5
Skepticism, knowledge, and truth in the Jena Phenomenology

1. Idealism and skepticism

Whatever else Hegel intends by asserting an "Absolute Idealism," it is clear by now that such a claim at the very least involves Hegel in a theory about pure concepts, and about the role of such concepts in human experience, particularly in any possible knowledge of objects, but also in various kinds of self-conscious, intentional activities. Moreover, his account of this role is clearly committed to the priority of such a conceptual element. Throughout his mature system, his general term of art for such a nonempirical and supposedly "spontaneously self-moving" condition is "the Notion" (*der Begriff*) and, simply put, his claim is that the Notion originally determines the possibility and character of human experience. And it is also uncontroversial that Hegel does not want to be committed to any claim that would construe such a relativization of objects of experience or norms of action to our conceptual structure as a *limitation*, one that leaves us, to use his highly speculative language, with the finitude of subjective idealism rather than the infinity of Absolute Knowledge. There is, in Hegel's final position, no possible *contrast* between our conceptual framework and "the world," and hence no such limitation.[1] Finally, in much of the Jena material, Hegel had begun to connect the possibility of such a fully developed or "Absolute" Notion with a theory of subjectivity, an account of what it was to be a self-conscious subject in such a "Notional" relation with objects, an account, that is, of what he will call "Spirit."

In the 1807 *PhG* we are introduced to the terminology with which Hegel will attempt to articulate and defend such idealism. The position that the *PhG* will "introduce" us to, "educate" us about, and "deduce" is called simply "science" (*Wissenschaft*), knowledge of "the Absolute." Hegel appears to have a number of things in mind with each of these versions of the *PhG*'s task, and he characterizes such a science in many different ways, but in the Preface it is at least clear that "the proper exposition" of such a science "belongs to Logic, or rather it is Logic" (*PhG* 35; *PS*, 28).[2] In further describing what will be the 1812–16 *Science of Logic*, the "standpoint of which" the *PhG* will in some sense justify or "lead us to," and that *SL* will present, Hegel bluntly summarizes the basic claim of such a Science as "truth has only the Notion as its element of existence" (*PhG*, 12; *PS*, 4), and he later says that "Science dare only organize itself by the life of the Notion itself," a "Notional life" Hegel constantly describes as

"self-determining" (*PhG*, 38ff.; *PS*, 31ff.). Indeed, in describing the subject matter of science, "the Absolute," Hegel goes so far as to say:

> Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a result, that only in the end is it what it truly is; and that precisely in this consists its nature, viz., to be *actual, subject, the becoming of itself*. (*PhG*, 19; *PS*, 11; my emphasis)[3]

These claims that "the Absolute" – variously also called "the truth," "actuality," "what there is, in truth," and "objects, in truth" – *is* "the Notion," and that such Notionality must be understood as the "logic" of a "self-determining" subjectivity are summed up in the most famous claim of the *PhG*: that "everything turns on grasping the True, not only as Substance, but equally as Subject" (*PhG*, 18; *PS*, 10). In fact, Hegel will quickly alter the "equally as" (*eben so sehr als*) language of this claim and state more directly that the true "living substance" or "what is in truth actual" "*is* in truth Subject" (*PhG*, 18; *PS*, 10; my emphasis), that "Substance is essentially Subject" (*PhG*, 22; *PS*, 14), that "substance is in itself or implicitly subject," and that "all content is its own reflection into itself" (*PhG*, 39; *PS*, 33).[4]

These are the claims that, I have argued, are best understood in terms of both Hegel's debt to Kant and Fichte, and his rejection of the Kantian account of pure intuition. The question now is simply whether he can make clear what such claims about "absolute" subjectivity amount to, and especially whether he can defend his assertions, particularly that the "results" of such a self-determining subjectivity are objective, indeed, incredibly, that such results comprise "absolute truth."

As we have seen, the defense of such an objectivity claim involves Hegel's highly abstract formulations about the "identity within difference" of "subject and object." Understandably (given a straightforward interpretation of "identity"), this is the claim that is at the basis of most metaphysical, or Spirit-monism, interpretations of Hegel. And so, with the preceding discussion of Hegel's idealist predecessors as a starting point for a potentially nonmetaphysical account of Hegel's idealism, we might also put the question to be pursued as follows: Is there a way of understanding the "subject–object identity" formulations of Hegel's absolute idealism as what he says they are, *extensions* of Kant's project, rather than a complete rejection, or a transformation so radical that Kant is no longer recognizable in it? If there is, then there is one problem more than any other that ought to be the focus of such an interpretation.

Simply put, the issue that radically differentiates Hegel from Kant and Fichte is expressed in the charge that Kant and Fichte, despite their achievements, are *skeptics*, philosophers who finally undercut their own results by admitting that they have no way of establishing that the conditions for a possibly self-conscious experience of objects are genuinely objective. The results of their respective "deductions" either relativize claims about objects to mere phenomena or create an infinite and infinitely futile task, a "striving" for a reconciliation that can never occur. Kant and Fichte reenact a Christian,

religious tragedy of human finitude; they insist on a fundamental, eternal difference between the human and divine perspectives, and ascribe to the latter the only genuine, absolute knowledge of things in themselves.

Thus, to all the other questions Hegel needs to be asked, we must ask the most pressing: How has he avoided the "transcendental skepticism" of Kant and Fichte? And, faced with such a question, there are two reasons to think that Hegel will have a difficult time answering it. The first stems from the results found in Chapter 2. Given Hegel's Fichtean rejection of Kant's reliance on pure sensible intuition in the Deduction, it seems far *more* likely that it will be Hegel, not Kant, who will be restricted to a mere finite or subjective idealism. In the second half of the Deduction, Kant at least tried to establish a priori that *phenomenal objects* (objects of intuition) must conform to the categories. Without such a strategy, it seems prima facie that the best Hegel can hope for is some case for the subjective indispensability of pure concepts, some way of describing our fundamental "like-mindedness." The *PhG* could then be read as an imaginative, original account of how and why various "shapes of Spirit," or Notions, came to be "experienced" as fundamental, unrevisable by experience since somehow *thought* to be constitutive of its possibility. But there now seems even less reason to think that whatever we can establish as a Notional condition of experience, necessary for experience to be a self-conscious unity, will have anything to do with "objects" of experience, much less be "identical" with "what there is, in truth."[5]

Second, Hegel's extraordinary Fichtean emphasis on the autonomy and self-determining character of this Notional level seems clearly vulnerable to empirical or material objections, broadly construed. Even if it can be shown that the possibility of determinate experience requires an empirically independent or in some way "self-determined" condition of some kind, it is unclear why we should think, even initially, that the best way to understand what such conditions are, and how they might change, is in the wholly "internalist" way Hegel has already begun to suggest: that accounts of some such Notional transformation should rely only on other Notions, that this Notional level has, if you will, a life of its own. A philosopher who might be inclined to travel with Hegel away from realism, to accept the transcendental objections to empiricism, and to be sympathetic to Hegel's criticisms of Kant's transcendentalism, might indeed find Hegel's systematic pretension to a "self-developing" Notion to be the greatest barrier to any further travel.

This interpretation – that the achievement of Absolute Knowledge claimed at the end of the *PhG* primarily involves a "deduction" of the absolute objectivity of the Notion (*both* the deduction of its basic structure and the deduction of its objectivity), without the transcendental-skeptical remainder of things in themselves – will obviously require a great deal of elaboration.[6] And finally, all of this will depend on some general interpretation of the *PhG* itself, an account of what kind of book it is that could claim to establish such a goal, and of its status within Hegel's mature system (as an "Intro-

duction," whether scientific or historical, as the "First Part" of the system, as finally transformed into a component of the "science" of subjective spirit, or as some kind of "propadeutic" for the system).

I shall begin to address the last question in Section 4 of this chapter. But since my interpretation of the *PhG* depends heavily on a claim about the engagement with skepticism I shall try to show is at the heart of the work, I continue to motivate that approach by reference to Hegel's own remarks about such a deduction and what it must show.

2. Phenomenological deduction

It is not difficult to find passages where Hegel clearly attributes a "deductive" intention to the *PhG*, and where he explains how that deduction succeeds by means of a particular kind of encounter with *skepticism*. By far the clearest of the former passages occurs in the Introduction to the *SL*. There Hegel says that the *PhG* had treated "*all* forms of the relation of consciousness to the object," and that by doing so had provided a "justification" (*Rechtfertigung*) of the Notion; indeed, he says that this procedure was the *only* justification the Notion could have received (*WL*, I, 29; *SL*, 48). And on the next page, he states directly that the *PhG* is "nothing other than the deduction" of the notion of pure science, and that it accomplishes this by having "eliminated" the "separation of the object from the certainty of itself" (*WL*, I, 30; *SL*, 49).[7]

This possible separation between the "object," or what Hegel also calls "truth," and the "self-certainty" of the subject, as well as his use of the term made so important by Kant, a "deduction," which will accomplish the elimination of this separation, suggests clearly that the confrontation with a "realist skepticism" about our conceptual scheme is the self-appointed task of the *PhG*, and the best indication of how we should understand, at least initially, the notion of absolute knowledge.[8] By this I mean that even if Hegel can show that we cannot make knowledge claims about any particular matter of fact unless such claims are subject to pure conceptual conditions, such a demonstration would still leave open the "separation" mentioned earlier, the possibility that we are describing a transcendental subject's criteria only for self-certainty, not for "genuine knowledge." The latter can, on such an account, only be what the robust realist insists it is: The world is as it is, independently of any activity of ours; knowledge worthy of the name must accurately represent the nature of things; and we must be able to give some account of how we know which of the claims or beliefs we make about that nature are the true ones. Hegel has set himself the task of rejecting such realist doubts, even while defending the objectivity of the results of what he calls "Spirit's experience of itself." Indeed, he thinks he can establish that such results, despite such skeptical suspicions, constitute "absolute knowledge."[9]

This is suggested even more directly in the Introduction to the *PhG*. There the realization of the continual "untruth" of "appearing knowledge"

is called explicitly a "thoroughgoing skepticism" (*sich vollbringende Skepticismus*) and is immediately distinguished from a merely or incidentally skeptical or interrogative attitude (*PhG*, 56; *PS*, 50). And, as claimed in the *SL*, this overcoming of skepticism, a skepticism said to be "directed against the *whole* range of phenomenal consciousness," is what "renders spirit for the first time competent to examine what truth is" (*PhG*, 56; *PS*, 50).

So much for Hegel's statements of intention. The questions they generate include, among others: What does he mean by "skepticism," and what does he mean by overcoming skepticism and establishing Absolute Knowledge? From what we have seen thus far, Hegel is apparently restricting himself to the question of skeptical doubts about his own version of a priori knowledge, doubts that there *are* a priori conditions (Notions) for the possibility of experience, that such predetermining subjective constraints on what could be an object of experience ought to be understood as a result of "Spirit's developing knowledge of itself," and that such Notions simply "are what there is, in truth," that they do not merely represent how it is that Substance is *thought* as Subject.

All of which means that Hegel's relation to the modern skepticism problem is complex, that many of the problems Hegel poses for himself in the *PhG* presuppose a point of view on a great many other issues. Hegel may write that the *PhG* is the "pathway of doubt," even of "despair," but it is only a particular *kind* of doubt and despair at issue, and it is not initially clear what kind. That is, like Kant, Hegel is, from the start, interested in the conditions of the possibility of knowledge, and nowhere seems interested in the modern post-Cartesian problem – Is there ever any good reason to believe that we know *anything*? – or with what is often a kind of test case for the radical problem – Is there any good reason to believe that there is an external world? Also, like Kant (who, though, finally did feel compelled to address such problems), Hegel offers little systematic discussion of why he has posed the problem of knowledge in the way he does, and why he generally ignores all sorts of other skeptical problems in epistemology.

