immediacy refined and purified by absolute negativity, this immediacy is pure being, is being as such, or is all being.

598. The absolute essence is thus not exhausted in being the determination of the simple essence of thinking. Rather, the absolute essence is all actuality, and this actuality is only as knowing. What consciousness could not know would have no sense and could be no power for it. Both all objectivity and the world have retreated into its willing which is fully aware of itself. It is absolutely free in knowing its freedom, and it is this very knowing of its freedom which is its substance, its purpose, and its sole content.

a. The Moral Worldview

599. Self-consciousness knows duty as the absolute essence. It is bound only by duty, and this substance is its own pure consciousness. For self-consciousness, duty cannot assume the form of something alien. However, moral self-consciousness, when resolved in that way within itself, is not yet posited and regarded as consciousness. The object is immediate knowing, and, as so purely permeated by the self, it is not an object. However, because it is essentially mediation and negativity, self-consciousness has in its concept the relation to an otherness and is thus consciousness. On the one hand, because duty constitutes its sole essential purpose and is the object of self-consciousness, this otherness is a completely meaningless actuality for it. Because this consciousness is so entirely resolved within itself, it relates itself freely and indifferently to this otherness, and existence, on the other hand, is completely free-standing vis-à-vis self-consciousness, only relating itself to itself. The more free-standing self-consciousness becomes, the more free-standing is the negative object of its consciousness. The object is thereby a world perfected within itself with an individuality all its own; it is a self-sufficient whole of laws peculiar to itself as well as a self-sufficient operation of these laws and their free realization – a nature as such, whose laws and activities belong to itself, a nature which, as an essence, is as unconcerned with moral self-consciousness as moral self-consciousness is unconcerned with it.

600. Out of this determination, there is a moral worldview which develops and gives shape to itself. This moral worldview consists in the relation between moral being-in-and-for-itself and natural being-in-and-for-itself. Lying at the basis of this relation is the complete indifference and the self-sufficiency of both nature and of moral purposes and activities with respect
to each other, and, on the other side of the coin, there is the consciousness of the sole essentiality of duty and of the complete non-self-sufficiency and inessentiality of nature. The moral worldview contains the development of the moments which are contained in this relation between such entirely conflicting presuppositions.

601. At first, it is moral consciousness as such which is presupposed. Duty counts, to itself, as the essence, and, to itself, the essence is actual and active; in its actuality and in its deed, the essence fulfills duty. However, at the same time for this moral consciousness the free-standingness\textsuperscript{131} of nature is presupposed, or moral consciousness experiences nature as unconcerned with giving moral consciousness the consciousness of the unity of its actuality with that of nature itself, and it thus learns from experience that nature might allow it to be happy but then again it might not. By comparison, the non-moral consciousness finds, perhaps by chance, its actualization in places where the moral consciousness sees only an occasion for acting but does not see itself thereby obtaining happiness either in the execution of the action or in the enjoyment of its achievement. Hence, the moral consciousness finds all the more reason for both bewailing such a state of affairs where there is no fit between itself and existence and for lamenting the injustice which both limits it to having its object only as pure duty and which fails to let it see this object and itself actualized.

602. Moral consciousness cannot renounce happiness and leave this moment out of its absolute purpose. The purpose, which is expressed as pure duty, essentially contains in it this singular self-consciousness. Both the individual conviction and the knowing of this conviction constituted an absolute moment of morality. This moment in the purpose which has objectively come to be, or in the duty fulfilled, is the singular consciousness intuiting itself as actualized, or it is the gratification which does not thereby immediately lie in the concept of morality regarded as disposition\textsuperscript{132} but which does lie in the concept of the actualization of morality. However, gratification also thereby lies in morality as a disposition, for the disposition does not aim at remaining a disposition in contrast to action; it aims at action, or at actualizing itself. The purpose, expressed as both the whole and the consciousness of its moments, therefore amounts to the following. Duty fulfilled is supposed to be just as much a purely moral action as it is a realized individuality, and nature, as the aspect of singularity in contrast with abstract purpose, is supposed to be at one with this purpose. – As necessary as the experience of the disharmony between the two aspects

\textsuperscript{131} Freiheit der Natur. \textsuperscript{132} Gesinnung.
is, it is because nature is free-standing that duty alone is the essential, and nature, in contrast to duty, is devoid of a self.\textsuperscript{133} That former purpose, which is constituted in its entirety by the harmony, contains within itself actuality itself. It is at the same time the thought of actuality. The harmony of morality and nature, or – as nature would come into view only insofar as consciousness experiences its unity with it – the harmony of morality and happiness is conceived\textsuperscript{134} as necessarily existing, or it is postulated. For making that demand expresses that something is thought of as existing which is not yet actual, or a necessity not of the concept as concept but of being. However, the necessity is at the same time essentially a relation by way of the concept. The demanded being therefore does not belong to the representational thinking of a contingent consciousness; rather, it lies in the concept of morality itself, whose true content is the unity of pure and singular consciousness. It pertains to the latter, to singular consciousness, that this unity is supposed to be for it an actuality, that what is happiness in the content of the purpose is in its form existence as such. – For that reason this demanded existence, or the unity of both, is neither a wish, nor, when it is taken as purpose, is it something whose attainment would still be uncertain. Rather, the purpose is a demand of reason, or an immediate certainty and presupposition of reason.

603. It is not that this first experience and this postulate are the only ones, but rather a whole sphere of postulates is opened up. Nature, namely, is not only this wholly free-standing external mode in which consciousness, as a pure object, would have to realize its purpose. Consciousness is in its own self essentially that for which this other free-standing actuality is, i.e., it is itself contingent and natural. This nature which to consciousness is properly its own is that of sensibility, which, in the shape of willing as impulses and inclinations has its own determinate essentiality for itself, or it has individual purposes, and it is thus opposed to the pure will and its pure purposes. But in contrast to this opposition, the relation of sensibility to pure consciousness, or its absolute unity with it, is to pure consciousness instead the essence. Both of these, pure thinking and the sensibility of consciousness, are in themselves One consciousness, and pure thinking is precisely that for which and within which this pure unity is. However, for it as consciousness, the opposition is between itself and its impulses. In this conflict between reason and sensibility, the essence for reason consists in the dissolution of the conflict, and as a result the unity of both emerges, a unity which is not the original unity, or the unity that consists in both existing in one

\textsuperscript{133} das Selbstlose. \textsuperscript{134} gedacht.
individual. The unity which emerges is that which arises out of the known opposition of both of them. Such a unity is initially actual morality, for contained within it is the opposition through which the self is consciousness, or through which the self is first actual, or is in fact the self and at the same time the universal. Or, it is the sort of mediation which, as we see, is essentially morality. – While of the two moments in the opposition, sensibility is purely and simply otherness, or the negative, whereas the pure thinking of duty is the essence from which nothing can be given up, then it seems that the unity which is engendered can only be brought about by the sublation of sensibility. However, since sensibility is itself a moment of this coming-to-be, or it is the moment of actuality, then for the expression of the unity, one will initially have to content oneself with a turn of phrase, more or less to the effect that sensibility is supposed to conform to morality. – This unity is equally a postulated being; it is not there because what is there is consciousness, or the opposition of sensibility and pure consciousness. However, the unity is at the same time not an in-itself like the first postulate, in which free-standing nature constitutes one aspect. Hence, the harmony of nature with moral consciousness belongs to the sphere outside of the latter. Here it is nature which is in its own self, and the issue here has to do with morality as such, with a harmony which is the acting self’s very own harmony. Thus, consciousness itself both has to bring about this harmony and to be making constant progress in morality. However, the culmination of this progress has to be put off to infinity, since if that culmination were actually to arrive, moral consciousness would be sublated. This is so because morality is only moral consciousness as the negative essence for which sensibility is only of negative significance, is only not in accordance with pure duty. But in that harmony, morality as consciousness vanishes, or its actuality vanishes in the way that in moral consciousness, or in actuality, its harmony vanishes. For that reason, the culmination is not actually to be reached, but rather, it is only to be thought of as an absolute task, which is to say, a task which remains purely and simply a task. Nonetheless, at the same time its content is to be thought as what purely and simply must be, and it must not remain a task. Now, in this aim, one is to represent consciousness as sublated, or, for that matter, not sublated. In the dark remoteness of the infinity to which the attainment of the aim consequently has to be postponed, there is no clear distinction to be made as to which of these views is to be held. Strictly speaking, the determinate representation of this progress should be of no interest and ought not to be sought because

\[\text{ist nicht da.}\]
it leads to contradictions – contradictions lying in a task which is both to remain a task and which is yet to be fulfilled, and in a morality which is no longer supposed to be consciousness and no longer supposed to be actual. However, the thought that a perfected morality would contain a contradiction would harm the holiness of moral essentiality, and absolute duty would then appear as something non-actual.

604. The first postulate was the harmony of morality and objective nature, the final purpose of the world; the other was the harmony of morality and the sensuous will, the final purpose of self-consciousness as such. The former is thus the harmony in the form of being-in-itself, and the latter is the harmony in the form of being-for-itself. However, the mediating middle that combines these two extreme final ends, as they have been conceived, is the movement of actual acting itself. They are harmonies whose moments have not yet become objects in their abstract differentiatedness from each other. This occurs in actuality, in which the aspects appear in real consciousness, where each comes on the scene as the other of the other. The postulates thereby arising contain, as before, only the separated harmonies in themselves and existing for themselves, which are now harmonies existing in and for themselves.

605. As the simple knowing and willing of pure duty in acting, moral consciousness is related to an object opposed to its simplicity – related to the actuality of the diverse cases, and as a result it has a diverse moral relationship to that actuality. According to the content, what emerges here is the plurality of laws, and according to the form, what emerges are the contradictory powers of knowing consciousness and of the unconscious. – At the outset, with regard to the plurality of duties, what counts for the moral consciousness is only the pure duty within them. The many duties, as many, are determinate and as such are thus nothing holy for moral consciousness. However, at the same time and necessarily through the concept of acting, which itself encompasses a diverse actuality and thus a diverse moral relation, those many duties must be regarded as existing in and for themselves. Furthermore, since they can only be within a moral consciousness, they are at the same time within a consciousness other than that for which there is only pure duty as that which is holy and which is in and for itself.

