by employing the two distinct notions of knowledge (Wissen) and truth (Wahrheit).

These two notions are to be understood as follows.

1. Consciousness posits an object as a thing existing outside itself. The object is then something that is such and such for consciousness. Let us define the state of the object in its being 'with respect to' (or for) consciousness as 'knowledge'. (★→Hegel's term)

2. Besides this being-for-another (das Sein fuer ein anderes), there is being-in-itself (das Ansichsein). It is the state of the object in its being in or as itself, instead of the state of its being this or that *for* consciousness. We may call it "truth" for now.

Put more briefly, the object has two moments (two states of being): being for another (knowledge) and being in itself (truth).

Suppose that the task of knowing is to examine whether knowledge and truth (notion and object) correspond to (are the same as or closely relate to) each other. We have first to ensure that our knowledge is itself genuine. We however soon become aware that our knowledge is always and *nothing but* knowledge created in and by our own subject.

We can never transcend our own subject (our subjectivity) to confirm that our knowledge corresponds to the truth. This is what is meant by the enigma of epistemology: that the subject can never reach the object. [→Descartes and Kant already presented this problem.]

This difficulty can be eliminated, though, in the following way.

We are never able to confirm the agreement between knowledge and truth because we cannot stand outside the subjectivity of our knowledge. After giving the matter more thought, however, might it not dawn on us that this distinction between knowledge and truth is itself taking place within our subjectivity?

As seen above, we have called 'knowledge' (being for another) the state of the object as a being-for-consciousness and called 'truth' (being in itself) the state of the object as a being in itself. Then we sought to see whether there is a correspondence between these two, i.e., between notion and object.

And now we have found that both these moments of notion and object *themselves fall within that knowledge that we are examining. Consequently we do not require to bring standards with us* (71f,59)

It is thus obvious that there is no need of particular criteria to be brought from outside consciousness to judge the correspondence between knowledge and truth.

We had separated object (truth) and notion (knowledge) from each other and considered them as distinct. In fact, this distinction is itself made within our subject. It should then no longer concern us how to guarantee the means to measure the validity of the criterion for knowledge.

How shall we go on then? All we should do for now is carefully to observe the state of consciousness by examining the relation between these two moments of knowledge and truth appearing in consciousness. In so doing, we have to take the following points into

account.

When consciousness finds that its knowledge, once considered as true, actually does not coincide with the truth (viz. you may be happy to say, "Oh, this is it!", but a little later, you see something different from your initial impression), it attempts to alter the knowledge so as to attain the correspondence, and convince itself that this new understanding is a true and real knowledge (one that coincides with the truth).

Since however, this new knowledge is a knowledge of the object, what has been altered is not only the state of knowledge but also the state of the object.

Let me try and make this clearer, as it is rather complicated.

When our knowledge of something is said to be making progress, it means that what we have initially believed to be the truth of the object is found to be a mere knowledge for us, or a knowledge taken as truth. In contrast, the new knowledge is now accepted as truth at this later stage.

As we know or perceive things more closely, this process of updating the old knowledge to a new one (that is more exactly the truth) repeatedly takes place, making both moments grow higher and higher.

All things considered, the process of knowing must be understood according to the principle that it is divided into two moments, knowledge and truth, which develop themselves in transitory opposition to each other, instead of the schematic principle in which the subject is required to correspond with the object for genuine knowledge.

This gives us a clear account of why the conventional theory of knowledge based on the subject vs. object schema has come to a deadlock, as it has considered knowledge to be an instrument that necessarily induces the problem of whether or not the standard is proper.

The Process of Experience

The process in which consciousness repeats its dialectic movement between knowledge and truth to bring the former to an elevated stage is termed experience.

This process of experience is basically configured as follows.

As said above, when consciousness knows an object, the latter has two moments: the object in itself (truth = being in itself) and the object as it appears to consciousness (knowledge = being for another).

That consciousness experiences an object signifies that the initial knowledge that this object is such-and-such is overlaid with another discovery that this object is actually something different. What is happening here is as follows.

The thing that initially appeared to be true is found to be a mere object to the subject, that is, knowledge, and, instead, the later discovery is taken as truth. This truth however turns out to be again mere knowledge to the subject. This realization arises on the appearance of yet another elevated discovery.

The important point is that the process of experiences proceeds as a series of discoveries in which what has been grasped as 'true' is continually found to be a subjective knowledge (for ourselves) of the object.

Such a way of viewing things may appear to be somehow bizarre to the usual notion of knowledge. Knowledge is generally perceived as something that, as our experiences advance, comes closer to an object which has of itself a true and unalterable existence.

This kind of understanding comes from our tendency distinctly to divide object and notion, or truth and knowledge, into two separate terms. Once we are aware of this tendency, we are able to appreciate the nature of skepticism that is inherently associated with the philosophical question about knowledge.

The experience of knowing repeatedly sees the situation in which the object of knowledge and the truth never correspond with each other. This situation itself is an apparent image arising from the schema in which the object and the notion are placed in absolute opposition.

The truth here is judged by asking if it is absolutely true or not, instead of being considered as gradually developing to higher stages. Since the sought-after agreement is negated all the time, people readily conclude that there is no such thing as absolutely certain knowledge. It is now obvious to us that the argument for nothingness of knowledge (for the uncertainty and impossibility of knowledge) in the skeptical view is of itself a necessary step in our experience of knowing.

Let me summarize. Experiences of consciousness advance as follows in terms of our Science of Experience of Consciousness.

What has been considered as truth at first is found to be an innocent (subjective) knowledge by uncovering another new truth *becomes consciously something which is per se only for Consciousness* (74,61) What then has been considered as a new truth of the object is in turn found by another discovery again to be a mere subjective knowledge, and this zigzagging chain goes on and on.

Knowledge is in nature incapable of taking any route other than developing and elevating itself to a more universal level in mutual relations of the two moments, knowledge and truth, within consciousness (subject).

[☆→] Chapter-end Commentary (by Takeda)

The Introduction is one of the most significant parts of the *Phenomenology* as it presents the fundamental scheme of Hegel's epistemological method.

First of all, he offers here a uniquely new method of epistemology, that is, the dialectic epistemology. Human knowledge never attains the truth about an object all at once. It only goes forward with two moments, knowledge and truth, alternating between each other. Knowledge advances to a higher definition only by going through this process of experience.

The Introduction is thus, so to speak, a concise account of Hegel's method of dialectic, as it vividly depicts this new approach in epistemology.

Secondly, Hegel radically alters the fundamental scheme of modern epistemology based on the contraposition of subject (consciousness or notion) vs. object, as typically conceived by, say, Descartes and Kant.

The epistemological schema of subject vs. object postulates the idea that the correspondence between subject and object is equal to the truth, which however results in such logically insoluble contradiction that the subject and the object never correspond with each other.