What little discussion there is, coupled with a little getting-ahead-of-ourselves, suggest the following. What we can call the "Cartesian," as opposed to the "Kantian," skepticism problem originates in a problem about inference. On the supposition that one is with certainty, incorrigibly, and so foundationally, having a certain experience, or is in a certain state, the problem is: How can one justify an inference about anything other than such a state, either the causal origin of that experience or the objects presented as such and such in that state/experience? This is a problem because it can be shown that there are no good (non-question-begging) reasons for preferring the commonsense or "natural" inference over other, more fanciful ones. So, the "sensations" naturally compatible with my inferring that I am in fact seated in front of the fire I seem to be seated in front of are equally compatible with my dreaming that I am so seated, or even with the existence of an evil demon who deceives me when I think I am in fact so seated. If I claim to know, in other words, that the evidence I have supports conclusion

p, it must be possible to show that such evidence *could* not be compatible with $-p$, and the skeptical challenge is that I cannot, in many apparently obvious cases, fulfill this latter condition.

Understanding Hegel's reaction to and rejection of such a problem is important, not only as a clarification of the skepticism issue he *is* interested in, but because it introduces us, through the problem of skepticism, to his own usual theory of "thought's negative relation to *itself*," and so to what he might mean by "overcoming" such self-negation. One early discussion brings his own Kantian skepticism problem into focus sharply and shows why he rejects, like Kant, the entire "inferential" apparatus presupposed by the Cartesian problem.

In the 1802 review of a work of the romantic skeptic G.E. Schulze (Aenesidemus) entitled "The Relation of Skepticism to Philosophy, a Presentation of Its Different Modifications, and a Comparison of Modern with Ancient Skepticism," in the course of arguing that the ancient skepticism was superior to the modern, he asserts that the latter involves a *dogmatic* confinement to the "facts" of common sense and sense experience. Modern skeptics like Schulze, Hegel asserts again and again, profess to restrict themselves to the "facts of consciousness" alone; they claim that there is no possible inference "beyond" or "behind' such immediate experience; and they conclude that if there is, such an "act" or projection is itself just another immediate experience. Schulze thus qualifies as the Cartesian skeptic described previously.[10]

As is apparent in Hegel's very characterization of the position, and as is more explicit in his ironic comparisons with ancient skepticism, the problem with the whole approach, as Hegel sees it, is that it is not skeptical enough, not as skeptical as ancient attacks on the integrity of commonsense experience, and it is dogmatic about its own point of orientation. It is not at all clear, he asserts, that there can be an immediate, "self-explanatory" fact of consciousness from which inferences are to be made. Such a position is dogmatic because it assumes that the mind simply perceives directly that it is in a certain state, and that the state is this-such a state.[11] Such a beginning is not self-explanatory at all; an account of the "conditions of *its* possibility" is necessary, and since it is necessary, we must reject wholesale any problem that is generated by assuming some original "fact of consciousness." Knowledge is not a matter of inference from noninferentially warranted states. There are no such states. And ultimately, such a claim will mean that the philosophical "problem of knowledge" will shift to the question of the "conditions under which" judgments about objects (even objects of "inner sense") could be true or false ("objective").

Although in this essay Hegel is mostly concerned with the superiority of ancient doubts about such supposedly indubitable foundations in consciousness, it is clear from the other essays written around this time that he has been quite influenced by Kant's similar attacks on the "dogmatic realism" of even the skeptical philosophers of the "new way of ideas," and in particular by Kant's claims about the "self-consciousness" condition and so the

necessary "mediation" of any conscious experience. Such an orientation naturally leads him to view the skepticism problem, as Kant did, in transcendental terms. If there are original conditions necessarily presupposed even for the possibility of the skeptic's generation of his counterpossibilities, then the original task is to discover these pure conditions. Such an orientation already undercuts the skeptical contrast between the certainty of immediate experience and the dubitability of inferences about objects, and it raises the transcendental problem of the "conditions" under which self-awareness and a distinction between self- and other-awareness is possible.

It thus also raises the skepticism problem in a different way. Even if it could be established that there are "pure conditions" for the possibility of any experience, and that such conditions ensure that a distinction between inner and outer experience is possible (even if, say, empirically difficult to demonstrate), it is not clear what the "dependence" of experience on such conditions finally says about the possibility of *knowledge*. Our robust realist might claim: All right, so you do not maintain that knowledge is a matter of inference from the occurrence of mental states; you do not maintain that we have some direct access to such states, and so are not subject to my attack on the rationality of any such inference. But I do not see the value of shifting the issue to the problem of "transcendental conditions." Now you are maintaining that the possibility of making true judgments about objects (even inner objects) is always relativized to subjective conditions for the possibility of judgments, and I maintain now that there are no good, non-question-begging reasons for assuming that such conditioned judgments have anything to do with knowledge of the world as it is.[12]

From Hegel's point of view, this is precisely the argument that Kant fell victim to in his admission that we do not know things in themselves. Accordingly, although Kant himself is not a "vulgar Kantian" like Schulze, he is still a "psychological idealist," subject to the skeptic's attack. What this suggests is that Hegel thinks his own idealism can accept the Kantian rejection of the Cartesian problematic and not inherit the Kantian skepticism that the transcendental approach seems necessarily heir to. Yet another tall order.

However, it is already becoming clear that Hegel will not, in some directly "realist" way, simply try to establish the identity of Spirit's self-determinations and "being as it in itself." Indeed, if the skepticism problem is posed as it is earlier, and if Hegel were to try to solve it by meeting the realist's objections directly, his project would look hopeless. What becomes apparent at this point, particularly when one briefly surveys the vast range of topics discussed in the *PhG* (all presumably having some connection with the programmatic goals summarized earlier), is that Hegel is just as radically *altering the terms within which* the problem of the "objectivity" of "Spirit's self-moving Notion" ought to be understood as he is defending such an objectivity claim. It will take considerable effort to explain the nature of this alteration, and to assess whether Hegel has begged the relevant question, but it is in the context of such an alteration, such an idealist project, and

such a "deductive" goal that, I shall argue, the *PhG*'s otherwise bewildering array of topics, from Perception to Master/Slave, from physiognomy to the Christian religion, must be understood.[13]

The general intent of such an alteration is clear enough; it is in the way Hegel proposes to justify such a strategy that some of his original and most influential contributions to philosophy become manifest. That is, the only strategy Hegel can use, consistent with his own idealism, will be to *undercut* the presuppositions involved in standard realist assumptions about "being as it is in itself." That is, Hegel will try to undermine and exclude the *relevance* of such doubts, progressively and systematically, rather than answer them directly. He will try to show, determinately, why, given some putative Notional determination of objects, doubts about whether objects must or even can be so Notionally specified, are the relevant, determinate doubts they are, only as a *consequence* of that Notion's own incompleteness. This in turn means, for Hegel (summarizing everything at once), that such an "opposition" between "subject" and "object" is itself a "determination of the Notion," and so such an incompleteness can itself be made out only on the assumption of a developing Notion *of* objectivity. There is no *point*, Hegel constantly remarks, in abstractly asking whether the world "really" is as we take it to be, whether, "for all we know," this or that bizarre scenario might actually be occurring. Doubts about the adequacy of our conceptual scheme must have some basis, a concrete *ratio dubitandi*, for them to be serious doubts, and Hegel thinks he can show that the only legitimate basis for such doubts is what he calls "Spirit's experience of itself," an experience always determined *by* the "developing Notion." If this is true, then, roughly, what Hegel is after is a way of demonstrating the "ultimate" or absolute objectivity of the Notion not by some demonstration that being as it is in itself can be known to be as we conceive it to be, but that a Notionally conditional actuality is all that "being" could intelligibly be, even for the most committed realist skeptic. Or, if you like, Hegel's skeptic is co-opted into the idealist program, not simply "refuted." (Although such a project is not yet clear, some aspect of what Hegel proposes is apparent in the passages where he attacks Kant's "thing in itself" doctrine and, like Fichte, does not simply claim that we *can* know the world as it is, independent of our transcendental conditions, but that the subject's knowledge of itself, finally, properly understood, *counts* as the knowledge of the thing in itself that Kant paradoxically denied.) We know this, if we do, by in effect systematically overcoming any objections based on realist assumptions, objections that Hegel thinks he can show arise within an "experience" putatively determined by some Notion. This is the way the *PhG* must overcome skepticism. And it brings us to the issue that must be explained in much more detail if the preceding compressed, still admittedly quite vague summary of Hegel's methodology is to be assessed – what Hegel means by such an appeal to "Spirit's experience of itself."[14]

Before doing so, however, we should briefly note the extent to which, already, this post-Kantian statement of Hegel's project conflicts with a

widely held view of Hegel. After all, it could be asserted, Hegel is known as a prototypical *realist*; whatever he means by the claim, he does assert that we know "reality" (Absolute Spirit) as it is in itself (what else could the denial of Kant's "thing in itself" remainder amount to?). Yet, as we have just seen, Hegel also states that reality *is* the developing Notion, and this certainly suggests a kind of contemporary antirealism, a relativization of truth claims to the Hegelian (Notional) equivalent of something like warranted assertability, or provability, or membership in an ideal theory. And as the project of the *PhG* has been stated so far, it does indeed seem that Hegel is making both such claims, or stating a fundamentally antirealist, idealist position, as if it *could have no realist competitor*, and so can be construed as itself constitutive of "reality as it is (could be) in itself." As noted, this will involve his elimination of the possibility of realist-skeptical attacks on the internally developing Notionality of various possible "shapes of Spirit" and the development of a technical sense of "actuality" (*Wirklichkeit*), one that can make plausible the counterintuitive consequence of his position: that actuality must be said to "change" if constituted by an internally "self-determining" Notion.[15]

3. The science of the experience of consciousness

There is in the Preface and Introduction of the *PhG* an abstract, often very confusing summary of what such a "self-examination by Spirit" is supposed to consist in. I discuss the specific terms of that explanation in this section. But we should also briefly remind ourselves why, given the intellectual ancestry of Hegel's idealism, his position on the "problem of objectivity" itself should indeed be as distinctive as his proposed absolutist solution.

Consider first that when Hegel is describing the conclusion or termination of the case made by the *PhG*, he is just as likely to describe such Absolute Knowledge in the terms used earlier (the overcoming of skepticism, the identity of subject and object, the comprehension of Truth as the Notion) as he is to state such things as the following:

> The Spirit that, so developed, knows itself as Spirit, is Science; Science is its actuality and the realm which it builds for itself in its own element. (*PhG*, 22; *PS*, 14)

And, "finally, when consciousness itself grasps this its own essence, it will signify the nature of absolute knowledge itself" (*PhG*, 62; *PS*, 57). Such passages testify even more directly to the point made earlier: that Hegel's resolution of the objectivity and skepticism problems raised by his idealism must involve a way of arguing *that* such a self-knowledge by Spirit, although not "metaphysically identical" with "what there is, in truth," nevertheless in some way defines or transcendentally constitutes the possibility of "objects."

Posing the problem this way should make clear why so many commentators have concluded either that the metaphysical interpretation is correct (the Spirit-monism view) or that what is "living" in Hegel is simply his

theory of Spirit's experience of itself, that he has an independently powerful "philosophical anthropology," a theory of "culture" that ought to be disconnected from the view of "the Absolute," or Science. Prima facie, any other view would seem unable to do justice either to the Absolute Knowledge claim or to the "Spirit's knowledge of itself is Science" claim. I have already indicated some reasons why the former view cannot account for Hegel's central idealist project, and shall present others as his case unfolds. Hegel himself would object strongly to the latter "disconnection" move. He claims often that we cannot understand what he means by Spirit "having itself for its object just as it is" unless we realize that *thereby* "the separation of knowing and truth is overcome" (*PhG*, 30; *PS*, 21) and that, in such self-knowledge, we have attained the "simple oneness of knowing, the True in the form of the True" (*PhG*, 30; *PS*, 22).

