

C. (AA.) REASON

V. THE CERTAINTY AND TRUTH OF REASON

231. In grasping the thought that the *single* individual consciousness is *in itself* Absolute Essence, consciousness has returned into itself. For the Unhappy Consciousness the in-itself is the beyond of itself. But its movement has resulted in positing the completely developed single individual, or the single individual that is an *actual* consciousness, as the *negative* of itself, viz. as the *objective* extreme; in other words, it has successfully struggled to divest itself of its being-for-self and has turned it into [mere] being. In this movement it has also become aware of its *unity* with this universal, a unity which, for us, no longer falls outside of it since the superseded single individual is the universal, and which, since consciousness maintains itself in this its negativity, is present in consciousness as such as its essence. Its truth is that which appears in the syllogism whose extremes appeared as held absolutely asunder, as the middle term which proclaims to the unchangeable consciousness that the single individual has renounced itself, and, to the individual, that the Unchangeable is for it no longer an extreme, but is reconciled with it. This middle term is the unity directly aware of both and connecting them, and is the consciousness of their unity, which it proclaims to consciousness and thereby to itself, the consciousness of the certainty of being all truth.

232. Now that self-consciousness is Reason, its hitherto negative relation to otherness turns round into a positive relation. Up till now it has been concerned only with its independence and freedom, concerned to save and maintain itself for itself at the expense of the *world*, or of its own actuality, both of which appeared to it as the negative of its essence. But as Reason, assured of itself, it is at peace with them, and can endure them; for it is certain that it is itself reality, or that everything actual is none other than itself; its thinking is itself directly actuality, and thus its relationship to the latter is that of idealism. Apprehending itself in this way, it is as if the world had for it only

now come into being; previously it did not understand the world; it desired it and worked on it, withdrew from it into itself and abolished it as an existence on its own account, and its own self *qua* consciousness—both as consciousness of the world as essence and as consciousness of its nothingness. In thus apprehending itself, after losing the grave of its truth, after the abolition of its actuality is itself abolished, and after the singleness of consciousness is for it in itself Absolute Essence, it discovers the world as *its* new real world, which in its permanence holds an interest for it which previously lay only in its transiency; for the *existence* of the world becomes for self-consciousness its own *truth* and *presence*; it is certain of experiencing only itself therein.

233. Reason is the certainty of consciousness that it is all reality; thus does idealism express its Notion. Just as consciousness, that comes on the scene as Reason, possesses that certainty *directly* in itself, so too does idealism give direct expression to that certainty: 'I am I', in the sense that the 'I' which is an object for me is the sole object, is all reality and all that is present. Here, the 'I' that is object for me, is not merely an *empty* object in general, as it is for self-consciousness as such, nor is it, as in free self-consciousness, merely an object that withdraws itself from other objects which retain their worth *alongside* it; on the contrary, it is for self-consciousness an object such that any other object whatever is a *non-being*. But self-consciousness is all reality, not merely *for itself* but also *in itself*, only through *becoming* this reality, or rather through *demonstrating* itself to be such. It demonstrates itself to be this *along the path* in which first, in the dialectic movement of 'meaning', perceiving and understanding, otherness as an *intrinsic being* vanishes. Then, in the movement through the independence of consciousness in lordship and bondage, through the conception of freedom, through the liberation that comes from Scepticism and the struggle for absolute liberation by the consciousness divided against itself, otherness, in so far as it is only *for consciousness*, vanishes for *consciousness itself*. There appeared two aspects, one after the other: one in which the essence or the True had for consciousness the determinateness of *being*, the other in which it had the determinateness of being only *for consciousness*. But the two reduced themselves to a single truth, viz. that what is,

or the in-itself, only *is* in so far as it is *for* consciousness, and what is *for* consciousness is also *in itself* or has *intrinsic* being. The consciousness which is this truth has this path behind it and has forgotten it, and comes on the scene *immediately* as Reason; in other words, this Reason which comes immediately on the scene appears only as the *certainty* of that truth. Thus it merely *asserts* that it is all reality, but does not itself comprehend this; for it is along that forgotten path that this immediately expressed assertion is comprehended. And equally, anyone who has not trodden this path finds this assertion incomprehensible when he hears it in this pure form—although he does as a matter of fact make the assertion himself in a concrete shape [i.e. the assertion is implicit in his behaviour].