The chapter on consciousness that we are now going to work on proceeds in the sequence of certainty at the level of sense-experience, perception and understanding. Let me offer a brief overview of the entire process.

1. Certainty at the Level of Sense-Experience

This is where the experience of consciousness sets out on its journey. It is in fact the lowest (or first) level of consciousness. It is quite rich in terms of the sensory experiences it can enjoy, for example of shapes and of colors. As for the intellect, however, it is very limited because it can merely assert: *here is this*.

2. Perception

Perception is knowledge of an object as a thing possessing various properties or qualities. It finds in a thing various general qualities (for instance, it finds in salt the qualities of whiteness and pungency).

3. Understanding (intellect)

Understanding moves beyond the perceived properties of concrete things. It takes as its object the actual phenomena the properties originate in, such as forces and laws.

The entire process starts at the point of consciousness grasping the object in front of it by means of sensory perception and proceeds to the point of its perceiving and reconstructing the object and the world by means of thinking. This is at the same time the process in which the consciousness, which has considered itself and its object as two separate things, now transforms itself to consciousness of self, namely self-consciousness.

In understanding (in the final step), consciousness learns that the laws of nature it considered as the truth of an object (and by extension, of the objective world) mirror, or are in fact, the process of thinking as it attempts to formulate a consistent account of this objective world. The alleged truth of the object is found to be the thinking process of consciousness itself. On becoming aware of this, consciousness-of-object evolves into self-consciousness.

I Certainty at the Level of Sense-Experience - The "This" and "Meaning"

The first form of consciousness is named 'sensuous certainty'. This version of consciousness does not work on this or that thing by thinking, but directly and immediately accepts what is given in sensory perception.

Subject and Object in Fusion

The content of this certainty is quite concrete; hence it is seemingly the richest kind of knowledge. The richness seems infinite when going out of this content in time and space as well as when taking one fragment and dividing it into minute parts. This certainty also appears to be the truest knowledge, for the world is received wholly as it is given to the senses. This form of consciousness that receives the world as a whole may be the richest and truest one, with no fear of distorting it by thinking.

In terms of the knowledge contained in it, however, this certainty is the poorest as it can merely say of a thing that it is. [→We may express this as a mental state of being absorbed in deep sensation without saying anything.] The object is presented in its immediacy, without reflection by the consciousness perceiving it. This bare 'it is' (this pure being) is the starting point of the experience of consciousness. [→The separation of the world into objects is not yet made by consciousness, nor is there as yet considered interpretation of the experience.]

Claim for the Independent Being of the Individual

Ego and the notion of object emerge from this pure being, that is, the state of subject and object as interfused. [→Imagine you have just come back to your senses from the state of mind of being totally absorbed in something that you were watching.] Consciousness then says: this (the object in front) is.

Consciousness finds that the 'this' (das Dies) exists per se, independently of consciousness, and quite indifferent to whether or not it is known to consciousness. Consciousness also supposes that this 'this' is utterly an individual thing, and that it is a unique thing, completely different from other objects.

Consciousness thus regards the object as *existing in simple immediacy* (80,64), as it has no relation with others.

Suppose we ask sense-certainty, what is the 'this'? Sense-certainty will answer that the 'this' means 'something being now and here'. Then let us ask, what is the 'now'? It is, say, night-time now, but it will be daytime soon. 'Now' can be morning, day or night, but also maintains itself as what is none of them. The same can be said about 'here'. 'Here' may be a house or a tree, but remains in being none of them. 'Now' and 'here', and therefore 'this' too, are not something immediate (which as something independent has nothing to do with other things), but on the contrary, are something universal.

[→This passage sounds as if it would deny the existence of the individual. It was therefore open to the criticism of Ludwig Feuerbach that Hegel denied the existence of sensory individual things. In fact the latter is what truly exists. It is not true, however, that Hegel attempted to deny the existence of individual things. Whereas particular or individual objects before us certainly exist, the knowledge of the objects includes the information that they are not what we have seen yesterday, and not what is far distant. In other words, the sensory knowledge of individual things is not entirely immediate or direct, but it already contains in it some temporal and spatial thinking (intellectual perception). This is what Hegel wanted to say.]

Claim for the Certainty of our Own Senses

Faced with such criticism, consciousness continues to observe. 'Object' does not matter at all. What I am certain about is the fact that I am seeing and hearing, viz., the individual sensations. Consciousness here clings to the individuality of its sensory perception.

The same argument for universality holds true though, because seeing itself is universal (general). I see a tree or a house or some other thing, but the act of seeing remains the same. Seeing is thus something universal, and not individual, as has been believed by the sense-certainty. [→At the moment I utter the words: I am seeing this or that, there comes already some intellectual and general understanding. When seeing something, we are at the same time aware that seeing and hearing are two separate things, and that the person seeing this something is I, and not you or he. Certainty tries to convince itself of the particular individuality of its own senses, but in fact, they are already associated with universal understanding.]

Confining Oneself within the Immediate Relations between I and Object

What could certainty do then? Another strategy is to confine itself to the direct, immediate relationship between itself and the object. It (certainty) attempts to submerge itself in the certainty of the immediate senses, without making an effort to use words or to compare 'now' past and present.

Since this certainty does not enter a place of dialogue, we [philosophical observers] may put ourselves in its position. Since certainty neither uses words nor compares things, we are to point out the individual 'now' that must have been truth for the certainty.

What happens next is this. Suppose that we point at 'now' and say: this 'now' exists and is the truth. Yet this 'now' becomes immediately a past 'now'. When we attempt to particularize the individual 'now', we find it to be neither immediate nor fixed. The now is thus *a simple entity that persists in its otherness* (86,68) [as it essentially immediately becomes not-now]. Hence it remains universal.

What is Perception?

Sense-certainty has clung to the individuality and particularity of each sensation. Perception, as the subsequent form of consciousness, on the other hand, acquires the perspective of universality (generality) and relationship to others in the light of preceding experiences. Perception now sees an object as 'a thing' (das Ding) having many different qualities or properties, instead of as an immediate 'this'. Salt, for instance, is considered to be an aggregate of qualities such as being white, pungent, cubic in crystal shape, and so on.

[→Is whiteness not a sensation, though? 'White' is certainly the word representing some quality of sensation. However, as soon as you utter the word 'white' to indicate the whiteness in front of your eyes, it is grasped as something universal (intrinsic to sugar and many other things), instead of being seen merely as something totally individual. Also, its presence quite naturally presumes the negation of other colors, such as its being not-red, not-black and the like. Consequently, white, besides being a sensory object, is associated with thinking of the relationship to other objects and to universality.]