Yet such a connection between complete "self-consciousness" and Absolute Knowledge should not, by now, sound so strange or require the choices suggested earlier. First, as we have seen in some detail, the foundations of the general connection between self-consciousness and the original possibility of a subject making judgments about *objects* were laid in Kant's apperception doctrine and Fichte's and Hegel's appropriation of Kant. If (and, of course, it is a big "if") Hegel's version of a "Deduction" can be defended, there will be nothing unusual about claiming that Spirit's full knowledge of itself is a kind of Absolute Knowledge. For it is a self-knowledge on which the very possibility of knowledge of objects depends. Second, although Hegel's disagreement with Kant about the availability of some pure representation of givenness, about pure intuitions, has greatly altered the issue of the objectivity of the various ways a subject might, a priori, bring its experiences to a unity, it has not eliminated the problem of objectivity. It is still a critical problem that Hegel fully accepts. Third, this latter should suggest the Fichtean legacy in Hegel's project, that the *problem* of such objectivity, when and if it arises as a problem, does not involve the pure synthesis of a "merely material manifold," but can only be understood as the subject's experience of some kind of "*self*-opposition," some way for a subject's projection of a possible experience to be "internally deficient" and "internally correctable." ("Internal" because, at such a level, empirical correction is not possible.) And this is where all the murkiest problems begin. The latter ought at least to mean, roughly, that (1) a subject's cognitive relation to an object can be shown to be possible only by that subject's reliance on some Notion of objects in general; (2) that such a reliance, although often deeply implicit, nonetheless reflects that subject's spontaneous apperception, an empirically undetermined Notion that reflects the subject "taking" the objects of its experience to be such objects; and (3) that in any such putative experience of objects, if such a Notional determination is inadequate as a condition for a self-conscious experience of objects, that inadequacy can be determined internally, just by a description of what such an experience would be like. With such a Notion of objects, a cognitive

relation to objects could not be coherently established. In *this* sense, a subject or a projected "candidate" subject could be said to be "opposed to" or "dissatisfied with" *itself*.

The problem is how all this "opposition" and "overcoming" is supposed to be *described*, indeed, presumably, to be described as some sort of idealized "history" of Spirit's self-education. Moreover, not only is this the kind of connection between apperceptive subjectivity and objectivity that must be accounted for if Hegel is to have any criteria for the adequacy of his own claims; the issue, posed this way, also helps to explain the generality and breadth of this issue of a "subject's experience of opposition" in the *PhG* as a whole. As noted previously, Hegel is attempting both to alter the way in which the objectivity of the results of "Spirit's experience to itself" are assessed and to defend such a newly defined objectivity. In fulfilling the former goal, he takes it upon himself to provide an account of how and why an idealized subject (any possible subject) would experience an "opposition" between its self-determining activity and what it is trying to determine – in our earlier language, why a subject would doubt that the way it takes things to be is the way things are. If such an account is to have a chance of providing a general enough description of such experienced opposition to be used in the kind of deductive strategy described earlier, the one that results from the rejection of pure intuition and that will fulfill the latter goal, it must be very general indeed, comprehensive enough to explain the *nature* of such "opposition" and so the skeptical doubts that originate from it. And, true to form, Hegel charges ahead and tries to provide such an extraordinarily general account. He tries to account for such things as how and why a subject would find its views of *another subject* "opposed" by such a subject; how social subjects, groups, or classes find their desires, and especially their view of their own desires, opposed and negated by other social subjects, groups, or classes; how political subjects with certain Notions about political life would (and did) find themselves in sometimes "tragic" opposition; in what way laboring or even worshipping subjects find their experience of their own activity "in opposition with itself"; and so forth.

Here, aside from this general, still quite programmatic, account of how Hegel will solve the enormous objectivity problem he has created for himself, we can also summarize the rather more technical discussion presented in the Preface and especially in the Introduction, and see if that is any help with the problem.

Having only loosely and provisionally defined Science (*Wissenschaft*) as knowledge of the Absolute, or "the truth," Hegel notes the obvious: that any specific such Notion of objects is initially just that, a Notion like any other, only initially what he calls an "appearance" (*PhG*, 55, *PS*, 48). This is so because such a putative Science "comes on the scene alongside another mode of knowledge," and so, without further ado, is as suspect as these others of just being a "bare assertion." In this context, the problem Hegel

sets for himself is to show how such manifestations of absolute claims "free themselves" from this situation of "merely seeming to be absolute" (*von diesem Scheine*) (*PhG*, 55; *PS*, 48).

Hegel realizes that this immediately sounds like a simple survey of arguments used to justify claims about the "absolute objectivity" of various Notions, and he quickly moves to correct the impression that his own "exposition" (*Darstellung*) in the *PhG* "seems not to be Science, free and self-moving in its own most shape." And, in beginning to defend the scientific nature of his own "exposition" of such an objectivity problem, he states all at once the most controversial and intriguing aspects of the *PhG*. The presentation

> can be regarded as the path of natural consciousness that presses forward to true knowledge; or as the way of the soul, which journeys through the series of its own configurations as though they were the stations appointed for it by its own nature, so that it may purify itself for the life of Spirit in that through the complete experience of itself, it attains knowledge of what it is in itself. (*PhG*, 55; *PS*, 49)

Later, this "detailed history of the education of consciousness itself up to Science" is said to involve a "necessary progression" and a final "completion" of the attempt by "natural consciousness" to rid itself of doubts about its own phenomenal status.

Throughout the Introduction, Hegel characterizes such "natural consciousness" much as he did in his earlier works when referring to "reflection" or the reflective point of view. This means that all points of view other than what he had called the "speculative" (now "scientific") are characterized by an internal dualism, a separation of subject and object. In his language, this means that the very possibility of consciousness presupposes that a subject can "distinguish itself from something" while it "at the same time relates itself to it" (*PhG*, 55; *PS*, 52). This is his way of formulating the issue of how a subject can be said to intend its objects determinately, if merely being in a state or having an experience cannot count as such an intention. The problem is then how to *account for* this "natural" or constitutive characteristic of consciousness, how a conscious subject comes to judge as it does about the objects taken to be the objects of awareness. He calls this point of view "natural" in the *PhG* to emphasize the power of its hold on the way we think; it is indeed natural to think of "subjects" who can, for example, wonder if their moral claims have objective justifiability or their epistemic claims objective warrant. This is especially the case, of course, given a conception of subjectivity in which there are such moral claims, or possible knowledge at all, only as a "result" in some sense of a subject's self-determining activity. No form of knowledge or claim to an objective authority of any kind seems immune from the possibility of such a "separation."

In sum, then, by referring to the self-examination of natural consciousness as the "coming on the scene of Science," Hegel is presupposing that there are various fundamental ways in which an experiencer can understand its

relation to objects, that such Notions, or presuppositions about the Absolute, are conditions for the possibility of experience, at least in the sense that they are not revisable in the face of experience. (He must now successfully identify such Notions, and defend their fundamentality and the nature of the transformation he will claim that any experiencer making such a presupposition or another must undergo.) And he believes that a deduction of Absolute Idealism can be effected by such a self-transformation because (1) such a deduction, a demonstration that natural consciousness ultimately presupposes the truth of Idealism, is the only way that the standpoint of Science can avoid begging the question against objections and because (2) identifying such presuppositions of natural consciousness identifies presuppositions so deep and fundamental that they constitute the only alternative to Science. So, if *all* "basic" positions that assume the nonidentity of Notion and Object can be shown to presuppose the identity of the fully developed Notion and Object, that identity will be established. That is why establishing Science *for* natural consciousness *is* the final overcoming of the possibility of skepticism about Absolute Knowledge.[16]

This all takes us back to the deepest issue raised by the Introduction's claims: Hegel's original characterization of the nature of consciousness, such that it can be said to experience itself as Hegel says it does and to transform itself in a "scientific" direction. That characterization can be summed up in one brief sentence, although, I have been arguing throughout, there is no way that it can be understood or justified without keeping in mind Hegel's appropriation of Kant and Fichte:

> Consciousness is, however, for itself its own Notion; thereby it is immediately a going-beyond the limited [*das Beschränkte*] and, because the limited belongs to it, a going-beyond itself. (*PhG*, 57; *PS*, 51)

The Kantian roots of this claim are even more visible in a later characterization of consciousness:

> For consciousness is on the one hand, consciousness of the object; on the other hand, consciousness of itself; consciousness of what is for it the truth, and consciousness of its own knowledge of that truth. (*PhG*, 59; *PS*, 54)

Both passages represent Hegel's appropriation of Kant's claim about the necessarily apperceptive nature of experience and Fichte's emphasis on the spontaneous, active nature of such cognitive activity. As we shall see in more detail, they express as well his proposed correction of Kant (such self-consciousness "depends" on the *experienced development of the Notion*, not on a Table of Categories) and his different answer to Fichte's question, "How is the I for itself?" (not as an original source of ground but as, at least partially, a *result* of previous self-interpretive activity).

That is, Hegel has simply assumed what we described earlier as the Kantian thesis about the inherent and ineliminable reflexivity of "consciousness" or empirical knowledge, although he is already expressing in his own terms that Kantian theory of apperceptive judging and what Fichte called the

"double series" (*doppelte Reihe*) character of experience. Those terms also indicate, however, that as with Kant, Fichte, and Schelling, this self-relational component of experience is not being treated as some species of self-awareness or some kind of attending to one's mental states. Hegel does *not* say that consciousness, in knowing an object, is also (or even "really") aware of its mental states and activities. Although he does not clearly argue for the claim here, the passages just quoted at least indicate that he holds that consciousness is indeed "of the *object*," as well as "of itself." Moreover, he parses "of itself" as "consciousness of its own knowledge *of that truth*," not "consciousness of its mental states, or subjective, constituting activity," and so on. This is Hegel's way of making what is by now a familiar point: that in, say, assertoric judgments, *we* self-consciously assert; the act of asserting is complex, since it involves not only the representation of what we assert but our fulfilling a criterion for asserting, a component of experience that cannot be isolated from *what* it is we are asserting. Both what we take to be "the truth" (in this example, the propositional content) and *our taking* it to be "the truth" are involved.

Keeping these Kantian categories in mind makes it, I think, much easier to see what Hegel means when he claims that

> consciousness simultaneously distinguishes itself from something and at the same time relates itself to it, or, as this is expressed, it is something for that consciousness. (*PhG*, 58; *PS*, 52)

As Hegel proceeds, again appropriating a good deal from Kant, it is clear that he can make this claim because he regards consciousness as judgmental, as having a "relation to objects" by *establishing* one through its active judging. Consciousness *relates itself* to objects. And, I am claiming, it is because Hegel assumes that it does this apperceptively that he can also claim that consciousness distinguishes itself from its objects; it has established this relation, and so must hold in mind the object's possibly being other than it has been construed to be for consciousness.

A good deal of this orientation, and its relation to Hegel's own speculative language, is made much clearer in the Preface to the *PhG*. Although transformed within Hegel's new terminology, the idealist presuppositions noted previously are, as we have said, prominent in that famous passage from the Preface where Hegel claims that "everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not as Substance, but just as much as Subject" (*PhG*, 18; *PS*, 10). In discussing this substance as subject, Hegel claims that a substance can only be "actual" (*wirklich*) as subject, that is, as the "movement of the self-positing" of this subjectivity, or the "mediating of its becoming other with itself" (*PhG*, 18; *PS*, 10). I suggest that the reference to self-positing is Hegel's way of expressing the necessary role of apperceptive judging in the possibility of experience, and the reference to a "becoming other" that finally becomes reconciled "with itself" expresses the skeptical worries that result from such insistence on the role of subjectivity in experience and their eventual resolution.