606. It is thus postulated that there is to be another consciousness which sanctifies those duties or which knows them and wills them as duties. The first consciousness supports pure duty indifferently with respect to all determinate content, and duty is only this indifference with respect to content.
But the other consciousness contains the equally essential relation to acting and the necessity of determinate content. While duties count, to itself, as determinate duties, the content as such is, to itself, just as essential as the form through which the content is a duty. This consciousness is thereby the kind in which the universal and the particular are utterly at one, and its concept is thus the same as the concept of the harmony of morality and happiness. This is so because this opposition equally well expresses the separation of the self-equal moral consciousness from that actuality which, as multiple being, militates against the simple essence of duty. However much the first postulate expresses only the existing harmony between morality and nature because nature is therein this negative of self-consciousness, the moment of being, still this in-itself is in contrast now posited essentially as consciousness. For what exists now has the form of the content of duty, or is the determinateness in the determinate duty. The in-itself is thus the unity of the sort of items which are as simple essentialities, as essentialities of thinking, and which thus only are within a consciousness. This latter consciousness is thus now a lord and ruler of the world who generates the harmony of morality and happiness and at the same time sanctifies duties as a plurality of duties. In turn, that means this much: For the consciousness of pure duty, the determinate duty cannot be immediately sanctified. Because the determinate duty, in the service of actual action which is a determinate action, is likewise necessary, so does its necessity fall outside of that consciousness into another consciousness, which is thereby what mediates the determinate and the pure duty and is the reason why that specific duty also counts as valid.

607. However, in actual action, consciousness conducts itself as this self, as a completely singular individual. It is directed towards actuality as such and has this actuality for its purpose, for it wants to accomplish something. Duty as such thus falls outside of itself into another essence, the consciousness and the holy lawgiver of pure duty. To the acting consciousness, precisely because it is acting consciousness, the other of pure duty is immediately valid. This pure duty is thus the content of another consciousness, and this pure duty is only mediately holy for the acting consciousness, namely, within that other consciousness.

608. Because it is hereby posited that the validity of duty as the holy in and for itself falls outside of actual consciousness, this consciousness as such thereby stands off to one side as incomplete moral consciousness. According to its knowing, it therefore knows itself to be the sort whose knowing and conviction is incomplete and contingent. Just as much according to
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its *willing*, it knows itself to be the sort whose purposes are affected by sensibility. According to its unworthiness, it thus cannot look on happiness as necessary but rather as something contingent, and it can only expect happiness to issue from grace.

609. However, even though its actuality is incomplete, duty nonetheless counts as the essence for its *pure* willing and knowing. In the concept, inasmuch as the concept is opposed to reality (or is the concept in thinking), consciousness is thus completed. However, the absolute essence is just something thought, what is postulated as an other-worldly realm beyond actuality. It is therefore the thought within which morally imperfect knowing and willing count as perfected, and as taking this imperfection to have full weight, it thereby also apportions happiness according to worthiness, namely, according to the *desert ascribed* to the imperfect consciousness.

610. With that, the moral worldview is completed, for in the concept of moral self-consciousness, the two aspects, those of pure duty and actuality, are posited as being in a *single* unity, and as a result both the one as well as the other are each posited not as existing in and for themselves but as a *moment*, or as sublated. In the last part of the moral worldview, it is for consciousness that this comes to be. That is to say, consciousness posits pure duty as lying in another essence than itself, i.e., it posits pure duty as something which it partly has as *something represented* and which it partly has as something which is not valid in and for itself, but it is the non-moral consciousness which instead counts as completed. It likewise posits itself as having an actuality which is unsuited to duty, which is *sublated*, and which, as sublated, or as lying in the *representation* of the absolute essence, no longer contradicts morality.

611. However, for the moral consciousness itself, its moral worldview does not mean that moral consciousness develops its own concept within that worldview and makes that concept its object to itself. It neither has a consciousness concerning this opposition of form nor a consciousness concerning this opposition, whose parts, according to their content, it neither relates nor compares with each other. Rather, it rolls onward in its development without being the *concept* holding those moments together. This is so because it only knows the *pure essence*, or the object insofar as the object is *duty* and insofar as it is the *abstract* object of its pure consciousness, as pure knowing or as itself. It therefore conducts itself only thinkingly, not comprehensively. Hence, the object of its *actual* consciousness is, to itself, not yet transparent; it is not the absolute concept, which alone grasps

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136 *dies Gedachte.*  
137 *Es verhält sich also nur denkend, nicht begreifend.*
otherness as such, or which grasps its absolute opposite as itself. To be sure, its own actuality as well as that of all objective actuality counts, to itself, as the inessential, but its freedom is the freedom of confronting nature as something which is itself just as free-standing. Because both are in the same way within it, the free-standing character of being and the inclusion of this being within consciousness, its object comes to be an existing object which at the same time is only [an object of] thought. In the last part of its intuition, the content is essentially posited in such a way that its being is something represented, and this combination of being and thinking, expressed as what it in fact is, is representing.

612. When we regard the moral worldview in such a way that this objective mode is nothing but the concept of moral self-consciousness itself which it makes objective to itself, what results from and through this consciousness about the form of its origin is another shape of its exposition. – The first, which is the starting-point, is actual moral self-consciousness, or that there is such a self-consciousness at all. This is so because the concept posits moral self-consciousness as subsumed under the following determination, that, to the concept, all actuality, full stop, has an essence only insofar as such actuality conforms to duty, and that the concept posits this essence as knowing, i.e., as being in immediate unity with the actual self. This unity is thus itself actual; it is an actual moral consciousness. – The latter now, as consciousness, represents its content to itself as an object, namely, as the final purpose of the world, as the harmony of morality with all actuality. However, while representing this unity as object and not yet the concept which has power over the object as such an object, this unity is, to itself, a negative of self-consciousness, or the unity falls outside of self-consciousness. It does this as an other-worldly beyond to its actuality, but at the same time as the sort of unity that is also existent even though only as it is thought.

613. To self-consciousness, which as self-consciousness is something other than the object, what remains is the non-harmony between the consciousness of duty and actuality, in fact its own actuality. The proposition thus now goes in this way: There is no morally perfected actual self-consciousness – and, since the moral per se only is insofar as it is completed, for duty is the pure unmixed in-itself, and since morality consists only in an adequacy to this purity, the second proposition itself goes like this: There is no moral actuality.

614. But, third of all, while it is one self, it is in itself the unity of duty and actuality; this unity thus becomes, to itself, the object as perfected
morality – however, as an other-worldly beyond of its actuality – but an other-worldly beyond that nonetheless ought to be actual.

615. In this goal of the synthetic unity of the first two propositions, self-conscious actuality as well as duty is only posited as a sublated moment. This is so because neither of them is singular; rather, each of them, in their essential determination as free-standing from the other, are, as they are in the unity, thereby no longer free-standing from the other, and are thus sublated. Thus, according to the content, each of them becomes the object which counts as object for the other, and, according to the form, this reciprocal exchange is at the same time only representationally thought.\textsuperscript{138} – Or, the actually non-moral, because it is just as much pure thinking and sublimely stands above its actuality, is within representational thought nonetheless moral and is taken to be entirely valid. In this way, the first proposition, namely, that there is a moral self-consciousness, is produced, but it is combined with the second, namely, that there is none, that is, there is a moral self-consciousness but only in representational thought; or there is indeed no moral self-consciousness, but it is accepted as one by another self-consciousness.

\textit{b. Dissemblance}

616. In the moral worldview, we see on the one hand consciousness itself consciously create its object; we see that the object is neither something we come upon as alien, nor do we see the object coming to be for consciousness in any kind of unconscious way. Rather, throughout all of this, consciousness conducts itself according to a reason, on the basis of which it posits the objective essence. It thus knows this objective essence as itself, for it knows itself as active consciousness, which creates the essence. It thereby seems to achieve its repose and its satisfaction, for these can only be found where it no longer needs to go above and beyond its object because this object no longer goes above and beyond it. However, on the other side of the coin, it itself instead posits the object as external to itself, as its other-worldly beyond. But this existent-in-and-for-itself is at the same time equally posited as the sort of entity which is not free-standing with regard to self-consciousness but which is supposed to be for the purpose of and to be through self-consciousness.

617. The moral worldview is thus in fact nothing but the elaboration of this fundamental contradiction according to its various aspects. It is, to
use a most appropriately Kantian phrase here, a whole nest of thoughtless contradictions. Consciousness conducts itself in this development in such a way that it fixes one moment, and from there immediately passes over to an other, and then sublates the first. However, as soon as it has now put forth this second moment, it also again dissembles about this moment and instead makes the opposite into the essence. At the same time, it is also conscious both of its contradiction and of its dissembling, for it passes over from one moment immediately in relation to itself into the opposite.

Because a moment has no reality at all for it, it posits that very moment as real, or, what amounts to the same thing, in order to affirm one moment as existing in itself, it affirms the opposite as what is existing in itself. It thereby confesses that it is in fact serious about neither of them. This calls for closer examination of the various moments of this vertigo-inducing movement.

618. First, let us just put off to one side the presupposition that there is an actual moral consciousness for the reason that the presupposition is immediately made without any reference to what came before. Let us turn to the harmony of morality and nature, the first postulate. It is supposed to be in itself, not for actual consciousness and not currently. Rather, the present is instead only the contradiction between the two. In the present, morality is accepted as extant, and actuality is so positioned that it is not supposed to be in harmony with morality. However, actual moral consciousness is an acting consciousness, and just therein consists the actuality of its morality. However, in acting itself, that stance is immediately made into a matter of dissemblance, for acting is nothing but the actualization of the inner moral purpose, nothing but the bringing forth of an actuality determined through the purpose, or of the harmony of moral purpose and actuality itself. At the same time, the completion of the action is for consciousness; it is the present of this unity of actuality and purpose. And because in the completed action consciousness actualizes itself as this singular individual, or intuits existence returned into it, so at the same time is also contained in it that form of the actuality which is called gratification and happiness. – Acting therefore in fact immediately fulfills what had been put forward as not taking place at all, or what was only supposed to be a postulate, only an other-worldly beyond. Consciousness therefore expresses through its deed that it is not serious about its own postulating, because what the action means is instead that it brings into the present what is not supposed to be in the present. And as the harmony is postulated for the sake of the action – which is to say, that what is supposed to become actual through action must be that

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way *in itself*, for otherwise the actuality would not be *possible* – the connection between acting and the postulate is so constituted that, for the sake of acting, i.e., for the sake of the *actual* harmony of purpose and actuality, this harmony is posited as *not actual*, as an *other-worldly beyond*.