That the phenomenon of property yet contains an aspect of thinking is, however, known only to us (philosophical observers). Perception itself is not at all aware of this. Perception simply supposes that the properties are presented by the object as it is. In this sense, perception takes the standpoint of common sense. When perception next proceeds to pursue the truth of the 'thing' (what truly is the thing?), however, it encounters unexpected contradictions.

What is the Thing? A Medium of Properties or an Excluding Unity?

Salt has qualities such as whiteness, tartness and of being cubic in shape, as mentioned above.

This thing will then be considered as a locus where different properties harmoniously coexist. That is, the truth of the thing is thought now to be its general mediumship ('das allgemeine Medium') in which the properties exist in peaceful coexistence. It may be expressed by the term 'also' ('auch'). Salt is also-white, or also-pungent, or also-of-cubic-shape.

The thing is thus redefined as the aggregate of its qualities. Can the unity of the thing be maintained on this view? May the thing not just fall apart into different qualities? This question then leads to another view: that the thing is unitary

The thing may appear to consciousness as expressing multiple qualities, but the truth of the thing is quite otherwise. The truth asserts itself in its exclusive unity [ausschliessende Einheit], negating the simple multiplicity of different properties.

[→ Here we see the idea of distinguishing the appearance of the thing in consciousness from the thing-in-itself. This is reminiscent of the arguments of some earlier philosophers. Rene Descartes, for instance, maintained of the qualities of things that while odours and colours are a part of appearance as it is represented through human senses, weight and shape are a part of what properly belongs to the thing in itself. John Locke divided the thing into primary and secondary qualities; and Kant distinguished the thing in itself from the appearances or the phenomena of things.]

Thus, there are two opposed ideas with respect to the truth of things. Is the truth of things its mediumship of universal qualities, i.e., its multiplicity, or is it simply its essential unity? Which is true? Consciousness faces this question and seeks for solutions.

The Experience of Perception

Perception at first believes that the thing is truly one. Salt is white because I see it as such, pungent because I taste it as such, and of cubic shape because I touch it as such. That is to say, multiple qualities are presented to the subject 'I'. The object in itself must be one. Consciousness thus here allocates unity to the object and multiplicity to itself.

This means that oneness alone remains as the essence of the thing. A new question then arises. If any single thing is intrinsically one, with no particular set of universal qualities, there is no way to distinguish it from other things. Salt is salt because it is white, pungent

and cubic. The qualities define the thing. Thus we cannot but now conclude that the qualities belong to the thing per se.

The reversal then takes place. Multiple qualities are ascribed to the thing. They are one merely because consciousness integrates them together as having oneness, or unity.

Consciousness makes a number of such attempts. It then gradually begins to think like this:

I assigned oneness to the thing and multiplicity to myself a while ago. And now I assign multiplicity to the thing and unity to myself. Does this really make any sense? Should I not suppose that the thing itself comprises both unity and multiplicity?

The truth of things is neither its unity nor its multiplicity. The thing which is one presents itself as having multiple qualities and therefore is in relationship with other things, and takes them together into itself. Coming out of unity to multiplicity, and vice versa, the thing in the state of being-in-itself puts itself into the state of being-in-relation-to-others (being for another), and again returns into itself. In this idiosyncratic way things exist. Consciousness cannot but admit this.

The thing stands in opposition to others, but must therein preserve itself for itself (für sich). It is, however, a thing, a self-existent "one", only in so far as it does not stand in relation to others. (99,79).

[→This conclusion may seem to be quite abnormal. What does it mean that the thing is at once both a unity and a multiplicity? This mode of being oneness and of being multiple is surely not actually intrinsic to the thing, but is rather the transition of perspectives of consciousness, i.e., a factor of the process of consciousness. Exactly! There is no way of being one and multiple at the same time outside the process of consciousness that sees things on the one hand as one, and, on the other hand, as a group of qualities that make any individual thing distinct from or similar to other things. Put simply, the process of being for things and the process of consciousness are one and the same. This identity is asserted by Hegel in his text.]

Toward Indeterminate Universality

Perception has considered the determination of unity and that of multiplicity as two separate items. Being-in-itself and being-for-another (or, being in relation to others) have also been understood as incompatible and exclusive to each other. Consciousness has, meanwhile, learned from experience that unity and multiplicity, as well as self and others, are interconnected.

Consciousness is now aware that the truth of things is a solid unity of these two modes of being. The object thus can no longer be named 'thing', and instead should be termed "unconditioned absolute universality". [→The German word for 'unconditioned' – unbedingt – implies 'not-being-Ding (or, not-being-thing)'. This notion of unconditioned universality, in effect, stands for force or law.]

III. Force and Understanding. The World of Appearance and the Supersensible World

Force and Understanding

It has been seen that the dual nature of the thing, such as one vs. the multiple and self vs. others, emerges with (or from) the process of consciousness. We, who philosophically can observe the experience of consciousness, definitely know this; but consciousness itself is not aware of it. It has no insight into its own way of experience, and in this absence of insight pursues the truth it believes to exist in the object. Consciousness therefore seeks a new object that is supposed to be furnished with such a duality because it seems to be the truth of the thing.

This new object is now called force (Kraft). For, while a force such as electricity or gravity brings forth multiple phenomena and qualities, it remains a unity.

The form of consciousness that corresponds to the new object (force) is called understanding (intellect). It is the form of consciousness that deals with pure thought or ideas. At the level of perception, thought and sensory perception have been mingled together as seen

from the discussion on qualities. Force, in contrast, is something super-sensitive, or the pure thought. Force is initially grasped as somehow sense-related, but understanding gradually begins to discern that force is thought (the product of thinking).

Force is the Process of Thinking

When we speak of force, we usually imagine it as a substance, somehow like a mass of energy. The force as the concrete substance, we suppose, comes out to give rise to a number of results. This means that, distinguishing the intrinsic force in the interior from the manifestation of force, we look upon the former as its essence.

Nevertheless, the 'inner force' could not be any force at all, unless it is outwardly manifested. Appearance is necessary to discover a force in something. Inner force is unable to have an independent existence. The appearance (manifestation) of force meanwhile has no independence either. Different phenomena cannot be independent of one another insofar as they are regarded as appearing from force.

[→ In short, force is not a static substance such as a thing is taken to be, but is rather a process or movement (inward to outward to inward), having aspects both of inner force and appearing force. We usually see the force (such as electricity and gravity) as something objective and independent of our thinking. Hegel meanwhile argues that the process of force is nothing but a reflection of our own process of thinking. We generally understand electricity, for instance, to be the source of various phenomena, as these seem to us to be caused by this force. That is to say, the essential fact about the process of moving from inward to outward to inward is that it is precisely the process of thinking as we seek to know the causes hidden behind diverse phenomena that appear in front of us. We are not yet aware of this, and are still assured that the truth of the objective world is in its aspect as force.]