If, that is, we keep in mind the fate of the doctrine of apperception in Fichte's account of the self-posited nature of experience and so the "alienation" from the not-I that thereby resulted, and in Schelling's account of an intellectual intuition of self "out of which" subject–object opposition could be understood, then the following bit of Hegelese will seem very much like a continuation of the same theme:

> It [substance] is, as subject, pure simple negativity, and thereby the dissolution of the simple, or the opposing doubling (or any simple), which is again the negating of this indifferent diversity and its opposition; only this self-restoring sameness [*Gleichheit*] or reflection in otherness within itself – not the original or immediate unity as such – is the True. (*PhG*, 18; *PS*, 10)

The original "negation" there referred to is Kant's idealistic denial of the possibility of immediacy, whether in phenomenal givenness or the intellectual intuition of the rationalist tradition, a denial tied to his insistence on the self-mediated or apperceptive requirements for the possibility of experience. It is this necessary, subjective "negative activity" that results in the antinomies and dualisms of reflection, that cannot be overcome from within the Kantian or Fichtean point of view, that requires a final "second negation," or, as interpreted here, a way of resolving the basic "opposition" of reflection itself, between objects as appropriated (and so "negated") by us and as they are in themselves; or, a resolution of transcendental skepticism.

Indeed, at one point in the Preface, Hegel, when explaining the nature of "mediation" in "Absolute Knowledge," notes that this mediation is

> nothing other than self-moving self-sameness, or it is reflection in itself, the moment of the being-for-itself I, pure negativity or simple becoming. (*PhG*, 19; *PS*, 11)

This string of appositives is quite revealing, since one of the synonyms for *pure negativity itself* is the "being-for-itself I" (*fürsichseyenden Ich*), a clear reference to Kant's apperceptive I.[17]

With this at least provisionally established, one can next ask what Hegel means by saying not merely that consciousness is "of itself" in experience, but that it is implicitly the "Notion of itself." [In the Preface, Hegel's terms change somewhat, and he refers to the Notional element of consciousness as "self-moving or form" (*PhG*, 19; *PS*, 10), which must be reconciled with "essence," though the point he makes is identical to the Introduction's use of Notion and Object.] This claim obviously ties the possibility of reflexive judgments to modes or kinds of describing, classifying, categorizing, and so on, but, frustratingly, Hegel has almost nothing to say about the level of generality, or other logical characteristics, that define this issue of "the" Notion's priority in experience. Clearly, he cannot be talking about *any* concept used in knowledge claims when he refers to the necessary inherence of *the* Notion in consciousness. The enterprise of the *PhG* cannot be to show that our doubts about the objectivity of any concept can be overcome. Although Hegel will rightly claim that his full account of conceptuality as such, and so of the Notions that do articulate the "Absolute" nature of

things, must await the third book of his *Logic*, we ought to have some indication of what he is referring to when he talks about the "realization of the Notion" in consciousness's self-examination.

There are some indications of what he means in the passages where Hegel identifies the experience of natural consciousness with the appearance of Science itself. This implies that a condition of conscious experience is some (usually implicit) Notional presupposition. Given the passages just cited, what this now appears to mean is that the possibility of consciousness establishing a "relation to objects" depends on consciousness implicitly taking itself to be in some kind of relation to objects in general, that its judgments about objects are governed by some normative assumption about what there is for it to establish a relation to. Since concepts of particular kinds of objects would have already had to be formed by interaction with objects, and so the coming into play of such a prior criterion, this Notion cannot be empirically established or disconfirmed. Such a "criterial" level of generality is indicated in this passage:

> Therefore, in that which consciousness declares from within itself the in-itself, or the true, we have the criterion [*Masstab*] which consciousness itself sets up, by which to measure its knowledge [*sein Wissen daran zu messen*]. (*PhG*, 59; *PS*, 53)

This passage, and the course of the *PhG* itself, indicate that what is at issue for Hegel is whether consciousness's "Notion of itself," its presupposition both about what there really is to know ("essence" in the language of the Preface) and the way in which it, consciousness, could know such a reality ("form" according to the Preface) are what, at some moment or other, it takes them to be. His interest is in whether a certain conception of experience, a self-understanding about the conditions under which a judgmental relation to objects could be established, can in fact succeed in accounting for such a judgmental relation.

For present purposes, such a discussion as a whole can be taken to confirm that "the Notion inherent in any consciousness of objects," or what Hegel also calls the "essentiality" presupposed in consciousness of "existence," or what he again calls the "knowledge of itself" in any knowledge of existence (*PhG*, 35; *PS*, 28), is a criterion (*Masstab*) determining the possibility of objects. And what makes Hegel's proposal about this theoretical dimension so unusual is that he wants to show that this criterial presupposition is as "deep" as it can get – it involves a Notion of objecthood itself, a criterion for what there is. Moreover, he has proposed that such Notions be understood within a reconstructed account of possible Notions, a reconstruction that would show how and why some particular Notion of the possibility of objects could function as such a Notion only if expanded or transformed in ways that Hegel thinks are systematically connected with other Notions.[18]

Hegel calls this experience the "dialectical movement which consciousness exercises on itself," and he claims that its results affect "both knowledge and its object" (*PhG*, 50; *PS*, 55). Obviously a very great deal, perhaps

everything in Hegel's idealism, will come down to his ability to demonstrate that the way in which our Notions change within a progressively more inclusive system can also be understood as a progressively more adequate articulation of the Absolute, the "determinations" of "anything at all," the ontological constituents anything must have in order to have any specific contingent properties. How we *know* that this is so, or what I have been calling the *PhG*'s problem of transcendental skepticism, is the problem it must solve.

And again, as noted previously, it is the generality of this issue of objectivity that, in the interpretation I am presenting, introduces the "existential" and "historical" themes other readers find so important in the *PhG*. That is, consider the results of the earlier sections of this chapter, the results, that is, of attributing a deductive intention to the *PhG*, of locating the problem of such a deduction in a realist skepticism, and of the preceding brief sketch of Hegel's "internalist" (or, to use a more well-known word, "dialectical") procedure in fulfilling these goals. On Hegel's view, a fully thought-out skepticism (i.e., not the empirically based skepticism of modernity) is potentially a source of "despair," not merely a "skeptical attitude." This is so because in any critical examination of a claim to know, we discover that it is possible to doubt both the legitimacy of any given claim and the implicit Notion of an object presupposed for there to be any such determinate claim. Since Hegel also thinks he can show that it is impossible to claim that there is no self-conscious experience of objects (there can be no mere sense- or self-certainty), and can show the futility of appeals to a metaphysical or naturalist foundation of knowledge (they too would have to be taken to be such foundations by a subject in order to be foundations of *knowledge*), then the question of the adequacy of any potential Notion in the face of such skepticism can only be understood relative to other possible Notions. Such a Notion is necessary for there to be experience; there *is* experience, and the question of legitimacy thus can only arise relative to other possible Notions. However, this means that the sense of this relative adequacy of legitimacy is still, as it were, up in the air. There is no independent criterion to help us decide what an adequate, full, constitutive Notion of objects should be. And it is thus in the context of this problematic that Hegel's *PhG* can be said to transform radically the traditional notion of epistemology. For, with the issue set up this way, Hegel is committed to showing that the issue of the deductive legitimacy of any potential Notion (naive realism, empiricism, atomist metaphysics, post-Newtonian science, Kantian idealism, etc.) involves, first, an account of why, in what sense, such a Notion would have *appeared* or would have been "experienced" as[19] adequate to Spirit at some time or other (given that there is no other ground for such adequacy) and why, in what sense, it would come to be *experienced* as inadequate. Both of these components must ultimately involve reference to a variety of practices, institutions, and "self-understandings" not traditionally included in epistemological or critical theory.

All of which is still pretty vague (especially the idea of something being

"experienced as inadequate" in some wholesale, culturally relevant way). But before moving on to Hegel's more technical (not necessarily more precise) version of such claims, I need to make an important qualification. For, the question of a historically relative or developmental assessment of the very basic principles by which a "knowledge community" comes to understand itself and the world raises the great Hegelian bugbear of "dialectic" again. I shall not try to add to the vast literature on this topic here, but the following distinction is important for understanding Hegel's idealism argument in the *PhG*. To consider some Notional criterion, B, justifiable not in some absolute or realist sense, but because B improves on A, the best hitherto available option, can be taken in one of two ways. One way, by far the stronger, is to argue that, given the internal difficulties of A, B is the only possible resolution of those difficulties, and so represents a "necessary" correction of A. The weaker argument is that B *does* resolve the inadequacies of A in the appropriate way, and issues a challenge to any potential objector to provide a better resolution. Since the first looks like an attempt to prove the truth of a negative existential, it seems hopelessly ambitious, even though some of what Hegel says indicates that it is his view of this developmental or relative deduction. But, I shall try to show, a good deal of what is important about his idealism (both important in itself and for historical reasons) can be defended with the latter, weaker account. I shall only be interested in such a demonstration in what follows, and so in the plausibility rather than the necessity of Hegel's various claims. This will raise a question about Absolute Knowledge to which I shall return at the end of this consideration of the *PhG*.[20]

In summary, since Hegel regularly describes his idealist goal as, for example, the demonstration of "pure self-knowing in absolute otherness" (*PhG*, 22; *PS*, 14), this cannot be achieved by demonstrating that "otherness" (*Anderseyn*) is not really "otherness"; indeed, it is to remain "absolute otherness." Hegel's proposal throughout the Preface and Introduction has been rather to extend the Kantian and Fichtean notion of a necessarily apperceptive consciousness into a search for the Notional conditions of such "otherness" in experience. This commits him to a defense of Notionality itself, what logical properties a Notion must have to count as such (or, in this book, as a *fundamental* "shape of consciousness"), a demonstration that, prior to a fully self-conscious Science, the "experience" by a subject within any shape must be incomplete and self-negating, and, finally and most importantly, a deduction of the objectivity of such a completed system, *the* Notion. In the *PhG* this amounts, then, to an extended reductio ad absurdum of any skepticism about Notion–object "identity" once the full development of that relation has been explicated and developed. The identity in question, then, amounts to a systematic rejection of the *skeptical* claim of nonidentity between even the *necessary* conditions of our experience of the world and the world in itself.

4. Objections

Such an approach to the *PhG* raises several possible textual and thematic objections, most of which are best answered by attending to the details of the text. It is in those details that one can determine whether the previous suggestions best describe what Hegel thought he was doing and whether he has even a plausible chance of defending his ambitious claims. But there are some general issues that can be addressed briefly here.

There is first, the textual controversy. The title of Section 3 of this chapter was the original title of the *PhG*, and it already indicates the initial problem. The issue particularly concerns the role of the *PhG* as both an introduction to and a deduction of Hegel's *Science of Logic* and the system that depends on that *Logic*. The approach I have described, although it appears to be clearly supported by what Hegel says in the *PhG* and the greater *Logic*, has not been a popular one in much of the influential commentary. As Fulda has noted, those who take very seriously the systematic and in that sense "scientific" nature of Hegel's project find the *PhG* a piece of dispensable juvenilia.[21] They take quite strictly other of Hegel's claims about his project: that his system cannot have an introduction, that the standpoint of Absolute Science can depend on nothing outside that standpoint for its own legitimation (or: there cannot be any way for the standpoint of Absolute Science to be made intelligible or justifiable to "natural consciousness," and Hegel finally realized his mistake in trying). On the other hand, those who regard the *PhG* as Hegel's most successful, exciting, and even revolutionary book often tend to find the approach of the *PhG* superior to any systematic project it is meant to justify. For many of these commentators, Hegel's great breakthrough in the *PhG* was in being able to show that even the most abstract or supposedly "pure" philosophic positions can be, indeed must be, understood within the context of "Spirit's concrete self-consciousness," or even as existential achievements of "spirit"; that this approach allowed us to see the relations among history, social practices, religion, and philosophy for the first time; and that this insight is lost, or at least unfairly denigrated, if it is treated as merely a preliminary to reestablishing some mystified domain of Notional Reality as the locus of philosophic interest.[22] On either approach, the role of the *PhG* as a deduction of the validity of Absolute Idealism is denied, either because of a much more exalted sense of such Idealism (it does not need and cannot have an Introduction and Deduction) or because of a much more suspicious view of such Idealism (the move to an Absolute Science represents a religious or metaphysical repudiation of the accomplishment of the *PhG*, not its extension). Since I am arguing against the view of Absolute Idealism presupposed by *both* approaches, I think it is possible to understand the *PhG* as a component of Hegel's systematic project without either sacrificing its insights or rendering that systematic project incoherent.[23]