619. While *acting* does take place, the *inadequacy* of the purpose and of actuality [to each other] is therefore not taken seriously at all; but in contrast, it does seem that acting itself is taken seriously. However, the actual *action* is in fact only the action of a *singular* consciousness; therefore it is only itself something singular, and the work is only something contingent. However, the purpose of reason as the all-comprehensive universal purpose, is nothing less than the whole world itself, a final end which goes far beyond the content of this individual action and thus is to be placed altogether beyond all actual acting. Because the universally best ought to be put into practice, nothing good is done. However, in fact the *nothingness* of actual acting and the *reality* only of the *whole* end, which are now put forward, are according to all the aspects again a matter of dissemblance. Moral action is not something contingent and restricted, for it has pure *duty* for its essence; this pure duty constitutes the *single entire* end; and the action, as the actualization of that end, is the accomplishment of the entire absolute end, whatever other restrictions there may be on the content. Or, if actuality is again taken to be nature, which has its *own* laws and which is opposed to pure duty so that duty cannot realize its law within nature, then while duty as such is the essence, this in fact has *nothing to do with the accomplishment* of pure duty, which is the entire end, for that accomplishment would instead have as its end not pure duty but instead what is opposed to it, actuality. However, that it is not supposed to have anything to do with *actuality* is again a matter of dissemblance, for according to the concept of moral action, pure duty is essentially an *active* consciousness. By all means, action should be taken; the absolute duty ought to be expressed in the entirety of nature; and the moral law should become the natural law.

620. If we allow this *highest good* to count as the essence, then consciousness is not at all serious about morality. This is so because in the highest good, nature does not have a different law from that of morality. Moral acting itself thus breaks down, for there is action only under the presupposition of a negative which is to be sublated through the action. However, if nature is in accordance with ethical laws, then these ethical laws would be violated by action, or by the sublation of what exists. – In that assumption about the essential condition, there is the admission that there is a condition in which moral action is superfluous and does not take place at
all. Seen from this aspect, the postulate of the harmony between morality and actuality – of a harmony posited by the concept of moral action which is to bring the two into agreement – is expressed in the following way: Because moral acting is the absolute purpose, then the absolute purpose is that moral acting would not at all be said to be present.

621. If we collect these moments together in which consciousness has rolled forward in its morally representational thinking, it becomes clear that it again sublates each of those representational thinkings into its opposite. It starts from the position that for it morality and actuality do not harmonize, but, to itself, it is not serious about it, for in the action this harmony is for it in the present. However, to itself, it is also not serious about this action, for it is something singular, for it has such a lofty purpose, the highest good. But this is again only a dissemblance about what is really at issue, for in that dissemblance all action and all morality would fall by the wayside. Or, it is that, to itself, it is not genuinely serious about moral action, but rather it holds that what is most desirable, the absolute, is that the highest good be put into practice and that moral action be superfluous.

622. On the basis of this result, consciousness must advance further in its contradictory movement, and again it necessarily dissembles about the sublating of moral action. Morality is the in-itself; for morality to come about, the final end of the world cannot be realized, but rather, moral consciousness must be for itself, and it must find that it confronts a nature which is opposed to it. However, in its own self it must be completed, and this leads to the second postulate of the harmony of itself and the nature which is immediately in it, namely, sensibility. Moral self-consciousness puts forward the view that its purpose is pure purpose, independent of inclinations and impulses so that the pure purpose has eliminated within itself sensibility’s purposes. – Yet this proposed sublation of the sensuous essence is again made into a matter of dissemblance. Moral consciousness acts, brings its purpose into actuality and self-conscious sensibility, which ought to be sublated, is precisely the mediating middle between pure consciousness and actuality. – It is the former’s instrument, or organ, for its realization, and it is what is called impulse, inclination; hence, it is not really serious about sublating inclinations and impulses, for it is just these which are the self-actualizing self-consciousness. However, they should also not be suppressed, but rather, only to be in accordance with reason. They

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are also \textit{in accordance with} reason, for moral \textit{action} is nothing but self-realizing consciousness giving itself the shape of an \textit{impulse}, which is to say, it is immediately the current harmony of impulse and morality. However, impulse is in fact not only this empty shape which might have within itself a spring of action other than itself and by which it could then be impelled. This is so because sensibility is a nature which contains in its own self its own laws and springs of action, and thus morality cannot be serious about the driving force for the drives or the angle of inclination for inclinations. For, while these latter have their own fixed determinateness and distinctive content, the consciousness with which they were to conform would instead be in accordance with them, and this is a conformity which moral self-consciousness refuses to tolerate. The harmony between the two thus is only \textit{in itself} and is \textit{postulated}. – In moral action, the \textit{current} harmony of morality and sensibility had been put forth as a view, but now even this \textit{is} a matter of dissemblance. The harmony is an other-worldly beyond of consciousness, lying somewhere off in a foggy distance in which there is no longer anything which can be accurately differentiated or comprehended, since the comprehension of this unity, which we just attempted to provide, itself failed. – However, within this in-itself, consciousness gives itself up altogether. This in-itself is its moral completion within which the struggle of morality and sensibility has ceased, and the latter is in accordance with the former in a way which cannot be grasped. – For that reason, this completion is again only a dissemblance about what is really at issue, for in that completion \textit{morality} would instead be abandoned, since morality is only consciousness of the absolute purpose as \textit{pure} purpose, and therefore as \textit{opposing} all other purposes. Morality is just as aware of the \textit{activity} of this pure purpose as it is aware of its elevation above sensibility, aware of the intrusion of sensibility, and aware of the opposition and struggle with sensibility. – Consciousness itself immediately expresses that it does not take this moral completion seriously by its dissemblance about the way this culmination is put off into \textit{infinity}, which is to say, by asserting that this completion is never completed.

623. What is valid is thus instead only the in-between state of incompleteness, a state that nonetheless is supposed to be at least \textit{progress} towards completion. Yet it also cannot be this progress, for progress in morality would really be progress towards its own downfall. The aim would be the nothingness mentioned above, or the sublation of morality and of consciousness itself; however, to get ever nearer and nearer to nothing is to \textit{decrease}. Besides, to \textit{make progress} as such (as well as to \textit{decrease} as such) would equally make the assumption that there are differences of quantity
within morality, yet there can be no such kind of talk in morality. In morality, as the consciousness which takes ethical purpose to be pure duty, there cannot be any thinking at all of diversity, least of all of the superficial difference of quantity. There is only one virtue, only one pure duty, only one morality.

624. While it is therefore not serious about moral completion but rather about the intermediate state, i.e., as was just discussed in the case of non-morality, we return to the content of the first postulate by way of another route. That is to say, one cannot see how for this moral consciousness happiness is going to be demanded on the basis of its worthiness. It is well aware that it is not perfect and that it thus cannot in fact demand happiness as a matter of desert, as something of which it is worthy. Rather, it can only require that happiness be given as freely bestowed grace, which is to say, it can only demand happiness in and for itself as that kind of happiness. It can hope for such happiness, not on the basis of that absolute ground but only in accordance with a fortuitousness and a kind of arbitrary free choice. – Non-morality expresses therein just what it is – namely, that it is concerned not about morality but about happiness in and for itself without reference to morality.

625. On the basis of this second aspect of the moral worldview, the other assertion is also sublated, namely, the one about the first aspect in which the disharmony between morality and happiness is presupposed. – It wants indeed to have learned from experience that in this present state of affairs the moral person often fares badly, whereas in contrast the immoral person is often happy. Yet the intermediate state of incomplete morality, which has turned out to be essential, clearly shows that this perception, this supposed experience, is only a matter of dissemblance about what is really at issue. For since morality is not completed, which is to say, since morality in fact is not, just what exactly is there in the learning experience to the effect that the moral person fares badly? – While it has come to light at the same time that what is at issue is happiness in and for itself, it turns out that the appraisal which asserts that “things go well for the non-moral person” did not intend to imply that anything wrong took place. When morality as such is incomplete, the designation of an individual as immoral in itself falls by the wayside and has therefore only an arbitrary ground. As a result, the sense and content of the judgment of experience is only that happiness in and for itself should not have been granted to some people, which is to say, the judgment is envy which helps itself to the cloak of morality. The reason, however, why so-called good fortune should be apportioned to others is that of good friendship, which does not begrudge it and which
wishes that this grace, this accident of good fortune, be given both to them and to itself.

626. Morality is therefore not completed in moral consciousness. This is what is now being proposed, but the essence of moral consciousness is just to be completed purity, and incomplete morality is thus impure, or is immorality. Morality itself thus is in another essence than in that of actual consciousness, and this other is a holy moral legislator. – The morality which is not completed in consciousness, the very morality which is the basis for this postulating, initially signifies the morality which, as it is posited within consciousness as actual, stands in relation to another, or to an existence, and thus acquires in it otherness, or difference, within which a variegated plurality of moral commands arises. However, at the same time, moral self-consciousness holds these many duties to be inessential, for it is concerned only with the one pure duty, and for self-consciousness, this plurality of duties, insofar as they are determinate duties, has no truth. They thus can have their truth only in an other, and although they are not holy for self-consciousness, they are made holy through a holy law-giver. – Yet this is itself again only dissemblance about what is at issue. This is so because, to itself, moral self-consciousness is absolute, and duty purely and simply is only that which self-consciousness knows to be duty. However, it knows only pure duty as duty; what, to itself, is not holy is not holy in itself, and what is not holy in itself cannot be made holy by the holy being. 141 Moral consciousness is also not really serious about permitting something to be made holy by another consciousness than itself, since, to itself, the utterly holy is only that which is made holy through itself and is holy in moral consciousness. – It is thus not any more serious about the claim that this other being is a holy being, for in that holy being 142 something should have arrived at essentiality, which, for moral consciousness, i.e., in itself, has no such essentiality.

627. However much the holy essence had been postulated so that duty would have its validity within it, not as pure duty but as a plurality of determinate duties, still this must again be a matter of dissemblance, and the other being 143 alone would have to be holy only insofar as it is only the pure duty in it which has validity. In fact, pure duty too has validity only in another being 144 and not in moral consciousness. Although in the latter, it is pure morality alone which seems to be valid, still this moral consciousness must be taken in another way, for it is at the same time a
natural consciousness. Within natural consciousness, morality is affected and conditioned by sensibility and thus is not in and for itself. Rather, it is a contingency of free willing, but as pure willing within natural consciousness, it is a contingency of knowing. Hence morality is in and for itself in another being.\textsuperscript{145}

628. This being\textsuperscript{146} is therefore here the purely completed morality for the reason that within it morality does not stand in any relation to nature and to sensibility. Yet the reality of pure duty is its actualization in nature and sensibility. Moral consciousness posits that its incompleteness lies in the following, namely, that within it morality has a positive relation both to nature and to sensibility, since, to itself, what counts as an essential moment of morality is that morality purely and simply should only have a negative relation both to nature and sensibility. On the other hand, the purely moral being,\textsuperscript{147} because it stands sublimely above the struggle with nature and sensibility, does not stand in a negative relation to either of them. In fact, to itself, what thus remains is only the positive relation to them, i.e., what remains is precisely what had counted as incomplete, as immoral. However, as entirely separated from actuality in such a way that it would lack any positive relation to actuality, pure morality would be an unconscious, non-actual abstraction in which the concept of morality and the thinking of pure duty together with both willing it and then acting on that duty, would all be utterly sublated. This purely moral being\textsuperscript{148} is thus again dissembling about what is really at issue, and it too is to be given up.