Phenomena and Inner Being

Force is a mirror of thought from our (philosophers') point of view, but consciousness still imagines it to be something with a sensory substance. However, once consciousness is aware that the two items (inner force and the appearance or manifestation of force) are not two separate substances, it proceeds to the stage where the inner being behind the phenomena given to our senses is again sought after. Consciousness now deals with the pure thought completely liberated from the sensory world.

The inner being is a supra-sensitive world or the Beyond, which is initially utterly empty in terms of content. For it has only the determination that it is not the phenomena (the sensory world). If there should be some filling content for the Beyond, it must be derived from the sensual world [e.g., Heaven or Paradise being colored with sensual images]. Understanding regards the Beyond as the essence or truth, and the sensual world as its phenomena; but from our (philosophers') point of view, phenomena are the basis where phenomena come from. We have made up the essence or 'Beyond' to give explanation about the sensual world.

Law and Force

Thinking about inner being in natural science, instead of in religion, it is found to be law. Understanding obtains something static and stable out of perpetually changing phenomena. A stable picture of unstable appearances, this is the law. The world of stationary law comes up in contradistinction to the world of flux.

Just one law is insufficient to account for all the phenomena, so there must be a certain number of laws. Understanding, however, is not satisfied with multiple laws and it tries to acquire a single supreme meta-law that unites several diverse laws together. Understanding thus goes forward in pursuit of an explanation as generalized and universal as possible. [→In this logic, the law of falling by Galileo and the law of planetary motion by Kepler have been united together to make the law of universal gravitation by Newton. Even today, scientists are in quest of a single universal 'theory of everything'.]

Understanding thus strives to attain ever more universally applicable laws, but is not yet completely satisfied with this. For example, in the case of the law of fall, $S = 1/2gt^2$ (S = distance of fall, t = time of fall, and g = acceleration under gravity), there are two terms, time and space (distance). These are related to each other in a particular way. But why must time and space be related in no way other than this? Understanding then wonders why the law is as it is found to be and not otherwise (it asks what are the grounds for the law).

Explanation as Tautology

Understanding then relies upon force again. Unlike the previous force, it is now presented as the ground for the law. Understanding now says: Why is the law of universal gravitation exactly what it is and not otherwise; and answers: because gravitation is formed of such and such qualities. This is evidently only tautology. But understanding does not mind such groundless explanation.

[→ There may possibly be discovered in the future a more fundamental force or law that is able to give a more compelling account of the law of universal gravitation. However, one may inquire of this new universal law why it is framed as it is. Nothing can be done outside a chain of linked and tautological explanations. There is no perfect explanation possible that is free of the possibility of some higher-order explanation.]

Notwithstanding, this discussion on explanation is of crucial significance. It brings to light the fact that the process of force, phenomena and inner being, and the law with separate terms and the force as its ground, are all the process of thinking being achieved by consciousness that, after finding distinctions (multiplicity), reduces them to a certain unity (one) and explains the distinctions based on this unity.

We (philosophers) have an insight into this fact. Understanding has seen its own process of thinking as a form of object. That is to say, consciousness is in nature self-consciousness that knows about itself. Understanding, however, cannot but separate its own self from the object, so that it is unable to become aware of this fact.

[☆→] Chapter-end Commentary (by Nishi)

We have now reached the final stage of consciousness (of an object). Before going on to the chapter regarding self-consciousness, Hegel discusses the notion of 'infinity'. Since this is a key idea in his philosophy, we need to be clear what he means by this.

We may generally say that infinity (in his use of the term) stands for the manner consciousness proceeds in the course of discerning the flow of distinction → unity → distinction → unity and so forth. Infinity does not mean here some kind of endless expansion, but means rather being not finite or not limited. Consciousness divides itself into the finiteness of different kinds, and immediately returns to itself. Even if consciousness is certainly involved with finiteness, it is intrinsically free from it and keeps its self-identity independent of it.

Infinity is expressed in many ways. Unity of unity and distinction, identity of identity and non-identity (being self-identical while being involved with others), etc., are used as the emphasis shifts.

One emphatic point is in unity and multiplicity. Consciousness, Hegel contends, is one and multiple. Hence, consciousness is the 'unity of unity and distinction.

Another point is in the notions of self and others. Consciousness withdraws inward to be isolated or on its own (as self-identity), but also goes out to be engaged with others, losing its self-identity (assuming non-identity). Yet it still holds its self-identity. Consciousness is therefore the 'identity' of identity and non-identity. It retains its nature as self while being involved with others.

This notion of infinity seems to have been derived from the idea of life Hegel had cherished in his youth, rather than from the notion of consciousness or of ego itself. When younger, Hegel believed that as human individuals we, as well as other sentient creatures, had radiated out from a grand universal life. (It is associated with the sense of romanticism that all things form, primordially, a unitary.) Hegel said, "The relationships between the universal life and individuals are too mysterious to be spoken about. If we are to put it into words, all we can say is that it is the 'connection' of connection and non-connection" (Fragment of a System of 1800). Universal life and the life of the individual are interlinked, and are yet separate at the same time. All we can say is that connection and separation are somehow united as one. What the younger Hegel believed was simply too deeply mysterious to speak of, was later redefined by him, when an established philosopher, as a logical concept of infinity that is to some degree amenable to our understanding.

Infinity, as Hegel uses the term, is thus the way consciousness or ego exists, and is at the same time the essence of a universal primordial existence (referred to by him as Life and later as Spirit). Infinity is indicative of the universal life which, while infusing itself into different living matter, perpetually remains a universal.

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Let me give a more detailed account of the transition of consciousness to self-consciousness by means of this notion of infinity.

When the quiescent kingdom of law and the ever-changing phenomenal world of flux have been distinguished from each other, self-identity and the changes have been allocated to separate domains, respectively. The distinction then collapses to allow the whole world to be grasped as infinity. The world is apprehended as a being kept self-identical while varying in different ways. (This being appears in the next chapter, on self-consciousness, as a gigantic Life that is also Nature in its entirety.)

The 'infinity' as a form of consciousness is now brought into coincidence with the infinity as a form of the objective world. The relation between consciousness and the object is also found to be infinity as one separates into two and duality reforms as unity.

Chapter 2 Self-Consciousness

(Paraphrased by Takeda with his comment in [→])

[☆→ Consciousness realizes through experiences that the apparent opposition between the object and itself (that is, between truth and knowledge) is an illusion.

When one comes to the awareness that all objects exist (that the whole world exists) for oneself, one is no longer a mere consciousness but is now enabled to become aware as a self-consciousness.