But this "programmatic" problem is only the beginning of the many

controversies that surround the *PhG*. To claim that the *PhG* as a whole manages to establish an idealist position not subject to skeptical negation clearly implies that one takes the work as a whole to have this result, that there is an interconnected argument to this effect throughout the text. And that too has not been a popular position. Hegel himself contributed the most to the controversy by remaining silent about many of the most important architectonic issues, by scrambling the structure of his Table of Contents to produce a virtually unfathomable overview of the relations among all the parts, and by lopping off much of the 1807 *PhG* when the later *Encyclopedia Phenomenology* was repeated as a subsection of subjective Spirit. Scholars have had a difficult time trying to justify a unified picture of the work that could explain especially why the account of literature, politics, history, morality, and religion (Chapters 6 and 7) is "added on" (so it seems) to what appears to be the triadic unity of the work, the consciousness–self-consciousness–reason argument. For a long while, Haering's insistence that these three main sections constituted the most important "introductory" work of the *PhG* was widely influential, even among those who hoped that some more unifying interpretation could be found. Recently, Otto Pöggeler has effectively destroyed the philological evidence used by Haering to establish his claims, but Pöggeler has added to the controversy with his own interpretation of the composition of the work.[24] (He argues that Hegel originally intended a "science of the experience of consciousness" that would have at its center the development from self-consciousness to absolute self-consciousness, and so to absolute knowledge, but that in the summer of 1806, Hegel began to change his mind about the work, shifting a good deal of the weight for the book's claims to the sections on "spirit" and altering many of the key concepts in the work. The final product, for Pöggeler, represents the relatively disunified historical traces of both projects, a palimpsest, and so cannot be read as a coherently planned, well-worked-out argument.)

Both of these problems – the status of the *PhG* within the system and the coherence or incoherence of the parts of the book itself – are worthy of and have produced book-length studies in themselves.[25] My intention has been to stay clear, for the most part, of the mass of evidence concerning Hegel's real intentions and supposed development, changes of mind, and so on. As indicated in the previous section, there is, at least with respect to the problem of idealism, both a clear context for the central problem Hegel addresses in the *PhG* (completely overcoming a skepticism about the "Notion–object" gap) and at least an initially clear statement of the relation between that task and the science of the Notion, or of "Logic." There should, then, be a *thematic* question that can be pursued throughout the book, one that can be understood in terms of the idealist context developed in Part I, and that can be used to interrogate at least the general architectonic of the work, the success of the work as a whole in establishing its goal. (That is, *does* Hegel succeed in appropriating the idealist point of view he found in Kant and Fichte, and in solving its greatest problem – transcendental

skepticism – without reverting to a precritical or romantic or Schellingean metaphysics?) It may be occasionally difficult to follow that thematic thread, some arguments in support of the theme may fail, and it may be impossible, on its basis, to construct an interpretation of the entire work, but I hope to show that pursuing this idealist problematic can shed more light on these two interpretive issues and can help reveal the power, if not the final success, of Hegel's approach to it.

There is, though, another plausible objection to this whole approach. Casting the *PhG* in the role of a deductive justification of the standpoint of Science, attributing to it a concern with skepticism and an investigation of "the problem of knowledge," can all seem to violate the spirit and the letter of Hegel's famous opening remarks in the Introduction. There he had appeared to deny the very possibility of what we would call epistemology, or any sort of prior investigation of the possibility of knowledge, contrary to the preceding suggestions about an epistemological intention in the *PhG*. He seems to ridicule the assumption that we first have to ensure that our "instrument" or medium is adequate to the object it wishes to apprehend, that we ought to begin by "distrusting" our distrust in our ability to know "scientifically," charges that the problematic of skepticism itself already dogmatically assumes a relation between knowledge and object (and so a possible gap between them) that it has no right to assume, and that this whole preparatory zeal is just an excuse for not getting down to the hard work of "providing the Notion" itself. In the *EL*, he repeated this with his famous accusation that critical philosophy reminds him of the resolution of Scholasticus not to venture into the water before he knew how to swim (*EL*, 43; *EnL*, 14).[26]

However, none of these claims undermine the attribution of a critical function to the *PhG*. Those who think they do, and who therefore stress Hegel's original, title page assertion that the *PhG* is the "first part" of the system, cannot, I think, successfully reconcile their view of these opening remarks with the rest of what is said in the Introduction. (Indeed, on some readings of Hegel, one gets the impression that the proper response to the ridiculed prudence of Scholasticus would simply be to jump straightaway into the "ocean," without first knowing anything about swimming.) In the first place, the assumption that generates a critical skepticism – a possible gap between our "Notions of objects" and objects in themselves (particularly our a priori Notions or categories) – is precisely the assumption that Hegel attributes to natural consciousness, the subject of the *PhG*. This may mean that although "we" (the investigators of natural consciousness) should not simply assume that this natural view of knowledge is true, Hegel clearly suggests that we must observe the problems its assumption causes in the "experience" of natural consciousness. Indeed, immediately after he entertains the suggestion that we ought to give up all critical, preparatory posturing, he *rejects* that suggestion and insists that Science cannot simply assure us that it has overcome the subject–object dualism. In that case, "one bare assurance is worth as much as another" (*PhG*, 55; *PS*, 49). Later he calls

the *PhG* "an investigation and testing of the reality of cognition" (*Prüffung der Realität des Erkennens*) (*PhG*, 58; *PS*, 52), indicating that his antipathy to the critical examination of the possibility of knowledge has to do more with the assumed *absoluteness* of its initial assumptions than with a fundamental objection to critical philosophy. In the Preface he again clearly states that, in the *PhG*, "The goal is Spirit's insight into what knowing is" (*PhG*, 25; *PS*, 17). Thus, however uniquely Hegel will raise his "critical questions," his epistemological concern with the objectivity problem is not abandoned or disparaged in the Introduction and Preface. If anything, it is emphasized throughout.[27]

Finally, one might object directly to the terms within which the problem itself is posed. According to this criticism, the problem Hegel is trying to solve is, in itself, incoherent. Such an objection is based on the following line of reasoning. If we loosely summarize the goal of the *PhG*, it can be expressed as the attempt to show that the forms of the subject–object, or Notion–Truth opposition inherent in natural consciousness (or reflection, or all nonspeculative accounts of knowledge) themselves presuppose the speculative understanding of a subject–object or Notion–Truth identity, an enterprise that would thereby indirectly establish this identity by effectively disarming the only possible skeptical opposition to it. The identity is established by showing that it cannot be effectively denied. However, taking these terms at reasonable face value, this whole project can be charged with making a number of seriously confused assumptions. In the first place, one might claim, Hegel has not at all successfully identified what "truth" and "knowledge" *mean* in natural consciousness; in the second place, his own speculative view of what they mean, and of their final identity, is unintelligible.

On the first point, one might question Hegel's apparent identification of "the true" with "being in itself" what is "posited as existing outside" the subject. The "in itself" at whatever level, though, is not a "truth." Chairs and tables and even monads and souls are, if they exist, just objects in themselves, and although we might take some claim about them to *be* true, there is no reason to call *them* "truth." Only propositions are true, and any kind of inquiry into which propositions, even those of an extremely general and unusual sort, are true ought to be an inquiry into the evidence adduced to support a claim that a proposition is true, and not a search for an "object" that *makes* it true.

On the second point, since Hegel so often understands knowledge as a "subject–object" relation, it ought to be pointed out to him that this general logical relation defines *all* intentionality, and does not by itself distinguish the properties of epistemic intentionality. Believing, hoping, imagining, and so on all involve a relation between a subject and the "object" of consciousness, even, in some theories, a "real" state of affairs distinct from consciousness, without being a case of knowledge. And this inadequacy could be taken to reveal a deep one in Hegel's treatment, his treatment of knowledge as strictly a bipolar relation between subject and object, particularly

in his own speculative claims about Absolute Knowledge as the final identity of subject and object. In contrast, one might reasonably point out, knowledge is multipolar; it involves a *belief*, a "holding to be true" by a subject, the objects or state of affairs in question, *and* the "good reasons" the subject must provide in order to confirm the claim made. It is easy to imagine a "subject" whose assertions about objects *are* true; states of affairs are as he says they are, but who cannot be said to *know* that they are true because, say, all his beliefs are merely lucky guesses, or produced by behavioral conditioning, and so on. Knowledge does not involve a "relation" between a subject and an object, but the attempt to confirm beliefs (propositions), and since that is what it is, the announced goal of an identity of any kind between subject and object *could* not be knowledge, and, so the criticism goes, introduces a dangerous dogmatism into metaphysical and eventually political speculation.

If these characterizations of Hegel's project were true (and, for example, Hegel did need to have it pointed out to him that tables and chairs are objects, not truths), then these would be decisive objections. One could even say, about Hegel's assertion concerning knowledge in natural consciousness, that

> one can only characterize this assertion, which the always sympathetic Hegel interpreters pass over with the greatest self-evidence, as a monstrosity. Here one can detect with what carelessness the philosophy of German Idealism descriptively introduces the concepts which it later feeds into the dialectical machinery.[28]

But the criticisms attack a straw man. However confusing Hegel's terminology may be, he does not propose any of the theses Tugendhat and others attribute to him and then easily criticize.

In the first place, he does not identify "truth" itself with external objects. In defining "das Wahre," he says:

> Thus in what consciousness affirms from *within itself* as being in itself or the True we have the *standard* which consciousness itself sets up by which to measure what it knows. (*PhG*, 59; *PS*, 53)

and later that

> these two moments, "Notion," and "object," "being for another" and "being in itself," both fall *within* that knowledge we are investigating.

In other words, the Truth refers in these passages to the criterion of objectivity that consciousness must fulfill *if* what it claims to know is to count *as* knowledge of objects. The criterion is affirmed "from within itself," and does not refer to any supervening "true" *claim about all objects*, and certainly does not refer *to* all objects existing outside of consciousness. As we have seen, it is precisely because, according to Hegel, consciousness must "establish" its relation to objects that it also "distinguishes" itself from objects. There is little doubt in the text that by "Wissen" Hegel means knowledge *claims*, and by "das Wahre" he means the *criterion* that must be satisfied

(the "good reasons" in the modern context, the ground in his language), for such a claim to be successful.[29]

More importantly for Hegel's idealism in general, his appropriation of a post-Kantian account of apperceptive consciousness makes it impossible that he could conceive of the subject–object relation, in either a transcendental or an empirical context, as some sort of bipolar relation.[30] Since, according to Hegel, consciousness is "of what is *for it* the True, and consciousness of its knowledge of the truth" (*PhG*, 59; *PS*, 54), this ensures that consciousness can be said to be in a "relation to an object" only in the sense that it *takes itself* to be. Hegel is clear throughout that he does not think that objects simply appear within consciousness to be compared with the subject's Notions. From his denial of the relevance of Kant's concept–intuition distinction, Hegel has been claiming that any relation to objects must be understood as a moment within the self-conscious activity of a subject. In this context, that means that experienced objects are always objects of judgments for Hegel, and although in successful knowledge such objects turn out to be "in themselves" as they are characterized "for consciousness," they are still taken to be so identical, in a mediated sense, as a *result* of the subject's establishing that this is so. Thus, there is no indication that Hegel has obscured the difference between intentional relations in general and knowledge. Only, on his account, *by* consciousness attempting to fulfill a criterion of truth can an epistemic relation to an object be established. In other words, nothing about Hegel's project can be as quickly identified as Tugendhat does with what he calls the "object" rather than the "proposition" orientation of traditional philosophy, and so all the Eleatic paradoxes such a tradition produces.[31] Nothing about the Introduction's description of the inherent skepticism that results from the "Notion-mediated" (or apperceptive) nature of natural consciousness would make sense unless Hegel had rejected the traditional ontology and the "noetic" intellectual intuition that was its epistemology.