629. However, in this purely moral being,\textsuperscript{149} the moments of the contradiction, within which this synthetic representational thinking has roamed about, now draw closer together to each other, as do the opposing alsos succeed each other, one after the other, without its bringing these thoughts together. One opposite is always letting itself be displaced by the other to such a degree that consciousness here has to give up its moral worldview and retreat back into itself.

630. For that reason, consciousness recognizes\textsuperscript{150} that its morality is incomplete. It does this because it is affected by a sensibility and a nature opposed to itself which in part itself obfuscates morality as such and in part gives rise to a whole host of duties through which consciousness falls into dilemmas in concrete cases of actual action. Each case is the concretion of a plurality of moral relations in the way that an object of perception per se is a thing of many qualities. While the determinate duty is the purpose, it has

\textsuperscript{145} Wesen. \textsuperscript{146} Wesen. \textsuperscript{147} Wesen. \textsuperscript{148} Wesen. \textsuperscript{149} Wesen. \textsuperscript{150} erkennt.
a content, and its content is a part of the purpose, and hence morality is not pure. – Morality therefore has its reality in another being.\textsuperscript{151} However, this reality amounts to nothing but the following. Morality is here supposed to be \textit{in} and \textit{for itself}—\textit{for itself}, i.e., it is supposed to be the morality of a consciousness; and \textit{in itself}, which is to say, it is supposed to have existence and actuality. – In the former, initially incomplete consciousness, morality was not put into practice; in such a case, morality is the \textit{in-itself} in the sense that it is a \textit{thought-thing}.\textsuperscript{152} for it is associated\textsuperscript{153} with nature and sensibility, and with the actuality of being and of consciousness. That actuality constitutes its content, and the morally null is nature and sensibility. – In the second case, morality is present as \textit{completed} and not as a thought-thing which has not been put into practice. However, this completion precisely consists in morality’s having actuality as well as free-standing actuality in a consciousness, in having existence per se, in its not being empty but rather in having a fulfilled content. – Which is to say, the completion of morality is posited in the following way. What was just now determined as morally null is now in morality’s own interior and is present in morality itself. It is at one time supposed to be what has validity purely and simply as a non-actual thought-thing of pure abstraction, but it is equally as much supposed to have no validity at all in this mode. Its truth is supposed to consist in its being opposed to actuality, to be wholly free-standing from it, to be empty, and therein again to be actuality itself.

631. The syncretism of these contradictions, which lie side by side in the moral worldview, collapses into themselves as the difference on which such syncretism rests, namely, that between what would be necessarily thought and posited, and what at the same time would also be inessential, becomes itself a difference that no longer even resides in the words themselves. In the end, what is posited as diverse, or is posited as being both a nullity and as real, is one and the same, namely, existence and actuality. And what is absolutely supposed to be only as the other-worldly beyond of actual being and of actual consciousness, and is equally supposed to be in consciousness and, as an other-worldly beyond, the utterly null, is pure duty and the knowing of it as that of essence. The consciousness which makes this distinction which is no distinction, the consciousness which at the same time states that actuality is both nullity itself and the real, which also states that pure morality is both the true essence and is utterly essence-less, now declares that the thoughts which it had previously separated are linked together, and

\textsuperscript{151} Wesen. \textsuperscript{152} Gedankendings. \textsuperscript{153} vergesellschaftet.
it declares its own lack of seriousness about this determination and expression of the moments of the self and the in-itself. Instead, what it declares to be absolutely outside of consciousness is what it keeps enclosed within the self of self-consciousness, and, it states that the absolutely thought,\textsuperscript{154} or, the absolute in-itself, is for that very reason what has no truth at all. – It becomes clear to consciousness that when it assembles all these moments so that they are separate from each other, it is really dissembling, and that if it were to keep on doing this, it would be hypocrisy. However, as pure moral self-consciousness, it flees from this inequality between its representational thinking and its essence, flees from this untruth which declares that what counts to it as untrue is in fact true, and with abhorrence, it flees back into itself. It is a pure conscience that spurns such a moral worldview. It is, as turned inwardly into itself, the simple self-certain spirit which, without the mediation of those representations, immediately and conscientiously acts and has its truth in this immediacy. – However much this world of dissemblance is nothing but the development of moral self-consciousness in its moments, and however much it is thus the reality of that moral self-consciousness, still through its retreat inward into itself, moral self-consciousness will, according to its essence, not become anything else. This inward return into itself is instead only the consciousness that has arrived at this, that its truth is a feigned truth. It would always have to pretend that this feigned truth is its truth, for it would have to express itself and exhibit itself as an objective representation, but it would know that this is only dissemblance. It would thus in fact be hypocrisy, and that disdain for such dissemblance would itself already be the first expression of hypocrisy.

\textit{c. Conscience; the Beautiful Soul, Evil, and its Forgiveness}

632. The antinomy of the moral worldview, that there is a moral consciousness and that there is none – or that the validity of duty is an otherworldly beyond of consciousness, and conversely that this validity only comes about in consciousness – was summarized in the representation of non-moral consciousness counting as moral, its contingent knowing and willing being accepted as sufficiently important, and in the idea of happiness being granted to it as a matter of grace. Moral self-consciousness did not put this self-contradictory representation onto itself; rather, it shifted it off into a being\textsuperscript{155} which, to itself, is other than itself. However, taking what it must think to be necessary and then positing it outside of itself is just as

\textsuperscript{154} Gedachte. \textsuperscript{155} Wesen.
much a contradiction according to the form as the former was a contradiction according to the content. However, because in itself it is what appears to be contradictory and within whose separation and its ever reoccurring dissolution the moral worldview meanders around, it is in itself the same pure duty as pure knowing. It is nothing but the self of consciousness, and the self of consciousness is being and actuality—likewise, what is supposed to be the other-worldly beyond of actual consciousness is nothing but pure thinking and therefore is in fact the self, so self-consciousness for us, or in itself, returns back into itself, and it knows that being\textsuperscript{156} to be itself and to be that in which the actual is at the same time pure knowing and pure duty. It itself is to itself what is fully valid in its contingency and which knows its immediate singular individuality as pure knowing and action, as true actuality and harmony.

633. This self of conscience, spirit immediately certain of itself as absolute truth and being, is the third self which has developed out of the third world of spirit and which in short order may be compared with those that preceded it. The totality or actuality which showed itself to be the truth of the ethical world is that of the self of the person; its existence consists in its being recognized. As the person is the substance-less self, so is the substance-less self’s existence likewise abstract actuality; the person counts as valid in fact immediately. The self is the immediately motionless point in the element of its being; that point is not detached from its universality, and the two are therefore not in movement and in relation to each other. Within that point, the universal is without any differentiation, and neither the content of the self nor the fulfillment of the self comes about in and through the self. – The second self is the world of cultural formation which has achieved its truth, or it is the spirit of estrangement which has given itself back to itself—absolute freedom. In this self, the former initial immediate unity of singular individuality and universality come undone from each other. The universal, which remains equally a pure spiritual essence, a being recognized, or universal will and knowing, is the object and content of the self and its universal actuality. However, it does not have the form of free-standing existence apart from the self; within this self, it thus is not brought to fulfillment, and it reaches no positive content, no world at all. Moral self-consciousness, to be sure, lets its universality go and be free-standing so that this universality becomes a nature of its own and moral self-consciousness equally holds fast to the universality’s being sublated within moral self-consciousness. However, it is only the dissembling game of shifting back and forth between

\textsuperscript{156} Wesen.
these two determinations. As conscience, it has within its certainty of itself the content for the formerly empty duty as well as for the empty law and the empty universal will. Because this self-certainty is equally the immediate, moral self-consciousness has existence itself.

634. Having arrived at this, its truth, moral self-consciousness therefore forsakes, or rather sublates instead the separation within itself out of which the dissemblance arose, the separation of the in-itself from the self, of pure duty as pure purpose from actuality as a nature and as a sensibility opposed to pure purpose. Having thus returned into itself, it is concrete moral spirit, which in the consciousness of pure duty does not give itself an empty standard which would be opposed to actual consciousness. Rather, pure duty, as well as the nature opposed to it, are both sublated moments. In its immediate unity, spirit is a moral essence actualizing itself, and its action is immediately a concrete moral shape.

635. A case calling for action is present, and it is an objective actuality for the knowing consciousness. As conscience, it knows the case in an immediately concrete manner, and at the same time the case is only as conscience knows it. Knowing is contingent insofar as it is something other than its object, but spirit certain of itself is no longer either such a contingent knowing or such a creation within itself of thoughts which themselves might differ from actuality. Rather, while the separation between the in-itself and the self has been sublated, the case is immediately within the sensuous-certainty of knowing as the case is in itself, and the case only is in itself in the way it is in this knowing. – Acting as actualization is thereby the pure form of willing. It is the mere reversal of actuality as a case which exists into an actuality which has been done, the conversion of the mere mode of objective knowing into the mode of knowing about actuality as something brought forth by consciousness. Just as sensuous-certainty is immediately incorporated, or rather is reversed, into the in-itself of spirit, this other reversal is also simple and unmediated; it is a transition through the pure concept without there being any alteration of content which would be determined by way of the interest of the consciousness which knows it. – Furthermore, conscience does not break up the circumstances of the case into a variety of duties. It does not conduct itself as the positive universal medium within which the many duties, each for itself, would acquire undisplaceable substantiality so that either no action could take place at all, because every concrete case contains opposition per se (and moral cases contain oppositions among duties), such that there would thus always be one aspect, one duty which

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would be *violated* in the determination of action – or, if action does take place, one of the conflicting duties would actually be violated. Conscience is instead the negative One, that is, the absolute self which erases all these diverse moral substances. It is simple action in accordance with duty, an action which does not fulfill just this or that duty but rather knows and does what is concretely right. Hence, in the first place conscience is moral *acting* as acting, into which the previous consciousness of morality, itself devoid of any deeds, has made its transition. – The concrete shape of the deed may be analyzed by different consciousnesses into a variety of properties, i.e., in this instance into a variety of moral relations, and these may be each expressed either as absolutely valid, as each must be if it is supposed to be a duty, or else as a matter up for comparison and testing. In simple moral action on the part of conscience, duties are buried so that all these individual essences are immediately *aborted*, and the kind of justificatory jiggling which undermines duty simply does not occur in the unwavering certainty of conscience.