234. The idealism that does not demonstrate that path but starts off with this assertion is therefore, too, a pure *assertion* which does not comprehend its own self, nor can it make itself comprehensible to others. It proclaims an *immediate certainty* which is confronted by other immediate certainties, which have, however, been lost on that same path. With equal right, therefore, the assertions of these other certainties, too, take their place alongside the assertion of that certainty. Reason appeals to the *self-consciousness* of each and every consciousness: '*I am I*, my object and my essence is *I*'; and no one will deny Reason this truth. But in basing itself on this appeal, Reason sanctions the truth of the other certainty, viz. that there is for me an 'other'; that an other than 'I' is object and essence for me, or, in that I am object and essence to myself, I am only so by drawing back from the 'other' altogether, and taking my place as an actuality *alongside* it. Not until Reason comes on the scene as a *reflection* from this opposite certainty does its affirmation about itself present itself not merely as a certainty and an assertion, but as truth; and not merely alongside other truths but as the sole truth. Its *immediate appearance* on the scene is the abstraction of its *actual presence*, the essence and the *in-itself* of which is the absolute Notion, i.e. *the movement which has brought it into being*. Consciousness will determine its relationship to otherness or its object in various ways, according to the precise stage it has reached in the development of the World-Spirit into self-consciousness. How it *immediately* finds and determines itself

and its object at any time, or the way in which it is *for itself*, depends on what it has already *become*, or what it already is *in itself*.

235. Reason is the certainty of being all *reality*. This *in-itself* or this *reality* is, however, a universal pure and simple, the pure *abstraction* of reality. It is the first *positivity* in which self-consciousness is *in its own self* explicitly *for itself*, and 'P' is therefore only the *pure essentiality* of the existent, or is the simple *category*. The category, which formerly had the meaning of being the essentiality of the existent—and it was *undetermined* whether of the existent as such, or of the existent contrasted with consciousness—is now the essentiality or simple *unity* of the existent only as a reality that thinks; in other words, the category means this, that self-consciousness and being are the same essence, the same, not through comparison, but in and for themselves. It is only the one-sided, spurious idealism that lets this unity again come on the scene as consciousness, on one side, confronted by an *in-itself*, on the other. But now this category or *simple* unity of self-consciousness and being possesses difference *in itself*; for its essence is just this, to be immediately one and selfsame in *otherness*, or in absolute difference. The difference therefore *is*, but is perfectly transparent, and a difference that is at the same time none. It appears as a *plurality* of categories. Since idealism proclaims the simple unity of self-consciousness to be all reality, and *immediately* makes it the essence without having grasped it as the absolutely negative essence—only this has negation, determinateness, or difference within it—this second assertion is even more incomprehensible than the first, viz. that in the category there are *differences* or *species* of categories. The assertion as such, as also the assertion as to any *specific number* of species of categories, is a new assertion which, however, itself implies that we no longer have to accept it as an assertion. For since the difference originates in the pure 'I', in the pure Understanding itself, it is thereby made explicit that the *immediacy*, the making of assertions and [mere] finding of differences, is here given, and we begin to *comprehend*. But to pick up the plurality of categories again in some way or other as a welcome find, taking them, e.g., from the various judgements, and complacently accepting them so, is in fact to be regarded as an outrage on Science. Where else should the Understanding be

able to demonstrate a necessity, if it is unable to do so in its own self, which is pure necessity?

236. Now, because, in this way, the pure essentiality of things, like their difference, belongs to Reason, we can, strictly speaking, no longer talk of *things* at all, i.e. of something which would be for consciousness merely the negative of itself. For to say that the many categories are *species* of the pure category means that this latter is still their *genus* or *essence*, and is not opposed to them. But ambiguity already attaches to them, since in their *plurality* they possess otherness in contrast to the pure category. In fact, they contradict the pure category by such plurality, and the pure unity must supersede them in itself, thereby constituting itself a *negative unity* of the differences. But, as *negative* unity, it excludes from itself both the differences as such, as well as that first *immediate* pure unity as such, and is a *singular individual*; a new category which is consciousness as exclusive, i.e. consciousness for which there is an 'other'. The singular individual is the transition of the category from its Notion to an *external* reality, the pure *schema* which is both consciousness, and, since it is a singular individual and an exclusive unit, the pointing to an 'other'. But this 'other' of the category is merely the other first-mentioned categories, viz. *pure essentiality* and *pure difference*; and in this category, i.e. just in the positedness of the 'other', or in this 'other' itself, consciousness is equally itself. Each of these different moments points or refers to another; but at the same time they do not attain to otherness. The pure category points to the *species*, which pass over into the negative category or singular individual; this latter, however, points back to them. It is itself pure consciousness which is aware in each of them of being always this clear unity with itself, but a unity which equally is referred to an 'other', which in being, has vanished, and in vanishing also comes into being again.