Admittedly, again, when the abstract goal of speculative idealism is stated only as "achieving an identity of subject and object," Hegel's position always seems committed to the precritical, metaphysical, Schellingean monism often attributed to him. The idea of subjects somehow "grasping" (*begreifen*) *objects* is pre-Kantian enough, but a claim about the identity of the two must be beyond the Kantian pale. But everything we have seen so far should caution us to be extremely careful about this supposedly speculative goal. From early in the Jena period, Hegel was already interpreting the subject as a self-conscious, self-relating, self-determining subject, always mediately, never directly in relation to objects. And as the Introduction has made clear, the relation to objects he is interested in involves a relation to a criterion of objecthood, the possibility of objects, *and* that this criterion is "affirmed" by consciousness "from within itself" as *its* subjective condition. Accordingly, a speculative science cannot be a knowledge of objects in the first-order, nonreflective sense, as if philosophical science is a competitor with natural science, say, and will eventually replace such sciences with a spec-

ulative knowledge of reality. Neither can it be a "first philosophy" of the traditional sort, finally discovering the truth about being in itself (understood in the traditional sense). The way the *PhG* is set up, the speculative goal can only be a knowledge by reflective subjectivity *of its own* criteria of knowledge, and hence of objectivity. Or, to sum up again the theme of this interpretation, Hegel's idealism does assign to philosophy the task of a radical self-reflection and self-understanding, and of examining and evaluating the *subject's* relation to what is "other than itself" *in* any such self-relating, but there is little reason (yet) to take this project to involve any monistic, metaphysical, or theological intention.

48. See Pippin (1978).
49. This is not to say that Hegel is not in this period committed to some kind of a claim about numerical identity, a claim that derives from the monistic implications of the account of the "totality of Absolute *Geist*," implications he was still working out. See Horstmann (1980), 187ff.
50. That Hegel regards the identity issue as this kind of truth claim is confirmed by a discussion of Kant and his "true idealism" in *GW*, 332; *BK*, 76. What is not clear in the passage is just what Hegel takes his criticism of the "mere formality" of Kant's view of the objective identity between subjective concept and objective world to entail.
51. Thus what I am claiming is that elements of Hegel's "logical" or idealist version of identity are already present in *GW*, even though he was still also under the influence of Schelling's romantic metaphysics. So I think Düsing goes too far in claiming that Hegel's early theory of subjectivity radicalizes Descartes against Kant and conceives of self-knowledge as indeed knowledge of substance. I have tried to show throughout the last two chapters the preservation of the transcendental theory of apperception. See Düsing (1976), 239. If I am right about this continuity, Kimmerle's central problem with Hegel's early and later idealism, its *Abgeschlossenheit*, or the "closedness" of thought upon itself, would also have to be rethought (1970), 51–85.
52. Although the text is far from clear, some evidence for this claim can be found in the 1804–5 Jena system "Metaphysics," in the section on "Cognition as System of First Principles," which begins with the claim that cognition is "self-equivalence that persists even in opposition" (*JS*, 128FF; *LM*, 133ff.). Cf. Horstmann (1980), 184ff. See also even earlier evidence in the 1803–4 *Philosophie des Geistes*, *PG*, 273, and Kimmerle's (1970) remarks about the passage, especially his claim that they represent a "Wendepunkt in der Entwicklung des Hegelschen Denkens in Jena" and that they signal the return to a Kantian–Fichtean "Transzendentalphilosophie" as the "Zentralbegriff der Philosophie" (259). (Cf. also Kimmerle's evaluation of this development, 263.)
53. *Ethics*, 2, prop. 7.
54. Rosenkranz (1963), 178ff., 201ff. Cf. Kimmerle (1969), 43, 44.

Chapter 5. Skepticism, knowledge, and truth in the Jena phenomenology

1. This recalls again the significance of Hegel's charge, at first glance tendentious and inaccurate, that Kant was an empirical psychologist. As we begin to see, he means to charge that although Kant correctly reformulated the problem of objective categories, of the fundamental structure of things, as the problem of transcendental subjectivity, he misunderstood his results by comprehending them in a quasi-empirical way. This meant that Kant was seduced into worrying that, since the phenomenal world was "conditioned" by our conceptual scheme, had we a different scheme, there would be a different (phenomenal) world; hence the thing-in-itself problem. Since Hegel *denies* that this could be so, many have taken him to mean that the world is as we (fundamentally) think it to be *because* it is the product of thought's positings or itself somehow mental. See Rorty (1972), 664. Things look different, I am trying to suggest, once we read Hegel's denial of Kant's skepticism as grounded not in such a monistic metaphysics but in a way of *demonstrating* what Rorty himself keeps suggesting but does not

demonstrate: that the thing-in-itself world is simply a "world well lost." (All Rorty basically has is a very abstract "Who cares?" response to the realist skeptic and his doubts.)

2. It is important to note especially that Hegel does not refer to the *Encyclopedia* as a whole here; only the *Science of Logic* is *Wissenschaft*.
3. Miller translates a "spontaneous" here. I agree with the sentiment, but it's not in the German.
4. Perhaps the best extended (i.e., book-length) argument showing, quite convincingly, why Hegel's theory of subjectivity cannot be understood in "substantialist" terms is that of Brockard (1970). See especially 59ff. I am in agreement with much of what Brockard concludes, but (predictably, I suppose) I do not think he deals in sufficient detail with the Kant and Fichte connections in Hegel, and so the self-consciousness theme, for him to be able to state clearly what such a "subjectivity" theory finally is.
5. The problem Hegel faces can be usefully compared with similar issues in Wittgenstein. Hegel too, speaking informally, is interested in showing that understanding what the Wittgensteinean would call a fundamental human "like-mindedness" is the way to understand and legitimate what would otherwise be considered ontological commitments, or what there is about "the world" that could not change. [Cf. Brockard's formulation (1970), 89.] And he is interested in showing that this like-mindedness is not a "fact" about us that might have been different, that it is pointless to wonder about a possible other-mindedness, or about the world as it "really" is. But Wittgenstein does not think there is much that can usefully be *said* about such like-mindedness, and so cannot raise Hegel's "Deduction" problem or Hegel's phenomenological account of how we come to be as like-minded as we are. (In essence, this is because there is no account of self-consciousness, at least as insisted on in the idealist tradition, in Wittgenstein.) For a discussion of similar topics, see the illuminating articles by Lear (1982, 1984). In Lamb (1980), an explicit attempt is made to connect the Wittgensteinean and Hegelian programs, with, I think, predictable results. Lamb throughout, with the Wittgensteinean influence, threatens to lose sight completely of the critical, deductive intention of much in Hegel, all in favor of a "descriptive" program. See 31–41. Much of this characterization stems, if I am right in what has been said so far, from an exaggerated emphasis on Hegel's "rejection of the critical method" (31). Findlay (1958) is probably the commentator best known for a Wittgenstein-influenced reading of Hegel. See also n. 13 in Chapter 6, this volume, on Taylor.
6. For initial support of such a reading, see also this remark in the *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*:

> Es ist eine neue Epoche in der Welt entsprungen. Es scheint, dass es dem Weltgeiste jetzt gelungen ist, alles fremde gegenständliche Wesen sich abzutun, und endlich sich als absoluten Geist zu erfassen, und was ihm gegenständlich wird, aus sich zu erzeugen, und es, mit Ruhe dagegen, in seiner Gewalt zu behalten. Der Kampf des endlichen Selbstbewusstseins mit dem absoluten Selbtsbewusstsein, das jenem ausser ihm erschien, hört auf. Das endliche Selbstbewusstsein hat aufgehört, endliches zu sein; und dadurch anderseits das absolute Selbstbewusstein die Wirklichkeit erhalten, der es vorher entbehrte.
>
> (*JA*, 19, 689ff.)

7. It is true that Hegel claims, "But to want the nature of cognition clarified prior to the science is to demand that it be considered outside the science; outside the science this cannot be accomplished, at least not in a scientific manner and such a manner is alone here in place" (*WL*, I, 52; *SL*, 68). However, this is not inconsistent with Hegel's claims about the *PhG*'s deduction of "pure knowing," since he makes clear that in the *Logic* he is concerned with "the nature of cognition simply as such," that the problem of the "nature of cognition" is different from the issue of whether there *is* "absolute knowing." Cf. Aschenberg's discussion (1976), 225–47. In this context, I can see no justification for Maker's claim (1981a) that Hegel intends the *PhG* to be a wholly "negative" introduction, the "self-sublating" of "knowing" itself, so that the *SL* can be understood as radically presuppositionless. Hegel had abandoned the idea of a "negative" or wholly self-destructive introduction after 1804 and never returned to it. (Cf. *EL*, section 78.) Cf. also the much clearer statement of the *PhG–SL* relation in the original (1812) opening remarks, "Womit muss der Anfang der Wissenschaft gemacht werden?," which Miller, using Lasson's edition, does not translate. *GWe*, 11, 33.
8. I discuss subsequently the relevance of this association of realism with skepticism for Hegel. For a clear thematic statement of the issue itself, see Kupperman (1975).
9. What I am calling the "deductive" intention of the *PhG* has recently been characterized in a different way in an important book by Flay (1984). He understands the *PhG* as a "quest for certainty," or an attempt to "establish warranty for one's certainty of access" to an account of "the ultimate nature of reality," the Absolute Standpoint (1ff). Although I am in substantial agreement with many of Flay's conclusions about the *PhG*, I would disagree with two things. First, I think the emphasis on "certainty" is misleading; it suggests a kind of Cartesian completion to the Hegelian project and distorts the nature of the skepticism problem in the *PhG*. [One way of stating this problem is simply to note that Flay has provided us with a very well worked out version of Heidegger's interpretation of Hegel. See Heidegger (1970) and Flay, 271. This leaves Hegel open to a number of criticisms, especially Heidegger's own, but only if Heidegger's association of Hegel with the traditional history of ontology is correct. I do not think Heidegger is right, but obviously I cannot argue it here. See Flay's closing remarks (249–67).] Second, Flay's account of the *PhG*'s methodology makes use of the notion of a "praxical presupposition," an interpretive term Flay often explains by reference to problems of meaning and truth value (see 22). As I assume is already apparent, I think that the "presupposition" or "condition" question in Hegel is better articulated in terms of the post-Kantian apperception problem crucial to all German Idealism. So, when Flay says that his praxical presuppositions can be said to "form the a priori synthetic unity of the constituents of experience" (24), I am in complete agreement, but would argue that we need the *whole* story of the Hegelian transformation of this Kantian problematic before we can properly understand the *PhG*.
10. *GWe*, IV, 197–238.
11. *GWe*, IV, 202–3; *RPS*, 318–19.
12. This is roughly the accusation against the Kantian approach raised by Stroud (1984), 162.
13. Of course, as will be quickly apparent, "skepticism" will come to mean some-

thing quite specific to Hegel's project. He will be especially concerned with distancing himself from classic Enlightenment skepticism, which Hegel regards as wholly "negative" and ultimately inconsistent. (See *EL*, section 78.) The most famous and perhaps most influential example of this attempt to undermine completely, in his own way, "skeptically," the self-understanding of a "shape of spirit" while preserving its implicit expression of speculative truth is in his account of religion. Cf. Fulda (1965), 30. Cf. also Kortian (1980), 34–47, for a "critical theory" reading of the problem of skepticism (i.e., the critique of positivism).