636. In conscience there is just as little of the former uncertainty of consciousness, flickering here and there, which at one time posits so-called pure morality as external to itself and as residing in some other, holy being, and it then posits itself as the unholy being. At another point, it then again posits moral purity as residing within itself, and it then posits that the linkage of the sensuous to the moral resides in the other being. It disavows all the moral worldview’s stances and dissemblances in that it disavows the consciousness which takes duty and actuality to be contradictory. According to this latter stance, I act morally while I am conscious to myself of accomplishing only the pure duty and of *nothing else*, and this means, in effect, *while I do not act*. But while I actually do act, I am conscious to myself of an *other* of an actuality, which is there before me and of an actuality which I want to bring about, so I have a *determinate* end, and I fulfill a *determinate* duty; there is something *other* therein than the pure duty which was alone supposed to be kept in view. – On the other hand, conscience is the consciousness about what is going on when the moral consciousness expresses *pure duty* as the essence of its action [and] this pure purpose is dissemblance about the crux of the matter. This is so because the crux of the matter is this, that pure duty consists in the empty abstraction of pure thinking and that it has its reality and content only

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158 Wesen. 159 Wesen.
in a determinate actuality, the actuality of consciousness itself, not in the sense that is a thought-thing but rather in the sense that it is a singular individual. Conscience has its truth for itself in the immediate certainty of itself. This immediate concrete certainty of itself is the essence. If that self-certainty is considered according to the opposition of consciousness, then its own immediate singular individuality is the content of moral action, and the form of moral doing is this very self as pure movement, namely, as knowing, or as one’s own conviction.

638. If this knowing is given a closer look according to its unity and the meaning of its moments, then we see that moral consciousness took itself only to be the in-itself, or to be essence, but as conscience, it now grasps its being-for-itself, or its own self. – The contradiction of the moral worldview dissolves itself, i.e., the difference which lay at its basis shows itself to be no difference, and it converges into pure negativity. However, this is precisely the self, that is to say, a simple self which is as much pure knowing as it is knowing of itself as this singularly individual consciousness. This self thus constitutes the content of what was formerly the empty essence, for it is the actual, which no longer has the significance of being, within its own laws, a self-sufficient nature alien to the essence. As the negative, it is the difference of the pure essence, a content, indeed, the kind of content which is valid in and for itself.

639. Furthermore, as self-equal pure knowing, this self is the universal pure and simple, such that it is just this knowing as its own knowing, as conviction, which is duty. Duty is no longer the universal confronting the self. Rather, duty is known to have no validity when it is separated in that way. The law now exists for the sake of the self and not the other way around, not the self existing for the sake of the law. But for that reason law and duty do not signify being-for-itself alone. Rather, they also signify being-in-itself, for on account of its self-equality, this knowing is just the in-itself. In consciousness this in-itself separates itself from that former immediate unity with being-for-itself; facing off in that way, this in-itself is being, being for others. – Duty, as duty deserted by the self, is now known to be only a moment. It has sunken from meaning the absolute essence, to meaning only “being,” which is not the self, which is not for itself, and is thus a being for others. However, for that very reason, this being for others remains an essential moment because the self, as consciousness, constitutes the opposition between being-for-itself and being for an other, and now duty, in its immediate actuality, is no longer merely abstract pure consciousness.
640. This *being for others* is thus the substance existing-in-itself, differentiated from the self. Conscience has not abandoned pure duty, or the *abstract in-itself*; rather, pure duty is the essential moment in its conducting itself as *universality* towards others. Conscience is the common element of self-consciousnesses, and self-consciousness is the substance in which the deed has *stable existence* and *actuality*, the moment of *coming-to-be-recognized* by others. Moral self-consciousness does not have this moment of being recognized,\(^{160}\) of *pure consciousness* which *is there*,\(^{161}\) and as a result it is not acting self-consciousness, not actualizing self-consciousness. Its *in-itself* is, to itself, either the abstract *non-actual* essence, or it is *being* as an *actuality* which is not spiritual. However, the *existing actuality* of conscience is the kind of actuality that is a *self*, i.e., an existence conscious of itself, the spiritual element of coming-to-be-recognized. Hence, the doing is only the translation of its singular content into the *objective* element within which it is universal and is recognized, and it is just this, that the content is recognized, which makes the deed into an actuality. The action is recognized and thereby actual, because the existing actuality is immediately linked with conviction, or knowing, or because the knowing of its purpose is immediately the element of existence, universal recognition. This is so because the *essence* of the action, duty, consists in the *conviction* which conscience has about that duty; this conviction is precisely what is the *in-itself*; it is *universal self-consciousness in itself*, or *being-recognized*,\(^{162}\) and is thereby actuality. What is done out of the conviction of duty is therefore immediately the kind of deed which has stability and existence.\(^{163}\) Thus, there is no longer any idle chatter about good intentions not coming to pass, or about things going badly for the good man. Rather, what is known as duty is carried out completely and becomes actual precisely because what is dutiful is what is universal for all self-consciousnesses, is what is recognized and what is thus existent. But taken separately and alone, without the content of the self, this duty is *being for others*, is transparent and its meaning is only that of a vacuous essentiality as such.

641. If we look back to the sphere where *spiritual reality* first emerged, we see that its concept was there the expression of individuality as what was supposed to be the *in-and-for-itself*. However, the shape which immediately expressed this concept was the *honest consciousness* which set itself in pursuit of the *abstract crux of the matter*. This *crux of the matter* was there a predicate, but in conscience it is for the first time the *subject* which has posited all the moments of consciousness as residing in it and for which all of these

\(^{160}\) Anerkanntsins.  \(^{161}\) da ist.  \(^{162}\) Anerkanntssein.  \(^{163}\) Bestand und Dasein.
moments, namely, substantiality as such, external existence, and the essence of thinking, are contained in this certainty of itself. The *crux of the matter* has substantiality per se in ethical life, it has external existence in cultural formation, it has the self-knowing essentiality of thinking in morality, and in conscience it is the *subject* which in its own self knows these moments. However much the honest consciousness only grasps the *vacuous crux of the matter*, still conscience, in contrast, attains it in its fullness, something which conscience gives it by way of itself. Conscience is this power as a result of its knowing the moments of consciousness to be *moments*, and as their negative essence, it rules over them.

642. If conscience is regarded in relation to the singular determinations of the opposition which appears in acting and in relation to its consciousness about the nature of those determinations, then it conducts itself foremost as a *knower* vis-à-vis the *actuality* of the *case* in which action is to take place. Insofar as the moment of *universality* exists in this knowing, it is part and parcel of the knowing of conscientious action that it comprehensively grasp the actuality before it in an unrestricted manner and that it thus accurately knows the circumstances of the case and takes everything into consideration. However, since it is *acquainted* with universality as a *moment*, this knowing of these circumstances is thus the kind of knowing which is fully aware that it does not comprehensively grasp them, or it is aware that it is not therein conscientious. The genuinely universal and pure relation of knowing would be a relation to something *non-oppositional*, to itself. However, through the opposition which essentially lies within itself, *acting* relates itself to a negative of consciousness, to an actuality *existing in itself*. Vis-à-vis the simplicity of pure consciousness, the absolute *other*, or the multiplicity *in itself*, this actuality is an absolute plurality of circumstances which infinitely divides itself and spreads out backwards into its conditions, sideways into its juxtapositions, and forwards into its consequences. – The conscientious consciousness is fully aware of this nature of the crux of the matter and of its relation to it. It knows that it is not acquainted with the case in which it acts according to the terms of the universality demanded of it, and it knows that its pretense of conscientiously weighing all the circumstances is an empty matter. However, this acquaintance with and weighing of all the circumstances is not entirely absent; yet it is present only as a *moment*, as something which is only for *others*, and its incomplete knowing, because it is *its own* knowing, counts for it as sufficiently complete knowing.

643. It conducts itself in the same way with the universality of the *essence*, or with the determination of the content through pure
Consciousness – Conscience, striding forth into action, relates itself to the various aspects of the case. The case breaks up into separate elements, just as does the relation of pure consciousness to it, whereby the multiplicity of the case is a multiplicity of duties – Conscience knows that it has to choose among them and to decide, for none of them are absolute in their determinateness or in their content. Rather, only pure duty is absolute. However, in its reality, this abstractum has arrived at the point of signifying the self-conscious I. As conscience, spirit certain of itself is motionless within itself, and its real universality, or its duty, lies in its pure conviction of duty. This pure conviction as such is just as empty as pure duty; it is pure in the sense that there is nothing in it, that no determinate content is a duty. But action is supposed to occur, and it must be determined by the individual. Moreover, spirit certain of itself, in which the in-itself has arrived at the significance of the self-conscious I, knows that it has this determination, this content, in the immediate certainty of its own self. As determination and content, this certainty is natural consciousness, i.e., the impulses and inclinations. – Conscience cognizes no content as absolute for it because conscience is the absolute negativity of everything determinate. It makes its determination from itself alone, but the circle of the self into which determinateness as such falls is that of so-called sensibility, and in order to have a content provided by its immediate certainty of itself, it finds nothing else present but sensibility itself. – Everything which in previous shapes had exhibited itself as good or bad, or as law and right, is an other than the immediate certainty of itself. It is a universal which is now a being for an other, or, looked at otherwise, it is an object which, mediating consciousness with itself, comes between consciousness and its own truth and dissociates consciousness from itself instead of it, the object, being the immediacy of consciousness – However, to conscience, the certainty of itself is the pure immediate truth, and this truth is thus its immediate certainty of itself represented as content, i.e., the arbitrary free choice of the singular individual and the contingency of his unconscious natural being.