Self-consciousness is intrinsic to humanity. Hegel observed how, in the course of experience, the typical human formed and developed the relationship between the world and the self, and from this consideration he came up with a unique historical typology of human existence. As will be seen, it proceeds from (a) the phase of ego and desire to those phases of (b) lordship and bondage and (c) freedom of self-consciousness.

What to be noted here is that Hegel begins with a bold fundamental hypothesis that human desire *is the desire for self-worth*, and that this is the archetype for all the particular desires for human freedom.]

IV. The Truth that Consciousness Certainty of Self Realizes

Life, Self-Consciousness, Genus

I confront the world as a self-consciousness. What is the meaning of this manifestation?

It may be paraphrased that any external object is something (an object) existing for me. Or, to put this differently, I am not just a bare consciousness, not a mere knowledge of the object, but a being confronting the object always with a certain interest or desire.

Any such object is thus an entity that carries a certain meaning, significance, or value for or to *my* interest or desire. To live in self-consciousness is therefore to be an existence that, as having certain desires, is open to the outer world.

Being a living creature in this meaning (as a form of desire) requires that it (the subject being) initially denies the independence of other beings. It identifies them with itself but without relinquishing its own identity. Namely, it takes the lives of other beings into itself by consuming them, in order to sustain its own existence. The animal is just such a desiring-life.

Now let us call the essence of life infinity, for here we see the infinite process between distinction and unity.

An individual, for instance, has different organic parts (distinction) within itself and sustains its own unity as a living creature by means of a complicated symbiosis conducted by those organs. Equally, just as the individual has various internal and interacting distinctions, so too has a genus or species: yet each exemplar maintains its own unity.

All things considered, life is something that uniformly maintains its own integrity, while at the same time constantly creating and reorganizing complex internal distinctions in numerous ways. In this sense, life by nature embraces an infinitely alternating oscillation between distinction and unity.

Mankind alone out of all creatures has self-consciousness. This means that mankind is the sole living thing being that is conscious that its self belongs to its genus.

Self and Desire

Animals have consciousness. Their consciousness, however, is merely a desire to sustain themselves by eating (denying) other creatures. It is also their desire, though unconsciously so, to preserve their species.

Humans are those who know what kind of desires they are and objectify them. This is how human consciousness is self-consciousness.

Humans are aware that they are merely one among many species. Despite this, they know that they are a unique species; they are conscious of their absolute individuality. This is how humans are self-consciousness.

I am merely a life and a living creature, but I am this 'I' who ultimately is no one else. This perception that I am I is the essence of self-consciousness.

Self-consciousness is a peculiar desire that seeks to secure its absolute individuality by the denial of others. The desire of self-consciousness is essentially the attempt to ascertain the independence of its selfhood. [This, for Hegel, is 'certainty of individuality', but is later referred to as 'freedom of self-consciousness.'] The ego of an animal certainly aims toward self-subsistence. Savage beasts, for example, are by themselves a desire to exhaust other lives in the world to sustain themselves. On the other hand, the nature of human ego is crucially different from that of the animal ego.

Humans seek the certainty of independence of the self (for the certainty that I am I). This pursuit is associated with the denial of others in a sense, but is not such a direct denial of others as the killing and eating of them. Human ego rather wants other people to condescend (deny themselves) and recognize the superiority of its own ego or self. This is the ultimate purpose of the desire for self-certainty.

Let us summarize. The essence of self-consciousness is broken down into the following moments or aspects.

- (1) Initial, immediate ego (mere consciousness – infantile ego),
- (2) Ego as a desire to deny others and maintain itself (animalistic or childish ego),
- (3) Self-consciousness, which objectifies its own ego as being in relationship with others (human or adult self-consciousness).

With the self-consciousness at (3), ego or 'I' know that the other is equally a self-consciousness trying to deny and objectify others, quite as much as it does itself. The notion of 'spirit' emerges at this stage.

Human self-consciousness thus discovers its own self in its relationship with others.

In this relationship, whatever desire we may have cannot be satisfied until other people recognize and acknowledge its (and thus our) existence; but others also have their own desires. From this ubiquity of desire arises the conflict in human relationships.

[→ Since humans live within communities, their desires cannot be fully satisfied without their being recognized (acknowledged, legitimized and fulfilled) to some extent by others. Infants, for example, cry in order to make their parents know and fulfill their desires; whereas children establish their interrelationships through a process of coercing, regarding, ignoring, and bullying one another, with outcomes dictated by their relative physical abilities.]

Animals settle this fight for freedom by means of direct confrontation. In nature, the order of the strong and the weak is grounded on their relative physical strength. The order or hierarchy is established in a much more complicated way in the adult human world. There arise in many cases fierce battles for winning the recognition by others of our own freedom (or independence). [This is what Hegel elsewhere names the 'Life-and-Death Struggle for Recognition'.]

A Independence and Dependence of Self-Consciousness. Lordship and Bondage

Struggles for Recognition

What kind of relationship will form when one self-consciousness confronts another, which is in effect another person?

Briefly put, it is a relationship of mutual objectification and mutual determination in which the two loci of self-consciousness objectify each other, and both realize that each objectifies the other. In the core of this relationship lies the ego of one self-consciousness seeking to coerce the other into a recognition of the being and desires of the first.

We remain an absolute subject when we face a mere thing or object. When, however, we come up against other persons, as self-consciousness facing self-consciousness, we are unable to maintain the absolute subjectivity of ourselves, as our relationship is bilateral and mutual. One act cannot be limited solely to just one self-consciousness, but will be equally an act of a certain significance for the other at the same time.

As self-consciousness, to some degree we always lose a part of ourselves in our relationship with others, as we know that others objectify us and we cannot but be concerned with this. (We can never be an absolute self in this situation.) If we truly want to confirm our absolute dominance of being, we need to secure our own independence and subjectivity by denying that of others.

In this endeavor, a process arises in which the subject and the object of consciousness constantly oscillate between each other. It is as if the pattern of movement is an ellipse that has two foci, of which neither is more central than the other. The two loci of self-consciousness exhibit complicated movements, as if two mirrors were reflecting each other.

In any given case, the central motive of this process of complicated motion is always the desire of self-consciousness seeking the certainty of its own self.

This mutually determining process of recognition between the two loci of self-consciousness begins with the struggle for recognition between the two, each seeking to fulfill its own purpose. This struggle must, ideally, proceed to the stage in which the antagonists mutually recognize that they are both equally disposed to seek the recognition of the other; that is, to the dimension of 'pure concept of recognition' [→the idea of mutual recognition of freedom that could resolve the conflict].

Let us now reconsider this initial two-sided struggle for recognition.

We have to carefully study the whole process of experiences of recognition which self-consciousness is supposed to go through. Yet let us begin with the observation of the scenes where they desperately struggle to win the opponent's recognition.