237. Here we see pure consciousness posited in a twofold manner: once as the restless movement to and fro through all its moments, aware in them of an otherness which is superseded in the act of grasping it; and again, rather as the *tranquil unity* certain of its [own] truth. For this unity that movement is the 'other', while for this movement that tranquil unity is the 'other'; and consciousness and object alternate within these

reciprocal determinations. Thus on the one hand consciousness finds itself moving about searching here and there, its object being the *pure in-itself* and essence; on the other hand, it knows itself to be the simple category, and the object is the movement of the different moments. Consciousness, however, as essence is this whole process itself, of passing out of itself as simple category into a singular individual, into the object, and of contemplating this process in the object, nullifying the object as distinct [from it], *appropriating* it as its own, and proclaiming itself as this certainty of being all reality, of being both itself and its object.

238. Its first declaration is only this abstract empty phrase that everything is *its own*. For the certainty of being all reality is at first [only] the pure category. This Reason which first recognizes itself in the object finds expression in the empty idealism which grasps Reason only as it first comes on the scene; and fancies that by pointing out this pure 'mine' of consciousness in all being, and by declaring all things to be sensations or ideas, it has demonstrated this 'mine' of consciousness to be complete reality. It is bound, therefore, to be at the same time absolute empiricism, for in order to give filling to the empty 'mine', i.e. to get hold of *difference* with all its developed formations, its Reason requires an extraneous impulse, in which first is to be found the *multiplicity* of sensations and ideas. This idealism therefore becomes the same kind of self-contradictory ambiguity as Scepticism, except that, while this expresses itself negatively, the former does so positively; but it fails equally with Scepticism to bring together its contradictory thoughts of pure consciousness being all reality, while the extraneous impulse or sensations and ideas are equally reality. Instead of bringing them together, it shifts from one to the other, and is caught up in the spurious, i.e. the sensuous, infinite. Since Reason is all reality in the sense of the abstract 'mine', and the 'other' is for it something indifferent and extraneous, what is here made explicit is that kind of knowing of an 'other' by Reason, which we met with in the form of 'meaning', 'perceiving' and the 'Understanding', which apprehends what is 'meant' and what is 'perceived'. Such a knowing is at the same time pronounced by the very principle of this idealism not to be a true knowing, for only in the unity of apperception lies

the truth of knowing. The pure Reason of this idealism, in order to reach this 'other' which is *essential* to it, and thus is the *in-itself*, but which it does not have within it, is therefore thrown back by its own self on to that knowing which is *not* a knowing of what is true; in this way, it condemns itself of its own knowledge and volition to being an untrue kind of knowing, and cannot get away from 'meaning' and 'perceiving', which for it have no truth. It is involved in a direct contradiction; it asserts essence to be a duality of opposed factors, the *unity of apperception* and equally a *Thing*; whether the Thing is called an extraneous impulse, or an empirical or sensuous entity, or the Thing-in-itself, it still remains in principle the same, i.e. extraneous to that unity.

239. This idealism is involved in this contradiction because it asserts the *abstract Notion* of Reason to be the True; consequently, reality directly comes to be for it a reality that is just as much *not* that of Reason, while Reason is at the same time supposed to be all reality. This Reason remains a restless searching and in its very searching declares that the satisfaction of *finding* is a sheer impossibility. Actual Reason, however, is not so inconsistent as that; on the contrary, being at first only the *certainty* that it is all reality, it is aware in this *Notion* that *qua certainty*, *qua 'P'*, it is not yet in truth reality, and it is impelled to raise its certainty to truth and to give filling to the empty 'mine'.

A. OBSERVING REASON

240. It is true that we now see this consciousness, for which Being [*Sein*] means what is its own [*Seinen*], revert to the standpoint of 'meaning' and 'perceiving'; but not in the sense that it is certain of what is merely an 'other'. Previously, its perception and *experience* of various aspects of the Thing were something that only *happened to* consciousness; but here, consciousness *makes its own* observations and experiments. 'Meaning' and 'perceiving', which previously were superseded *for us*, are now superseded by and for consciousness itself. Reason sets to work to *know* the truth, to find in the form of a *Notion* that which, for 'meaning' and 'perceiving', is a *Thing*; i.e. it seeks to possess in thinghood the consciousness only of itself. Reason now has,