At the same time this content counts as moral essentiality, or as duty because, as was already shown in the testing of laws, pure duty is utterly indifferent to every content and is compatible with any content. Here moral essentiality has at the same time the essential form of being-for-itself, and this form of individual conviction is nothing but the consciousness of the emptiness of pure duty. The consciousness that this is only a moment, or that its substantiality is a predicate which finds its subject in the individual whose arbitrary free choice gives pure duty content, can tie every content to this form and can attach its conscientiousness to any
content. – An individual increases his property in a certain way. It is a duty that each should see to the maintenance of himself and his family, and it is no less a duty that he see to the possibility of his becoming useful to his neighbors and of doing good to all those who stand in need. The individual is aware that this is a duty, for this content is immediately contained in his certainty of himself; furthermore, he clearly sees that he has fulfilled his duty in this case. Others may hold that this particular way of fulfilling one’s duty is deceitful; they hold tight to a different aspect of the concrete case, but he holds tight to this aspect of the case as a result of his awareness that the increase of property is a pure and absolute duty. – In that way, what others call outrageous behavior and wrong-doing is here just fulfilling the duty of affirming one’s self-sufficiency with respect to others; what they call cowardice is here the duty of preserving one’s life and the possibility of being useful to one’s neighbors; what those others call courage instead violates both duties. However, cowardice need not be so inept as not to know that the maintenance of life and the possibility of being useful to others are duties — it need not be so inept as not to have the conviction of the dutifulness of its action and not to know that dutifulness consists in knowing; otherwise, it would be committing the clumsy mistake of being immoral. Because morality lies in the consciousness of having fulfilled one’s duty, this consciousness will not be lacking when the acting is called “cowardice” any more than when the acting is called “courage.” The abstractum called “duty” is capable of each and every content — it thus knows what it does as duty, and while it knows this, and knows that the conviction of duty is dutifulness itself, it is thus recognized by others. As a result, the action counts as valid and has actual existence.

645. Against this freedom, which inserts any kind of arbitrary content into the universal passive medium of pure duty and pure knowing, it is of no help to assert that another content ought instead to have been introduced at that point. This is so because whatever the content may be, each content bears the flaw of determinateness in itself, a flaw from which pure knowing is free; pure knowing can disdainfully scorn this determinateness as easily as it can incorporate each and every determinateness. Every content in this respect, being determinate, stands on the same footing with every other, even if it seems to have exactly the character of having sublated the particular within itself. It might seem that while in actual cases, duty per se estranges itself into opposition and, as a result, into the opposition of individuality and universality, the duty whose content is the universal itself immediately has, as a result, in its own self the nature of pure duty, and that therefore form and content are here completely adequate to each other such
that, e.g., acting for the common good is thus preferable to acting for the individual's good. Yet this universal duty, as the substance existing in and for itself, is that which is present as law and right and which is valid independently of the singular individual's knowing and conviction as well as his own immediate interest. It is thus that against whose form morality per se directs itself. However, as to what concerns its content, this too is something determinate to the extent that the common good is opposed to the singular individual. Thus, its law is one from which conscience knows itself to be utterly free, and it bestows on itself the absolute privilege to add, pare, and neglect, as well as to fulfill – Furthermore, according to the nature of the opposition itself, the former difference between duty versus the singular individual and duty versus the universal is thus not something fixed and final. Instead what the singular individual does for himself benefits the universal as well. The more he looks after himself, the more there is not only the greater possibility that he can be useful to others but rather his actuality itself consists only in his living and existing in interrelation with others. His individual gratification essentially signifies that he puts what is his own at the disposal of others and that he helps them to secure their own gratification. In the fulfillment of his duty to singular individuals and thus in the fulfillment of his duty to himself, the duty to the universal is also fulfilled. – Balancing and comparing duties, which would here make an entrance, would lead into calculating the advantage which would accrue to the universal from an action. However, morality would thereby in part fall prey to the necessary contingency of insight. In part, though, it is precisely the essence of conscience to cut itself off from this calculating and balancing of duties and to come to a decision solely on its own without relying on any reasons of that sort.

646. In this way conscience acts and sustains itself in the unity of its being-in-itself and its being-for-itself, in the unity of pure thinking and individuality, and it is spirit which is certain of itself which has its truth in its own self, inside its own self, within its knowing, and therein has its knowing of duty. As a result, it sustains itself therein, so that what is positive in the action, that is, which is the content as well as the form of duty and is the knowing of duty, is that which belongs to the self in the self's certainty of itself. However, whatever with its own in-itself wishes to face off against the self is what counts only as untrue, only as sublated, only as a moment. Hence, what counts is not universal knowing but rather conscience's acquaintance with the circumstances. It inserts into duty as universal being-in-itself.
the content that it takes out of its natural individuality, for the content is what is in its own self present. Through the universal medium in which it is, this content becomes the duty that it carries out, and the empty pure duty is precisely thereby posited as sublated, or posited as a moment. This content is its sublated emptiness, or the fulfillment. – But conscience is likewise free from every content; it absolves itself from every determinate duty which is supposed to be a law, and in the force of its certainty of itself, it has the majesty of absolute autarky, to bind and to undo. – This self-determination is immediately for that reason sheer dutifulness. Duty is knowing itself, but this simple selfhood is the in-itself, for this in-itself is pure self-equality, and this pure self-equality is within this consciousness.

647. This pure knowing is immediately being for others, for as pure self-equality, it is immediacy, or being. However, this being is at the same time the pure universal, the selfhood of All; or acting is recognized and hence is actual. This being is the element as a result of which conscience immediately stands in the relation of equality to every self-consciousness, and the meaning of this relation is not the selfless law, but that of the self of conscience.

648. That this right, what conscience does, is at the same time a being for others means that an inequality seems to have been introduced into conscience. The duty which it fulfills is a determinate content, and that content is indeed the self of consciousness, and in that respect, that content is its knowing of itself, its equality with itself. But when it is fulfilled, when it is placed into the universal medium of being, this equality is no longer knowing, is no longer this differentiating which just as immediately sublates its own differences. Rather, in being placed into [the sphere of] being, the difference is posited as stably existing, and the action is a determinate action, unequal to the element of everyone’s self-consciousness and thus is not necessarily recognized. Both sides, the acting conscience and the universal conscience, which is the consciousness that bestows recognition on this action as its duty, are equally free from the determinateness of this doing. On account of this freedom, the relation between the two within the common medium of their interrelation is instead a relationship of complete inequality through which consciousness, for which the action is, finds itself in complete uncertainty about the self-certain spirit which acts. This spirit acts, it posits a determinateness as existent. Others stick to this being as sticking to its truth, and in sticking to it, they are therein certain of this spirit. In that respect, this spirit has expressed what counts, to itself, as its

165 anerkennende.
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duty. Yet it is free from any determinate duty; it is beyond the point where
the others think it is actually supposed to be, and this medium of being
itself and of duty as existing in itself counts to it only as a moment. What
this spirit has thus placed before them, it has again also dissembled about,
or, instead, what it has done is to immediately dissemble, for its actuality is,
to itself, not this duty and this proposed determination. Rather, actuality
is what it has within its absolute certainty.

649. The others thus do not know whether this conscience is morally
good or evil; or instead, not only can they not know this, they must also
take it to be evil, for just as it is free from the determinateness of duty and
from duty as existing in itself, likewise so are they. What it proposes to
them, they know themselves to dissemble about it. It is the kind of thing
through which only the self of an other is expressed, not their own self. Not
only do they know themselves to be free from it, they must dissolve it in
their own consciousness, and, for the sake of sustaining their own selves,
they must nullify it through judging and explaining.

650. Yet conscience’s action is not only this determination of being which
is abandoned by the pure self. What is supposed to count and be recognized
as duty is what it is solely through the knowing and conviction that it is
duty, through the self’s knowing itself in the deed. If the deed ceases to have
this self in it itself, it ceases to be what alone is its essence. Abandoned by
this consciousness, its existence would be an ordinary, common actuality,
and the action would appear to us as a way of achieving one’s pleasure and
desire. What ought to be there is here essentiality alone as a result of its
being known as individuality’s giving voice to itself. This being-known is
what is recognized and is what as such that is recognized is supposed to have
existence.

651. The self enters into existence as a self. The spirit certain of itself exists
as such for others. It is not immediate action which is valid and actual; what
is recognized is not the determinate, not the existent-in-itself; rather, it is
solely the self knowing itself as such a self. The element of stable existence
is universal self-consciousness. What enters into this element cannot be
the effect of the action; the effect does not endure there and acquires no
lastingness. Rather, it is only self-consciousness that is what is recognized
and which achieves actuality.

652. Here again we see language as the existence of spirit. Language
is self-consciousness existing for others. It is self-consciousness which as
such is immediately present, and as this self-consciousness, it is universal.

166 Medium des Seins selbst. 167 da sein. 168 vorhanden: “at hand,” or “available.”
Language is the self severing itself from itself, the self which, as the I = I, becomes objective to itself, in this objectivity likewise sustaining itself as this self, coalescing with others, and which is their self-consciousness. The self interrogates itself just as it is interrogated by others, and this interrogation is just existence which has become a self.

653. The content that language has acquired here is no longer the inverted and inverting, disrupted self of the world of cultural formation. Rather, it is spirit which has returned into itself, is certain of itself, certain within itself of its truth, or certain of its recognition and certain as the spirit which is recognized as this knowing. The language of ethical spirit is the law, the simple commandment, and it is the lament, which is more that of shedding a tear over necessity. Moral consciousness conversely is still mute, remains shut off and at odds with itself within its own interiority, for as yet the self does not have any existence within that interiority. Rather, existence and the self initially stand in an external relation to each other. However, language emerges as the mediating middle between self-sufficient and recognized self-consciousnesses, and the existing self is immediately universal, multifaceted, and, within this multifacetedness, it is simple recognition. The content of conscience’s language is the self knowing itself as essence. This alone is that to which it gives voice, and this giving voice is the true actuality of the doing, is the validity of the action. Consciousness gives voice to its conviction, and this conviction is that solely within which the action is a duty. It also solely counts as duty as a result of its having given voice to the conviction, for universal self-consciousness is free from action that is only existent determinate action. To itself, the action as existence counts for nothing. Rather, what counts is the conviction that the action is a duty, and this is actual in language. – To realize the action does not mean here that one translates its content from the form of a purpose, or from being-for-itself, into the form of abstract actuality. What it means is that one translates it from the form of immediate certainty of itself which knows its own knowing, or its being-for-itself, as the essence, into the form of an assurance that consciousness has a conviction about its duty, and that as conscience, duty knows from its own self what duty is. This assurance thus assures that consciousness is convinced that its conviction is the essence.