14. Cf. again Lear (1982), especially his claim on 392 about the Wittgensteinean acceptance of "Only because we are minded as we are do we see the world as we do" and rejection (as "nonsense") of "If we were other minded, we would see the world differently." I am suggesting that the same strategy is at work in Hegel, but with a much different strategy for showing *why* the latter claim ought to be rejected.
15. There are so many contemporary versions of antirealism, ranging from Dummett's generalization of intuitionism in mathematics to Putnam's "internal realism" to van Fraasen's empiricism, that it is difficult and potentially confusing to introduce Hegel into the debate. But there are several classic problems faced by antirealists, such as the rejection of bivalence, the necessity for something like "degrees" (or "moments") of truth, counterintuitions about true propositions that can never be verified, and so on, that Hegel not only faces up to but enthusiastically embraces. Cf. the discussion in Chapter 4, Section 4, and Chapter 9, Section 3, on Hegelian "contradiction." For a useful summary of such antirealist problems (and an account of how they appear in British Objective Idealism), see Smart (1986).
16. What this approach suggests about reading the *PhG* is that the line of argument that begins with Hegel's appropriation of and criticism of Kant and Fichte now comes to a relative completion in the *PhG*, more particularly, that it is completed essentially in Chapter Four. This resolution will itself introduce a different topic and several different problems in the *PhG* (not to mention in European philosophy after Hegel), and it will, in effect, create a kind of skepticism problem different from the one considered here. This will mean that there will be a great deal left "to do" in the chapters on Spirit, Religion, and Absolute Knowledge, but, I shall suggest in the last section of Chapter 7 of this volume, these tasks are wholly subordinate to, are only worth pursuing, if the central idealism issue is successfully resolved in the first four chapters. To some extent, this means that I am siding with the reading given the *PhG* by Pöggeler (1973d), but for essentially thematic rather than historical reasons. See also Pöggeler (1973c) and his strong characterization there of the *PhG* itself as the "phenomenology of self-consciousness." Fulda (1965) is the most convincing opponent of such readings (117ff). But that is because Fulda lays so much stress on the "introduction" problem, sometimes to the neglect of the "deduction" issue, although he is clearly quite aware of the "double" issue (165ff). Cf. Aschenberg (1976), section V, 263ff., and Hegel's own rare remarks on the issue in *EL*, section 25.
17. I should stress again here how many different problems were introduced into the idealist tradition by the Kantian claim about the implicit self-consciousness of consciousness. In this context, there are at least two serious issues involved. One involves what some commentators call the "formal-logical" issue, the "logic" of this peculiar kind of self-relation. For many, the problems of such a

logic both generate and constitute the core of speculative logic itself. The other involves what we might call the "content" of such a transcendental self-relation, the content of, in a word, the Notion. On the former issue, see Cramer (1979), 219–21, and (1974), 594–601.

18. I should note that this "reconstructive" suggestion about Hegel's methodology is quite controversial, given the well-established views about Hegelian theodicy. I shall be suggesting that Hegel is pursuing such a reconstructive argument in demonstrating the truth of idealism in general (i.e., that he proceeds negatively, by showing the undeniability of such a position, its necessary presupposition in what first appear more straightforward, realist positions), in demonstrating the necessary moments of an idealist "logic," and finally, in accounting for the role of such a logic as constraining the knowledge of Nature and Spirit. For some Hegelians, this will raise the question of what originally grounds or accounts for such a reconstruction of Spirit's internal rationality; whence the originally constructive activity? (It is also the chief issue of contention in the rejection, by both the later Fichte and the later Schelling, of idealism.) And they point to Spirit's hidden hand again, or to some other teleological account of *why* this reconstruction would originally be possible. I am arguing that Hegel's account is a reconstruction of the possibility of self-conscious, objective judgment and action, and that his idealism *excludes* such a metaphysical ground. There is a brief explanation of the strategy of reconstruction (*Nachbildung*) in *EL*, section 12, although it is eliminated in the translation by Wallace's use of "copy." For a fuller use of such a reconstructive strategy, see the account of self-consciousness in Chapter 7 and my account of Hegel's rejection of "external teleology" in Chapter 10, section 3. Cf. also the important remarks by Hartmann (1976a), and Henrich (1982a).
19. The particular way in which Hegel is relying on such a putative "experience" to establish his results will be clearer in the next chapter. See also Aschenberg (1976), especially his remarks concluding section II on "transcendental experience," 247; Pippin (1975); and Dove (1971) for his useful survey of the literature and his own comments, especially 55–56.
20. Cf. Chapter 7, Section 3, this volume.
21. See Aschenberg's summary of the literature (1976), 263ff., and Fulda's *Vorwort* (1965), 1–13, for another overview. For similar arguments denying the dispensability of the *PhG*, see Fackenheim (1967), 31–74, especially 67–73; Rosen (1974a), 123–30; Labarriere (1968), 17–30; and Baillie's clear summary of the issues (1984), 195–217.
22. A well worked out recent example of such an interpretation is given by Solomon (1983).
23. See Fulda (1965), 9, for a concise Hegelian formulation of the problem: "does the sceptical self-destruction of consciousness precede the completion of science, or follow from it?" Even more broadly, the issue is how and why philosophy itself can be said to "begin," what calls for it, if anything, and what it "leads to."
24. Pöggeler (1973d), 170–230. For more on the Haering issue, see Fulda (1965), 131ff; Labarriere (1968), 21ff.; and Aschenberg (1976), 263–4. For the opposing view of the *PhG*'s structure see Fulda (1966), 75–101.
25. Briefly, Fulda's position (1965) is that the *PhG* is an introduction to Hegel's system, not part of the system, but not a mere propadeutic and itself "scientific." See 110 and especially his remarks about Hegel's 1816 alterations on 114. Ac-

cordingly, although Fulda often stresses both the introductory and justificatory dimensions of the *PhG*, he constantly focuses on the former and interprets the latter in terms that create problems with what Fulda recognizes as the *SL*'s own demonstration or justification of claims about the limitations of "finite thought." I am interpreting the latter problem as more prominent and am trying to understand it in terms more consistent with the original Kantian Deduction problem. This narrows my focus somewhat to issues relevant to the idealism problem (especially the realist skepticism problem). Fulda's approach makes possible a way of understanding the function of the chapters on Spirit and Religion, but only, I think, at the philosophic cost of slighting the problem of legitimating the idealist standpoint. (Or: *Why* introduce natural consciousness to an understanding of the Absolute Standpoint when there might be little reason to think it *is* "absolute"?) Cf. 132 ff. and n. 16, this chapter.

26. This problem also involves the complex, much discussed issue of the extent to which Hegel can be considered a genuinely "critical" philosopher, as that neo-Hegelian, neo-Marxist movement came to be known. The clearest "critical theory" attack on Hegel is Habermas's (1971). For a general summary of the Habermas–Hegel relation see Kortian (1980). Habermas claims, in sum, that "the assumptions of the philosophy of identity kept Hegel from reaping the real harvest of his critique of Kant" (43). He says this because although Hegel, according to Habermas, "sees through the absolutism of an epistemology based on unreflected presuppositions" (10), he "presumes as given" throughout the *PhG* a "knowledge of the Absolute," by which, at the very least, Habermas understands "absolute knowledge independent of the subjective conditions of possible knowledge" (11). Obviously, the key to Habermas's criticisms involves his understanding of this contrast between a "radicalized epistemology," committed to the "self-constitution of the species," and an "identity theory," committed to "Absolute Knowledge." Accordingly, this criticism (not to mention Adorno's) is weakened by the lack of precision in casually attributing such an "identity theory" to Hegel. (Habermas often simply makes use of the historically received, prominent understanding of that position, one forged in the early "left–right" Hegelian fights.) Where he does indicate what he takes such an attribution to consist in (24), Habermas reveals that he thinks Hegel is trying to "usurp" the "legitimacy of independent sciences by a philosophy claiming to retain its position as universal scientific knowledge." I have been arguing that such an interpretation of Hegel (1) seriously underestimates the extent of Hegel's *appropriation* of Kant, and so exaggerates the criticism of Kant; (2) can be made consistent with Hegel's own characterization of Absolute Knowledge as the "realization of the Notion" or Spirit's full "self-consciousness" only by saddling Hegel with a traditional understanding of real (numerical) "identity," and so a metaphysical monism he does not espouse; and (3) confuses the issue of "Absolute Knowledge," a knowledge *about* the proper understanding of Reason and Actuality, with Hegel's *Encyclopedia* animadversions about the implications of such a claim. In sum, much of Habermas's criticism is irrelevant if the "subject matter" of Absolute Knowledge, "the Notion," concerns the empirically undetermined and so historically "self-constituted" Notionality of any possible experience, if the core of Hegel's idealism in no way "usurps" the empirical investigations of various sciences, but continues in a different way the Kantian quest for the categorial conditions of all such knowledge. In a recent work, Habermas (1987) has restated his criticism of Hegel, and although he still relies

on an interpretation of Hegelian Spirit as a metaphysical "macro-subject," his main emphasis now is on Hegel's (and Marx's) reliance on the "philosophy of subjectivity" in general. This emphasis on, basically, Hegel's theory of reflective rationality (cf. 84) makes for a more powerful and more historically interesting assessment of Hegel and Hegel's place in the "modernity" problem. See n. 38 in Chapter 7, this volume. For more discussion of Hegel and the Frankfurt School, see Schmidt (1971) and Pippin (1985).

27. Cf. Fulda (1965), 29, 52ff. Fulda is certainly right to note that the fact that there is a nonphenomenological introduction to the *Encyclopedia* in no way demonstrates that Hegel thought he had eliminated the need for a separate introduction and justification of Science. See *EL*, sections 4, 25, and 78. For a clear statement of the opposing view (i.e., the denigration of the significance of the Jena *PhG*), see Petry's "Introduction" to the *BPhG* (1981), xiii–xciv.
28. Tugendhat (1979), 310. All the objections cited earlier are raised by Tugendhat.
29. For more discussion of the differences between the ordinary senses of *Wissen* and *Wahrheit* and the use to which Hegel puts these terms in the *PhG*, see the discussion by Cramer (1976), 77ff., especially his account of the general relation between *Bewusstsein* for Hegel and the *Gedanken der Wahrheit* and *Anspruch des Wissens* (91). Aschenberg's is one of the most comprehensive and interesting studies of the problem of truth in the *PhG* (1976). For a decisive rejection of Tugendhat's supposed "Last dance with Hegel," see Siep (1981).
30. Cf. Hegel's remarks in the Preface about how even factual claims, such as when Caesar was born, also require the "movement of self-consciousness" (*PhG*, 31; *PS*, 23) or the development of a criterion of truth. He makes the same sort of claim about how a mathematical proof also presupposes what he calls the "essentiality" of the proof, a philosophic understanding of the relation between such a proof and "truth" (*PhG*, 32; *PS*, 24).
31. This charge is typical of Tugendhat's approach in (1979) and in his extended statement of his own "analytic" program (1982). I discuss some problems with the latter in Pippin (forthcoming b). See also Theunissen's remarks on Tugendhat (1978b), 66, 434.

Chapter 6. Overcoming consciousness

1. On the manifold and sometimes quite subtle differences between Hegel's idealist theory of intentionality and later realist theories, especially those of Natorp, Husserl, Brentano, and Dilthey, see the fine study by Cramer (1974). He demonstrates well how the problems in such latter theories (focused, for Cramer, around the issue of *Erlebnis*) ought to prompt a return to Hegel's account of the necessary relation between conscious intending and self-consciousness. See especially 593–4.
2. It should be noted, though, that to view this chapter in this way, in terms of the justificatory function of the *PhG* within Hegel's idealist project, is also to introduce the concerns of the chapter in a relatively restricted way. That is, although Hegel has spoken of the *PhG* as the education of natural consciousness, this does not mean that he thinks he has here identified the "most natural" or intuitive understanding of consciousness's relation to its objects. The first sentence of the chapter refers only to what kind of knowledge must at the start be *our* object, for the tasks of the *PhG*, and Hegel does nothing throughout the chapter to alter the impression that the epistemological position described bears

little resemblance to a commonsense or philosophic theory. The theory supposedly at issue restricts itself to what would be an incomprehensible language of exclusively demonstratives (or perhaps, deictic expressions in general), and the proponent of the position is far more opposed to the mere mention of a universal term than any defender of common sense or empiricism need be. Accordingly, when Hegel speaks of natural consciousness as an assumed context for this beginning, I take him to be simply referring to the assumption that consciousness *can* intend objects. There is thus all the difference in the world between "beginning" with the natural consciousness assumption of intentionality and then, in a highly abstract, methodologically determined way, "beginning" with the first candidate reflective account of the possibility of this relation. The former could loosely be called a "natural" assumption. The latter is a product of reflective theory, and is as it is because of the proposed project of the *PhG*, not because this is the account the man in the street would think up first. Cf. Cramer (1976), 91ff.