Life-and-Death Struggle for Recognition

Self-consciousness is a pure ego, viz., something that craves to be the protagonist of the world. Consequently, one self-consciousness appearing in this world will be basically a negative being for some other. [→Even parent and child do not offer immediate recognition on equal terms with each other.]

Since this antagonism is true for both, each self-consciousness feels equally negative towards the other. Where they are unfamiliar or strange to each other, each poses a direct threat to the independence of the other.

As long as a second self-consciousness exists, the first self-consciousness is unable to maintain its confidence in itself as the sole protagonist of the world. If the first still wants to secure its being as this protagonist, namely its absolute uniqueness, it has to make the other, and itself too, acknowledge that *it* is the center of the world.

When this pursuit endures, it will lead into a life-and-death struggle between the protagonists. For self-consciousness to prove its absolute uniqueness and independence, it will be necessary for it to demonstrate that its own will for freedom cannot be restrained by anything, even by its own life.

The presentation of self-consciousness in showing that it is not fettered to a determinate existence, namely, that it is not bound at all by the particularity everywhere characteristic of existence as such, and that is not tied up with life ... leads it to believe that freedom is obtained solely by risking its life (144, 111)

One who has not in these circumstances risked his life, one who has shrunk back from the fight, is regarded as one who has given up his own freedom in the face of death.

The will to assert its freedom, even at the cost of risking its existence, will lead self-consciousness towards a deed of annihilation of the other self-consciousness, which is viewed as an absolute negativity for itself.

If, however, self-consciousness actually kills the other as a result of the conflict, the initial desire for the other's recognition of its own freedom cannot then be fulfilled. Whereas the life-risking fight is the evidence of their will for securing their absolute freedom on both sides, there will be no one to recognize the winner's freedom if the loser is dead.

Self-consciousness learns through this experience of life-risking fight that not only its pure self-consciousness but its own life also are the vital elements of its being. The harrowing experience of a fear of imminent death teaches us how vital life is for human beings. Yet in the initial stage, self-consciousness is not fully aware of this.

The two essential moments of human existence, pure self-consciousness and continuance of life, are represented as these two extreme modes: the lord (Herr), who is conscious of the absolute independence of his own self, and the bondsman (Knecht), who seeks to preserve his life, even if deprived of his freedom.

Lordship and Bondage

As the result of the life-risking battle for recognition, mankind is divided into two separate conditions, those of lordship and bondage. The lord and the bondsman are in a relationship as follows.

The lord who has won the battle secures absolute independence. He wields absolute power over the bondsman, the power to threaten him with death and to implement that threat. The bondsman is forced in consequence to labor for the benefit of the lord. This is one important aspect of the relationship existing between the lord and the bondsman.

There is, however, another aspect between them. The lord forces the bondsman into hard labor through fear of death and he consumes and enjoys the fruit of his slave's labor. The dominance of the lord over the bondsman is apparent in this sense. In fact, however, the lord is dependent on the labour of the bondsman to enable his (the lord's) consumption and enjoyment of the things he (the bondsman) provides. In this arrangement, the lord becomes a dependent being.

How about the bondsman? He physically cultivates the earth and works on things (exerts a negative power upon these) and produces useful items as the fruit of his labor. Yet these are not owned by him, but by the lord.

With this arrangement between them, the lord seems to monopolize recognition of freedom; the bondsman openly admits his dependence upon and submission to the lord. Despite this, it will soon emerge that the lord is more or less dependent on the bondsman, who is potentially independent through his capacity to produce things.

The lord risked his life to assert the superiority of his self-consciousness over others and his independence of them. The bondsman, meanwhile, abandoned this freedom through his fear of death and thus yielded to the superior power of the lord. His surrender, however, gives him an important cue for being aware of the pure independence of his self-consciousness, that is, of his genuine existence.

Genuine fear of death is a terrifying experience. This soul-shaking terror is greater than any other fear or anxiety that we can experience. This desperate feeling leads the bondsman to an awareness of the absoluteness of his own invaluable and irreplaceable existence.

There is another key factor: labor. Through the experience of labor, the bondsman learns to be sufficiently patient to defer satisfying his desires. This is another essential factor in the genuine independence of a subject.

Labor is thus a fundamental factor or moment for true freedom (independence) in people. In the lordship-bondage relationship, the lord seems to enjoy the freedom to deal with things (to exert dominance over them). However, his freedom to consume and control things depends on the bondsman's labor.

The bondsmen, on the other hand, work on the things, shape them into useful goods and give them out as products. These activities are made possible by restraining their desires and honing their skills. They also lead to a continuous improvement in productivity and capability.

This ability to utilize labor is an essential condition for human domination over nature. The bondsman is empowered through his labor to be confident with his own, natural strength.

The bondsman thus realizes the essential possibility of his own freedom through submission to the lord, that is, through the various experiences of fear of death, labor and service. This process must be experienced in a universal way. It has to be accumulated for a certain period of time as a certain national experience, and only in this way can it become a human historical experience.

[→The assertion that the bondsman grasps the true motive for freedom through the experience of labor and service may sound like some version of a romanticism favored by weaker people. In fact, this theory is quite profound in terms of the process of development of the human mind. Consider, for example, a person who has grown up having his (or her) every demand immediately satisfied. This person hardly knows how to suppress his desires or how to make efforts to achieve some end by cooperating with others. Those who have been sufficiently spoiled (for instance by their parents or because of their high social status) and who are free to act as they wish may come to believe that *everything*, once desired, should be made available to them. They can then never enjoy the pleasures of true freedom, as genuine human pleasure resides in an earnest endeavor to grasp the meaning of one's desires, to adjust them appropriately in one's relationship with others, and finally to attain one's goal after rigorous effort and struggle.]

B Freedom of Self-Consciousness

Stoicism

We have seen that in the lord-bondage relationship, the bondsman rather than the lord is the more motivated to seek genuine freedom. Specifically, the bondsman who submits is found to be in a new stage of consciousness, that is, the 'consciousness of thinking infinity'.

How does this consciousness of thinking infinity, or the consciousness of inner freedom, emerge in the bondsman's mind?

First of all, the bondsman sees himself as a dual being, not just as an absolute self-consciousness, but also as an objectified being. By being objectified by others, he learns to objectify his own being.

Secondly, he works on things through labor, so that he is able to objectify the relationship between himself and outward objects (nature and things). In other words, he does not just imagine (see the images of) the world, but understands it in the form of 'concepts' viz., in their essential relations.

[→ Hegel often uses this expression of understanding a matter or an object not in its 'image' (Vorstellung), but rather in terms of its 'concept' (Begriff). Religious belief, for instance, is associated with an image of Absolute God whose being is superior to that of a human. Philosophy, in contrast, conceives of it using such ideas as how the human desire for something absolute evokes an image of an absolute existence of the beyond. Philosophy is thus supposed to offer a comprehension of a matter in a more fundamental way than can religion.]