654. Whether the assurance that it acts from conviction of duty is true, or whether it actually is duty that is done — these questions or doubts have no meaning when they are directed against conscience. – To ask whether

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169 bei sich in seinem Innern. 170 Anerkanntsein. 171 aus sich selbst.
the assurance is true would presuppose that the inner intention could be different from the one put forward, i.e., that the willing of the singular self could be separated from the duty, from the willing of the universal and pure consciousness. The latter could be put into words, but it is the former which would be the true motive of the action. But this difference between universal consciousness and the singular self is just what has been sublated, and whose sublation just is conscience. The immediate knowing of the self which is certain of itself is law and duty; its intention, as a result of being its own intention, is what is right, and the only requirement is that it should both know this and state its conviction that its knowing and willing are right. Giving voice to this assurance sublates the form of its particularity, and it therein recognizes the necessary universality of the self. While it calls itself conscience, it calls itself pure self-knowing and pure abstract will, i.e., it calls itself the universal knowing and willing which bestows recognition on others and which is equal to them, for they too are just this pure self-knowing and willing and for that reason, it is also recognized by them. In the willing of the self certain of itself, in this knowing that the self is the essence, lies the essence of the right. – Whoever therefore says that he is acting from conscience is speaking the truth, for his conscience is the knowing and willing self. However, it is essential that he should say this, for this self must at the same time be a universal self. It is not universal in the content of the action, for this content is on account of its determinateness in itself indifferent. Rather, the universality lies in the form of the action, and it is this form which is to be posited as actual. It is the self which as such a self is actual in language, which testifies to itself being the true, and which just in doing so recognizes all other selves and is recognized by them.

655. Therefore, conscience, in the majesty of its sublimity rising above determinate law and every content of duty, puts any content it likes into its knowing and willing. Conscience is the moral genius who knows the inner voice of his immediate knowing to be the divine voice, and as he is in this knowing, he just as immediately knows existence, he is the divine creative power who has the vitality of life within its concept. He equally conducts a worship service within himself, for his action is the intuiting of his own divinity.

656. This solitary worship service is at the same time essentially the worship service of a religious community, and pure inward self-knowing and pure inward self-interrogation advance into becoming moments of consciousness. The intuition of itself is its objective existence, and this objective element is the declaring of its knowing and willing as a universal. Through this declaring, the self becomes what is established and valid, and the action becomes
the executive deed. The actuality and stable existence of its doing is universal self-consciousness, but the declaration of conscience posits the certainty of itself as the pure self and, as a result, as the universal self. Others allow the action to count as valid on account of this speech within which the self is expressed and is recognized as the essence. The spirit and the substance of their bond is thus the reciprocal assurance of both their mutual conscientiousness and their good intentions; it is the rejoicing over this reciprocal purity, the refreshment received from the glory of knowing, declaring, fostering, and cherishing such excellence. – Insofar as this conscience still differentiates its abstract consciousness from its self-consciousness, it has only a hidden life in God. God is, to be sure, immediately current to its spirit and its heart, to its own self, but what is revealed, namely, its actual consciousness and the mediating movement of this consciousness, is, to itself, something other than the hidden inwardness and the immediacy of the essence which is at the current moment. Yet in the consummation of conscience the difference between its abstract consciousness and its self-consciousness sublates itself. It knows that abstract consciousness is just this self, this its being-for-itself certain of itself, that in the immediacy of the relation of the self to the in-itself, which, posited as external to the self, is the abstract essence and is hidden from the self, the diversity of this is sublated. This is so because that relation is a mediating relation in which the items which are related are not one and the same, but rather, each is an other for each other, and it is only within some third [term] that each is at one with the other. However, the immediate relation in fact means nothing other than the unity. Consciousness, risen above the unthinking mode that holds these differences which are themselves no differences at all nonetheless to be differences, knows the immediacy of the presence of the essence within itself to be the unity of the essence and its own self; it knows its own self therefore to be the living in-itself; and it knows this, its knowing, to be the religion that, as intuited or existent knowing, is the speaking of the religious community about its spirit.

With that, we see self-consciousness returned back into what is innermost to itself, for which all externality as such has vanished – it has returned into the intuition of the “I = I,” within which this I is all essentiality and existence. It is immersed within this conception of itself, for it has been driven to the apex of its extremes, indeed in such a way that the differentiated moments through which it is real, or is still consciousness, are not only for us as these pure extremes but rather are what it is for itself, and what is in itself to itself, and what is existence to itself, all of which have evaporated into abstractions that no longer either have any hold on
this consciousness itself nor any substance for it. Everything which hitherto had been the essence for consciousness has receded into these abstractions. – Refined into this purity, consciousness is in its poorest shape, and this poverty, which constitutes its sole possession, is in itself a disappearing. This absolute certainty in which substance has been dissolved is the absolute untruth which collapses into itself. It is absolute self-consciousness within which consciousness is swallowed up.

658. Taken as this submersion of consciousness inside of itself, the substance existing-in-itself is, for consciousness, knowing as its knowing. As consciousness, it is separated into the opposition between itself and the object, an opposition which, to itself, is the essence. But this object is precisely what is completely transparent, it is its own self, and its consciousness is only the knowing of itself. All life and all spiritual essentiality have receded into this self and have lost their diversity from the I-self. The moments of consciousness are therefore these extreme abstractions, neither of which holds its ground but each of which loses itself in the other and generates the other. It is the flux of the unhappy consciousness with itself, but which takes place this time inside itself, so that this time it is conscious of being the concept of reason, something which the unhappy consciousness was only in itself. Thus, a consciousness, absolute certainty of itself is immediately turned around into a fading tone, into the objectivity of its being-for-itself, but this created world is its speech, which it has just as immediately heard and whose echo is all that returns to it. That the echo returns to it does not thus mean that consciousness is therein and for itself, for the essence is, to itself, no in-itself but rather just itself. Nor does it have existence, for what is objective does not arrive at being a negative of the actual self, just as this self does not arrive at actuality. It lacks the force to relinquish itself, lacks the force to make itself into a thing and to sustain being. It lives with the anxiety that it will stain the splendor of its innerness through action and existence. Thus, to preserve the purity of its heart, it flees from contact with actuality, and it steadfastly perseveres in its obstinate powerlessness to renounce its own self, a self which has been tapered to the final point of abstraction. It stably exists in its powerlessness to give itself substantiality, or to transform its thinking into being and to entrust itself to absolute difference. The hollow object which it generates to itself it thus now fills only with the consciousness of emptiness. It is a yearning which only loses itself as it becomes an essenceless object, and as it goes beyond this loss and then falls back on itself, it only finds itself as lost. – In this transparent purity of its moments it becomes an unhappy,
so-called *beautiful soul*, and its burning embers gradually die out, and, as they do, the beautiful soul vanishes like a shapeless vapor dissolving into thin air.

659. This silent coalescence of the feeble essentialities of evaporated life is, however, still to be taken in the other meaning of the *actuality* of conscience and in the *appearance* of its movement, and conscience is to be examined as acting. – In the preceding, the *objective* moment in this consciousness determined itself as universal consciousness, and the knowing which knows itself as *this* self was differentiated from other selves. The language in which all of them mutually recognize each other as acting conscientiously, this universal equality, falls apart into the inequality of singular being-for-itself, and each consciousness is equally reflected out of its universality and utterly into itself. Through this, the opposition of singular individuality vis-à-vis other individuals and vis-à-vis the universal necessarily makes its entrance, and it is this relationship and its movement which is now to be examined. – Or this universality and duty has the utterly opposed meaning of determinate *singular individuality* exempting itself from the universal, for which pure duty is only the universality which has made its appearance on the *surface* and which has turned back outwards. Duty is only a matter of words and counts as a being for others. Conscience, initially directed only negatively towards duty as this determinate, present duty, knows itself to be free from it, but while conscience fills empty duty with a determinate content taken from its own self, it has the positive consciousness that it, as *this* self, makes itself its own content. As empty knowing, its pure self is without content and without determination. The content which it gives to its self is taken from its own self as this determinate self, or from itself as a natural individuality, and in speaking of the conscientiousness of its action, it is indeed conscious of its pure self, but in the purpose of its action as actual content of the action, it is conscious of itself as this singular individual and of the opposition between that which it is for itself and what it is for others, conscious of the opposition between universality, or duty, and consciousness of its being reflected from out of universality.

660. However much the opposition into which conscience enters when it *acts*, expressing it within its innerness, still it is also at the same time the inequality directed outwards in the element of its existence, the inequality of its particular singularity vis-à-vis other singular individuals. – Its particularity consists therein, that both moments constituting its consciousness, the self and the in-itself, each count as having unequal value; that certainty of itself is the essence *vis-à-vis the in-itself* or *vis-à-vis the universal*, which only counts as a moment. Confronting this inward determination is thus
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the element of existence or the universal consciousness, to which universality, duty, is instead the essence; in contrast, singular individuality, which is for itself vis-à-vis the universal, only counts as a sublated moment. To this adherence to duty [the universal consciousness], the first consciousness counts as evil because it is the inequality between its inwardly-turned-being and the universal, and while the latter at the same time also pronounces its doing as equality with itself, as duty and conscientiousness, to the universal consciousness it counts as hypocrisy.

661. The movement of this latter opposition is initially the formal establishment of equality between what evil is within itself and what it pronounces; it must come to light that it is evil and thus that its existence is equal to its essence. The hypocrisy must be unmasked. – This return of inequality, which is present within hypocrisy, into equality is not something which has already taken place, so that hypocrisy, as people commonly say, as a result demonstrates its respect for both duty and virtue by seeming to be both of them and then using that semblance as a mask to hide itself from its own consciousness no less than from the consciousness of others, and in which recognition of the opposition would in itself contain the equality and agreement of the two. – Yet at the same time, hypocrisy is just as much beyond this verbal recognition and is reflected into itself; and in using the existent-in-itself only as being for others, hypocrisy’s own contempt for what exists-in-itself and the exhibition of its total lack of essence is there for all to see. For what lets itself be used as an external instrument shows itself as a thing which has within itself no proper weight of its own.

662. This equality is also brought about neither by the evil consciousness in its one-sided insistence on itself nor by the judgment of the universal. – However much the former denies itself vis-à-vis the consciousness of duty, and however much it asserts that what the latter pronounces to be wickedness, absolute inequality with the universal, is instead as an action according to inner law and conscience, still there remains in this one-sided assurance of equality its inequality with the other, for this other neither believes his assurance nor does it give it any recognition. Or, since the one-sided insistence on one extreme dissolves itself, evil would as a result confess to being evil, but in so doing would immediately sublate itself and thus would not be hypocrisy, nor would it have unmasked itself as such hypocrisy. It in fact confesses to being evil through its assertion that it acts according to its own inner law and conscience in opposition to what is recognized as universal. If this law and conscience were not the law of its singular

\(^{373}\) Wesenlosigkeit.
individuality and its own arbitrary free choice, then it would not be something inward, not be something its own, but instead be what is universally recognized. Whoever for that reason says that he acts with regard to others according to his own law and his own conscience is saying in fact that he is mistreating them. However, actual conscience is not this insistence on knowing and willing which opposes itself to the universal; rather, the universal is the element of its existence, and its language pronounces its doing as a recognized duty.