3. "In apprehending (*Auffassen*) it [the object], we must refrain from trying to comprehend (*Begreifen*) it" (*PhG*, 63; *PS*, 58).
4. Although Hegel is trying to show that reference to a particular requires such a mediating, describing, and theorizing capacity, he is also trying to show that the "dependence" of such intentional reference on such capacities should *not* be understood as a simple subsumption of a particular under a description or of an intuition under a concept. Since conscious intending is originally a function of a subject's form of apperception, there is no such independent particularity in Hegel's full account. This creates, obviously, a vast complication, one that involves Hegel's basic claim, that "objects are, in truth, the Notion." Ultimately Hegel will claim that knowledge *can* be of "individuals" or "concrete universals," although it won't be clear for quite a while what this entails.

   Thus with respect to Soll's (1985) criticism of Taylor's (1975) position on just this point: I think Taylor is quite within his rights to state Hegel's argument from "within" the position of consciousness (in which there are external, determinate particulars to be "reached") and to restate Hegel's dialectical overcoming of such a position in terms of the assumptions about determinacy and selectivity inherent in that point of view. Soll is right to point out that Hegel is *ultimately* after the very Notion of particularity [something Taylor himself admitted in an earlier interpretation (1976, 166)], but Soll's point is premature without some detailed explanation of what such an ultimate attack on particularity is supposed to involve.
5. The classic account of the relevance of this section of the *PhG* to aporiai in Greek philosophy is that of Purpus (1908). See also Purpus (1904–5). Rosen (1974b), although relying much more on the *SL*, has also established the connection between such issues. Solomon (1983) has pointed out the relevance to Russell (321ff).
6. As we shall see in much greater detail, this "determinacy" (*Bestimmtheit*) issue, which plays so large a role in the *SL*, is the Hegelian successor to the Kantian problem of "unity" in experience and, I am arguing, will require a similar Hegelian account, a "dependence" on the "unity of apperception" and the "Notional moments" of such a unity. See Section 2.
7. This issue has been one of the most contentious in the literature: To what extent can the difficulty encountered by a "sense-certain experiencer" in "saying what it means" be said to be a problem inherent in such an experi-

ence, and to what extent is it an "external" philosophical problem, the lack of resolution of which has no bearing on whether such an experiencer can mean what he means? (The original formulation of this objection was made by Feuerbach.) For a clear counter to the objection, see Westphal (1978), 73ff. For one of the best accounts of how and why sense certainty can be said to be already "playing the philosophical game" in its intending, its *Meinen*, and so to be differentiating itself between a *Bekanntschaft mit der Sache* and the *Schein der Bekanntschaft*, see Wiehl (1966), especially 110–11.

8. Cf. Soll (1985), 63–4.
9. With respect to this issue of determinacy, it should be noted in anticipation that all Hegel is ultimately interested in is *qualitative determinacy*, the conditions required for an object to be picked out as to *kind* or "universal." This does *not* mean that Hegel thinks particulars do not exist, as I am reading him (contrary to the metaphysical-monist reading), but it does attribute to him the claim that such Notional determinacy is the "truth" or "essence" or, most properly, the "actuality" of what there is. Given that position, I see no reason to deny Hegel the full use of singular terms, demonstratives, and so on, as long as one keeps in mind that in his position the singularity presupposed by such subject terms is not an ontological ultimate, but dependent for its specifiability on "Notional determination" and the interconnections (and "history" properly understood) of such Notions.
10. It is characteristic of Hegel's idiosyncratic terminology that he wants us to understand universality as such a mediation of "this" and "not-this," in this case, a thing that stays the same (this) even as its sense qualities change (not-this). He uses this language at the beginning of the next chapter on perception. For some useful remarks on this mediation issue, as well as on what sense certainty "presupposes," see Wiehl (1966).
11. See Hume (1967), 2, and the problem Stroud poses for Hume on this issue, (1977), 20–1.
12. Hegel's position is, very roughly, that what makes an intellectual activity, like "judging," a *cognitive* activity, *and* a claim about this, or this set of objects, is its functioning within the conditions established by the "self-developing Notion," or Spirit's collective self-understanding, a practice, to use a non-Hegelian word, at once social and teleological. He does not spell out in detail why the possibility of something like reference should be a matter dependent on such institutional *functions*, but there is still much of relevance in his position to contemporary, especially post-Wittgensteinean, attempts.
13. Taylor (1976) has associated the argument of the first three chapters of the *PhG* with Wittgensteinean, anti-Cartesian, antiempiricist, transcendental arguments. As noted in Chapter 5 (see n. 5), there are indeed a number of important points of comparison between the two. However, in this case, Wittgenstein's anti-systematic, informalist methodology greatly complicates attempts to associate his later approach with Hegel. For example, Hegel is not trying to show that various candidate accounts of experience are individually impossible (as in the private language argument of the *Investigations*) or comparatively better or worse than others. His interest is developmental and systematic, a reconstructive account of the possibility of experience driven by the consciousness/self-consciousness problematic and the objectivity issue that it raises. Taylor's approach in this article does not, and given the Wittgenstein orientation, cannot, address

such an issue. In his book (1975), his narrative of Hegel's developmental case is determined by a metaphysical reading of Hegel's claim about "Spirit's knowledge of itself."

14. Thus, what is driving Hegel's argument forward here is not some simple assumption about the determinacy of possible objects of knowledge or a requirement for a capacity to "select out" relevant features of experience, but this kind of demonstration that such an indeterminate object, what sense certainty is Notionally committed to as the object, is internally incoherent, subject fatally to regular, old-fashioned "contradiction," and so not a possible object. However, as Hegel has also tried to show, the nature of this incoherence and the story of its generation reveal what is necessary to preserve consciousness's assumption about intending in a way directly responsive to such problems. There is a way, formulated by "Perception," to maintain that such an object must be both this and not-this, *this* instance of a universal, while *not* being such a universal.
15. Heidegger (1970). Much of the contemporary French attack on Hegel seems to me simply to reproduce the Heideggerean approach. I have in mind *inter alia* the work of Deleuze (1962) and Derrida (1978a, 1982b).
16. Wiehl (1966) has tried to make use of Kant's distinction between *Wahrnehmungsurteile* and *Erfahrungsurteile* to restate the claim being made in this section. This is not, I think, a particularly useful approach, since Kant's formulations of the distinction in the *Prolegomena* are imprecise and often inconsistent. A better example of the same kind of dilemma faced by Kant, one of relevance to the issue in this chapter, is what he calls the "paradox" of the apperception–inner sense relation. See Pippin (1982), 172–82.
17. For reference to some of the historical allusions here, many of which can be quite confusing, see Hyppolite (1974), 100–10. Solomon (1983) makes some useful remarks about the various possible historical addressees of Hegel's case: see 337–46. Cf. also Purpus (1908), 70–101, on the perception paradoxes.
18. Hegel makes clear the connection between his attack on the position of Perception and Kant in the *EL* addition to section 42.
19. Cf. Kant's "Anticipations of Perception," A167–B207ff.
20. Cf. Taylor's account (1976), 168–82. Taylor presents Chapter Two in a way that introduces the "resolution" of its "One/Also" paradox in "force" as the necessary reliance of consciousness on "causal powers" to explain the determinacy of the perceived object. Cf. the different account in Chapter 7, Section 1, this volume. Although he notes (174) that Hegel is thereby making a move similar to that in Book II of the *SL*, he does not note that this move is, there and here, a move to *reflection* and so an introduction of the problem of the "subject's determination of itself." Cf. Taylor's very brief, but I believe quite accurate, summary of this transition in his book (1975), 146–7. Note that Taylor here refers to the Hegelian Notion as "the structure of subjectivity."
21. For one of the clearest accounts of the relevance of this chapter to general problems in the philosophy of science, see Westphal (1978), 93–119. Lamb's comments on similar issues are also helpful, but brief (1980, 104–8).
22. Cf. *CJ*, 21; *AA*, vol. 5, 184–5; *KrV*, A644–B672 and especially A651–B679. Cf. also, in this regard, Kitcher (1986).
23. Gadamer (1976c) uses the Platonic *chorismos* as his central example of the inverted world issue (40ff). At several other points in his essay, Gadamer also alludes to what is quite an important point: that Hegel's claim here is paradigmatic for

much of what he wants to say about the limitations of traditional philosophical reflection, especially for his well-known attack on abstract or formal principles of practical rationality. Such principles either "invert" the real world, attempt to turn it into another, unreal world, or "pervert" it (another meaning of *verkehren*) by judging it to be permanently corrupt. However, Gadamer's essay, although beginning with a reference to the centrality of the consciousness/self-consciousness issue, concludes with no indication of how the specific problem of the inverted world is supposed to raise the issue of self-consciousness. He suggests that what we are now going to do is to think "of what is, as a self" and thereby "penetrate into the interior of nature, i.e., its life" (see 52–3). Hegel has already rejected this notion of "penetrating" into the interior of anything (that would be another *jenseits*) and, I shall argue in the first section of Chapter 7, this volume, Gadamer's romantic reading of the "life" issue is not supportable by anything in the text. For a clearer account of the "transition" issue, see Cramer (1979), 220–5.

Chapter 7. Satisfying self-consciousness

1. To be sure, this passage can also be read as much as a beginning, perhaps the true beginning of the *PhG*, rather than as the kind of closure I am suggesting. Cf. Kojeve (1969), 31ff., especially 36–7, or Habermas on Hegel's demonstration that epistemology must become "social theory" (1971), 43ff. However, it will not be difficult to show that the idealism issue I have been tracing through German Idealism, Hegel's early work, and the first two chapters of the *PhG* is, in Hegel's eyes, "resolved" in many important respects in this chapter, and if that is so, then, I shall suggest, the Marxist or social-theoretical approach to the rest of the *PhG* will prove difficult to maintain. Cf. Marx (1975) for a defense of the claim that the whole "idea" of the *PhG* is contained in the "principle of self-consciousness" (98), and Bernstein (1984a) for a decisive refutation of the materialist reading and criticism of this chapter.

   I note also the "architectonic" evidence for reading this chapter as a kind of culmination of the major work of the *PhG*: the correspondence between the Objective Logic of Being, and consciousness and Perception, between essence and the reflective, essence–appearance paradoxes of understanding, and between the Subjective Logic of the Notion – introduced by the reference to Kantian apperception and *Leben* – and self-consciousness. For a discussion of such a relation, see the important article by Pöggeler (1973c), 257ff. But cf. Fulda's influential contrary view in (1966) and his detailed position in (1965).
2. Pöggeler (1973c), 248. In the early sections of this article, Pöggeler stresses the metaphysical dimensions of Hegel's early account of life. Cf. 246: "Das einzelne stellt sich hinein in ein übergreifendes Ganzes." But by the end of the article, he is treating the introduction of the topics of life and self-consciousness in ways relevant to Descartes, Kant, and Fichte (and not, that is, Schelling). Cf. 293–7. I do not understand how Pöggeler interprets the relation between these two dimensions, as at the top of 293.
3. This language, of course, is reminiscent of Fichte's *doppelte Reihe* formulations. See Chapter 3, Section 2. And Cf. Wildt (1982) on the *Fichteanismus* of the *PhG*, 372–83.
4. I am stressing the link between Hegel's account of the "autonomous" "self-determining" and "infinite" nature of thought and Kant's original antiempiricist,