Notwithstanding, the consciousness of free infinity at this stage is merely a naive aspect of the consciousness of freedom. This consciousness took a historical expression in the form of stoicism (a school of Greek and Roman philosophy founded by Zeno of Cyprus). Stoic doctrine maintains that the matters are true only in the speculation of consciousness. The stoic holds that supreme happiness should reside in an inner peace (a freedom of mind) that is free of conflicting worldly desires.

We may suppose this attitude as being in the stage of lord-bondage relationship. Neither yet face the reality in which they are trapped. The lord does not yet concede that his freedom is sustained by labor of the bondsman. The bondsman, meanwhile, distracts himself from the reality of his bondage and recedes into an inner freedom of thinking that is allegedly his genuine being.

The truth for stoicism, in all situations, is thus *to maintain that stolid lifeless unconcern which persistently withdraws from the movement of existence, from effective activity as well as from passive endurance, into the simple essentiality of thought*, (153, 118).

[→ Hegel's description of freedom of self-consciousness becomes clearer when taken, on the one hand, as a process of historical human experience and, on the other, as the process of a juveniles experience during his or her psychological and moral growth. Stoicism is therefore considered by Hegel as a philosophy of inner freedom that arose particularly from the absolutely binding lord-bondage relationships of the Roman Empire.

In the meantime, it is also the developmental process of the juvenile mind in which the subject begins to be self-conscious and becomes more or less critical of his or her parents and of other adults, if not expressly so because he or she is still under their parents' supervision. This allows them gradually to gain a sense of inner freedom. Freedom is said to be the consciousness of infinity because inwardly one can infinitely objectify oneself and one's world by means of the free faculty of free thinking.]

Skepticism

While stoicism is considered as an inner negative denial of reality, skepticism must be a conscious and positive denial of reality.

In the context of lord and bondsman, stoicism may be likened to lordship and skepticism to bondage because a stoic is like the lord who sees himself as an absolute self-consciousness without facing reality, whereas a skeptic is like the bondsman who tries to secure the freedom of inner resistance despite his state of subordination.

While, however, the bondsman is totally unable to deny this reality, the skeptic is fully aware of the nature of infinity of thinking, that is, the logical negativity of the process of thinking, and has sufficient command of it to criticize or deny external reality as desired.

The skeptic is thoroughly versed in the fact that any authority or institution is logically relative. He locates his own superiority here. Further explanation of the logical superiority of the skeptic may be given as follows.

As discussed in the Introduction, human consciousness and knowledge evolve as a dialectic process of negativity in which what had earlier seemed to be true is found to be mere knowledge, and vice versa. The skeptic is familiar with the nature of this dialectic process of knowledge and thus has the means to criticize any established authority, institution, or idea.

In fact, however, the negativity in the genuine dialectic process of negation, such that it was actually not-true, spontaneously arises from the reality in front of us. The skeptic pre-empts this moment of dialectic process of negativity and himself arbitrarily imposes this logical negativity on everything.

He always says: this case seems true, but that opposing case is also possible. By doing this, the skeptic relativizes everything to make it uncertain and to raise an objection against its reality.

In short, he comes to resemble a highly skilled sophist. While the dialectics negating or denying real knowledge is necessary and inalterable, the skeptic arbitrarily fabricates this negativity of logic. This allows him to look down on everything from above and to imagine he has secured the infinite freedom of thought of self-consciousness as his absolute truth.

Skepticism, however, has a crucially weak point. Since the skeptic is very much familiar with the free negating power of thinking which relativizes everything, he tacitly knows that this power extends to his own view.

Skepticism declares that there is no such thing as absolute certainty and attempts to convince others that this exact assertion is an ultimate truth. Eventually, however, he cannot but realize that the definiteness of his assertion betrays his insistence on fundamental uncertainty, making it relative and weak.

The skeptic thus contradicts himself in insisting on the certainty of his proposition that everything is uncertain. He remains somehow like a clever child always playing with the "joy of perpetuating contradiction".

Now a new type of self-consciousness, which tries to synthesize stoicism and skepticism, arises from the experience of the contradiction between the absoluteness and relativity of consciousness. Let us call it the 'unhappy consciousness'.

Unhappy Consciousness

The unhappy consciousness does not, unlike stoicism and skepticism, try to assert its viewpoint, based on inner or logical negativity. Instead, it is the type of consciousness experience that tries to discover its own ideal of one kind or another (such as religion or the idea of reform) and keenly seeks something absolute in it.

Placing absoluteness in an ideal often makes the seeker strongly feel an incompleteness of self. Self-consciousness is then torn between the ideal and the defectiveness of itself or the misery of reality and is tormented by this gap. This divided, torn-between consciousness is called unhappy consciousness.

Suppose that the ideal of the self-consciousness of a young man is Christianity. He sees the incarnation of something eternal

(absolute) in an individual named Jesus. He further believes that all creatures, including himself, owe their existence to this Absolute.

The relationship between God as Absolute and humans as individuals has the following three aspects:

- (1) God exercises an absolute rule over people (requiring unilateral awe and worship of the Absolute)
- (2) The Absolute manifests himself in the form of an individual named Jesus (the individual originates in the Absolute).
- (3) This makes people aware that the individuality of mankind is not in dispute with the Absolute (God) but is in peaceful connection with Him.

People now sense the way in which they share the spirit of the Absolute, whereupon the Holy Spirit (der Geist) is perceived as a symbol of unity between absoluteness and individuality. The death of Jesus Christ is also understood as a symbol of reconciliation, of unity between God and mankind. [This is Hegel's interpretation of the Holy Trinity of Christianity: God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That is to say, human spirit is the individual manifestation of the Absolute Spirit of God.]

The narrative of Jesus Christ (his birth, crucifixion and so on) provides religious images or representations of the process in which humans recognize themselves as a spiritual essence. While humans, as individuals, proceed to reconciliation and synthesis with God, the Absolute in this understanding, they remain haunted by the consciousness of being torn between, namely the unhappy consciousness, heralded by Jesus' own agony at his inescapable fate.

Let us consider the typical process of experiences associated with this unhappy consciousness in more detail.

Pure Yearnings

The attitude that people initially assume toward the Absolute Being (Jesus Christ) is pure yearning (faith) accompanied by the deep emotions of adoration and affection.

As Jesus Christ is the Absolute Being presented in the form of a man, one's sincere piety for Him must be an unconscious pursuit of possible unity between the Absolute Being and a human individual. Yet the believer is not aware of this pursuit, and soulfully offers an inner yearning of pure sentiment for Jesus Christ, who is simply a great existence beyond his or her reach.

Jesus Christ, who had come into this world as the Savior, was, however, crucified and ascended to Heaven. Hence people feel that they were cut off from their absolute ties with the Savior and left alone in the midst of anxiety. The tale about the faith of Jesus Christ is thus painted dark for the unhappy consciousness.

People are not yet aware of the essential significance of the being of Jesus Christ and solely hope for salvation. What comes to matter here is therefore holy relics, crusaders and the like.

Absolute Self-devotion

Pursuit for genuine faith proceeds from a naïve longing for Jesus to a positive involvement in religious life. In general, desire and labor are the foundations of human life. These also underpin human freedom. In piety, however, everything in the worldly life is perceived as a blessing from God.

Since what is important for humans is their selfless devotion to God's will, any desire, enjoyment or pleasure is considered contrary to this. All forms of self-regard are viewed as disobedient to God. What is then invariably seen as truly crucial is absolute self-resignation and entire devotion to God.

However, new problems arise with such an extreme attitude of absolute devotion.

First of all, the pious aim at self-renunciation through absolute devotion to God, but it is difficult for humans thoroughly to forego the

most basic factors of human life, such as desire, labor and enjoyment. While people remain alive, it is impossible completely for them always to deny any personal emotional satisfaction.

Secondly, despite their intended extreme self-renunciation, people cannot evade the suspicion that this act may (selfishly) be a sort of channel through which they beseech God to give them some special blessing. This makes them aware of possible contradiction and hypocrisy hidden behind the edifice of complete self-renunciation. They cannot fully overcome this gnawing suspicion, and proceed instead to the next step.

Since they are tormented by the fear that even their most sincere devotion and gratitude to God might be rooted in selfishness and self-attachment, they attempt to find space for yet further self-renunciation. In response to this new pursuit, the church (sect) plays an important, intermediating role.

Since the genuinely pious learn that whatever personal effort they make towards a connection with God and a resultant salvation might ultimately be selfish, they attempt to entrust everything to the power of the church. The church thus becomes for them an intermediary between the Absolute Being and mankind. They abandon the hope for a direct connection with the Absolute Being and seek to secure it indirectly (impersonally) by immersing themselves in a religious community.

The idea held out by the church is cherished by them (its adherents) as what is truly most important and it attracts their wholehearted, selfless devotion.

Yet some notice that this devotion still remains locked in the cycle of labor and enjoyment, as it brings with it the pleasure of being appreciated by others. On realizing this, such people then search for a way to reduce the involvement of self *to an absolute minimum*. They take to asceticism and the relinquishing of all worldly life, severing any attachment to their property and donating all of it to the church so that they can now earnestly devote themselves to voluntary religious activities.

As long as they are human, however, it is impossible to give up all care for and attachment to themselves. Moreover, even absolute self-denunciation and devotion to the Absolute do not necessarily make them certain of their salvation. A niggling doubt persists.

People thus proceed incrementally, as outlined, from a simple longing for the person of Jesus Christ to an absolute self-renunciation for the sake of the church. Yet despite all their sincere efforts, they are never completely free from unhappy consciousness, as there always remains some degree of anxiety and suspicion concerning the received doctrines of salvation, eternal life, the Kingdom of God, and so on.

[→ Whereas stoicism and skepticism depict how the excessive self-consciousness of the young seeks to ensure its own value, the central theme of unhappy consciousness focuses on the anguish of an earnest young person who is awakened to his or her own ideal and is struggling to realize it. Hegel depicts this as a passion for an ideal Christian piety because he bears in mind the unfolding of ethical and religious thought between the stoicism and skepticism of the Roman era and the emergence of Christianity. In Hegel's time, sincere young people were attracted to such ideals as new political thoughts, say liberalism and radicalism, and were not confined to some revised religious pietism. In and after the 19th century, the object of young people's ideals has substantially shifted from religious to political idealism, because social contradictions in reality have been keenly sensed by them. The total devotion to religious or political ideals and the resulting passion for self-annihilation, as pictured by Hegel, has largely waned today. Notwithstanding this, it is notable that unhappy consciousness immutably remains an important insight into the peculiar crisis of the self-consciousness of the young in modern society.]

[☆→Chapter-end Commentary (by Takeda)]

Let me present an overall picture of this chapter on self-consciousness, as it is the starting point of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as an essential theory of the human mind.

Hegel begins with the essence of life. His scheme of philosophy originates in the idea that the world comprises one 'Absolute Spirit' whose essence is a free process of infinitely unfolding itself. Life intrinsically shares the 'infinity' of this Absolute Spirit, so that the

essence of life resides in the process of incessantly dividing, unifying, and reproducing itself.

Hegel says next that the essence of consciousness is not just life as a process of self-division and self-reunification, but is also the desire that strives to maintain this process. This is no doubt an exquisite definition of the essence of consciousness.

Self-consciousness is now in focus. The desire of self-consciousness is expressed not simply in the denial of others for the sake of one's self-preservation (e.g., in consuming them as food), but also in actively seeking recognition by others. (As people live in social communities, most desires cannot be satisfied without some degree of recognition or acceptance by others. See in this context the insightful observations of Alexandre Kojève in his work, *Lectures on Hegel's Philosophy*.)

Hegel then proceeds to his famous anecdote of the lord and the bondsman. People attempt to secure their own freedom (and satisfaction of desire) by urging others to recognize them. It is difficult, however, for two persons each to make compatible their compulsion for the other's recognition. The basic form of human relationship is thus a theatre containing the unending struggle of each to gain recognition by the other.

Hegel's description of this struggle may readily be understood by considering ancient history, in which splintered and sporadic violent wars over wide areas continue one after another until some great empire is founded in each sphere of civilization. The race between alien nations for rule (mostly for recognition) ends up with the imposition of slavery of the vanquished, under the threat of death. Universal wars (across the vast area of the ancient world) necessarily lead to the establishment of universal rule by grand ancient empires. This is Hegel's overview of the ancient world history of the Orient, of Persia and Greece, and of Rome.

As I already mentioned, the freedom of self-consciousness that follows the struggle for recognition has a dual import. Firstly, in human intellectual history it gives rise to stoicism and skepticism, which arose from the contradiction between the inner sense of freedom and the reality of a domineering Roman society; it also underpins the later 'unhappy consciousness' associated with Christianity. Secondly, it evolves into the critical self-consciousness of young people, who fiercely pursue their own ideals despite their dependency on their parents.

That is to say, the human prototypes of free self-consciousness in the Greek and Roman eras, as well as those of unhappy consciousness in the Christian era, torn between ideality and reality, are substantially consistent with the self-consciousness of modern young people in the course of their development from adolescence to young adulthood.]