663. The insistence on the part of the universal consciousness that it make its own judgment is even less so the unmasking and dissolution of hypocrisy. – While universal consciousness proclaims hypocrisy to be bad, vile, etc., in making such a judgment, it appeals to its own law just as the evil consciousness appealed to its own law. This is so because the former law comes on the scene in opposition to the latter, and as a result it comes on the scene as a particular law. It therefore has no advantage over the other law; on the contrary, it legitimizes this other law, and in its zeal, it does exactly the opposite of what it intends to do – which is to say that it shows that what it called true duty and which is supposed to be universally recognized, is what is not universally recognized, and thereby it concedes to the other an equal right of being-for-itself.

664. However, this judging has at the same time another aspect to it by which it becomes the introduction to the dissolution of the present opposition. – Consciousness of the universal does not conduct itself as actual and as acting with regard to the first consciousness – for this latter is instead the actual – but rather it conducts itself in opposition to the first consciousness, as what is not caught in the opposition of individuality and universality. It remains within the universality of thinking, conducts itself as interpreting, and its first action is only that of judgment. Through this judgment, it now places itself, as was just noted, alongside the first consciousness, and through this equality, the latter comes to an intuition of itself in this other consciousness. This is so because the consciousness of duty conducts itself as apprehending, passive consciousness, and it is thereby in contradiction with itself as the absolute willing of duty, and in contradiction with itself as that which determines itself quite simply by its own self. It preserves itself well in its purity, for it does not act; it is the hypocrisy which wants to know that its judging is to be taken as the actual deed and which, instead of proving its uprightness in action, proves it by means of speaking about its splendid dispositions. It is thus constituted in entirely the same way as is the

\[\text{auffassendes.}\]
one that is reproached for taking its duty to consist in its talking about its
duty. In both of them, the aspect of actuality is equally distinguished from
that of speech; in one, through the self-interested ends of action, and in the
other, through the lack of action at all, action of which the necessity lies in
talking about duty itself, for duty without deeds has no meaning at all.

However, judging is also to be regarded as a positive action on the
part of thought, and it has a positive content, and through this aspect, the
contradiction which is present in the apprehending consciousness and its
equality with the first consciousness become even more complete. – The
acting consciousness pronounces its determinate doing to be duty, and the
judgmental consciousness cannot deny it this, for duty itself is the form
capable of all content, contentless form – or, it is concrete action which
is in its own self diverse in its many-sidedness. It has both the universal
aspect, which is the aspect taken as duty, and just as much in it as the par-
ticular aspect, which constitutes the individual’s share and interest. Now,
the judging consciousness stops short neither at the former aspect of duty
nor the agent’s knowing that this is his duty, the relationship and the stand-
ing of his actuality. Rather, it holds on to the other aspect, spins the action
off into the inward realm, and explains the action according to an intention
and a self-serving motive which is different from the action itself. As every
action is capable of being considered from the point of view of dutifulness,
equally so can every action be considered from the point of view of particu-
larity, for as an action it is the actuality of an individual. – This assessment
thus puts the action outside of its existence and reflects it into the inner, or
into the form of its own particularity. If the action is accompanied by fame,
then it knows this inwardness to be a craving for fame. – If the action is
wholly in conformity with the social estate of the individual, if it does not
go beyond that status, and if this individuality’s social estate is not an exter-
nal determination tacked onto him but is the very conduit by which this
universalty fills itself out, and if as a result the individuality shows himself
to be fitting for an even higher social estate, then the judgment knows his
inwardness as ambition for honor, and so forth. While in the action itself,
the agent achieves an intuition of himself in [the realm of] objectivity, or
he arrives at a feeling for his own self in his existence and thus obtains
gratification, the judgment knows his inwardness to be a drive towards his
own happiness, even if this happiness were to consist only in inner moral
vanity, in the enjoyment of a consciousness of his own excellence, and in
the foretaste of a hope for a future happiness. – No action can escape being
judged in such a way, for duty for duty’s sake, this pure purpose, is the
non-actual. It has its actuality in what individuality does, and as a result,
the action has the aspect of particularity in itself. – No man is a hero to his valet, but not because that man is not a hero, but rather because the latter is – a valet, a person with whom the hero deals not as a hero but as someone who eats, drinks, gets dressed, in general in the singularity of the hero’s needs and ideas. For that kind of judgmental assessment, there is no action for which such judgmental assessment cannot oppose the aspect of the singularity of individuality to the action’s universal aspect, and there is no action in which it cannot play the part of the moral valet towards the actor.

666. The judging consciousness is itself thereby base because it divides up the action, and it both brings out and holds onto the action’s inequality with itself. Furthermore, it is hypocrisy because he pretends that such judgment is not only another manner of being evil but is rather itself the rightful consciousness of action. In his non-actuality and in the vanity he has in being such a faultfinder, he places himself far above the deeds it excoriates, and he wants to know that his speech, which is utterly devoid of any deeds, is to be taken as a superior actuality. – In thereby making himself equal to the agent about whom it is so judgmental, the judging consciousness is thus known by that consciousness to be the same as himself. The latter consciousness not only finds himself to have been taken by the former, the judging consciousness, as somebody alien and unequal to him, but rather instead finds that the judging consciousness, according to his own constitution, is equal to himself. Intuiting this equality and giving voice to it, he confesses this to the other, and he equally expects that the other, just as he has in fact placed himself on an equal plane to him, will reciprocate his speech and in that speech will pronounce their equality so that recognitional existence will make its appearance. His confession is not an abasement, nor a humiliation, nor is it a matter of his casting himself aside in his relationship with the other, for this declaration is not something one-sided through which he would posit his inequality with the other, but rather it is solely on account of the intuition of his equality with the other that he gives voice to himself, that in his confessions he gives voice on his own part to their equality, and he does this because language is the existence of spirit as the immediate self. He thus expects that the other will contribute his own part to this existence.

667. But following on the admission of the one who is evil – I am he – there is no reciprocation of an equal confession. This was not what was

175 Vorstellung. 176 Gut- und Besserwissens. 177 erkannt.
178 anerkennende Dasein.
meant by the judgment, no, quite the contrary! The judging conscious-
ess repels this community from itself and is the hard heart which is for
itself and which rejects any continuity with the other. – The scene is hereby
reversed. The one who confessed sees himself repulsed and sees the other as
in the wrong, sees the other as somebody who refuses his own inwardness
making the step into the existence of speech and as somebody who con-
trasts the beauty of his own soul to the soul of the one who is evil. He sees
the judging consciousness as somebody who sets his own stiff-necked self-
consistent character in opposition to the confessing consciousness, and he
sees the utter silence of someone who keeps himself locked up within him-
self, who refuses to be cast aside vis-à-vis an other. What is posited here
is the highest indignation of the spirit certain of itself, for, as this simple
knowing of the self, this spirit intuits itself in others, namely, it does so in
such a way that the external shape of this other is not, as it was in material
wealth, the essenceless itself, not a thing. On the contrary, it is thought,
knowing itself which is contrasted with that spirit; it is this absolutely fluid
continuity of pure knowing which refuses to put itself into communication
with him – with him, who in his confession had already renounced his sepa-
rate being-for-itself and had posited himself as sublated particularity and
thereby posited himself in continuity with the other, posited himself as the
universal. But the other retains in its own self its non-communicative being-
for-itself; in the one confessing, it retains just the same non-communicative
being-for-itself, which the latter has already cast off. In that way, the hard
heart shows itself to be the consciousness forsaken by spirit, the conscious-
ness denying spirit, for it does not recognize\(^\text{179}\) that in its absolute certain-
ity of itself, spirit has a mastery over every deed and over all actuality, and that
spirit can discard them and make them into something that never hap-
penned. At the same time, the hard heart does not recognize\(^\text{180}\) the contra-
diction it commits when it does not let the discarding that took place in
speech be the true discarding, whereas it itself has the certainty of its spirit
not in an actual action but in its innerness and has its existence in the
speech in which its judgment is phrased. It is therefore just the hard heart
itself which is putting obstacles in the way of the other’s return from the
deed into the spiritual existence of speech and into the equality of spirit,
and through its hardness of heart, it engenders the inequality which is still
present.

668. Inasmuch as the self-certain spirit as a beautiful soul does not now
possess the force to relinquish\(^\text{181}\) itself of the self-knowing holding onto
itself, it cannot arrive at an equality with the consciousness it has repulsed, 
and thus it cannot arrive at the intuited unity of itself in an other, and 
it cannot arrive at existence. Hence, the equality comes about only nega-
tively, as a spirit-less being. The beautiful soul, lacking all actuality, caught 
in the contradiction between its pure self and its necessity to empty itself 
into being and to turn itself around into actuality, in the immediacy of 
this opposition to which it adheres – in an immediacy which is alone the 
mediating middle and the reconciliation of an opposition which has been 
intensively raised to the point of its pure abstraction, and which is itself 
pure being or empty nothingness – is thus, as the consciousness of this 
contradiction in its unreconciled immediacy, shattered into madness and 
melts into a yearning, tubercular consumption. It thereby in fact gives up 
its severe adherence to its being-for-itself but engenders only the spiritless 
unity of being.

669. The true, namely, the self-conscious and existing conciliation,\textsuperscript{182} is 
according to its necessity already contained in the preceding. The breaking 
of the hard heart and its elevation to universality is the same movement 
which was expressed in the consciousness that confessed. The wounds of 
the spirit heal and leave no scars behind; it is not the deed which is imper-
ishable, but rather the deed is repossessed by spirit into itself; the aspect of 
singular individuality, whether present in the deed as intention or as exist-
ing negativity and limitation to the deed is what immediately vanishes. The 
actualizing self, the form of its action, is only a moment of the whole, and is 
equally the knowing which through judgment determines and assigns the 
difference between the singular and the universal aspects of action. The for-
mer evil consciousness posits this relinquishing of itself, or posits itself as a 
moment enticed into a confessional existence through the intuition of itself 
in an other. However, to this other, the latter consciousness, its one-sided, 
unrecognized judgment must break, just as to the former, its one-sided, 
unrecognized existence of particular being-for-itself has to break. As the 
former exhibits the power of spirit over its actuality, the latter exhibits the 
power of spirit over its determinate concept.

670. However, the latter renounces the divisive thought and the rigidity 
of its being-for-itself holding fast to itself for the reason that it in fact intuits 
itself in the first agent. This first subject, which casts its actuality aside, 
makes itself into a sublated This,\textsuperscript{183} and as a result exhibits itself in fact as 
universal. It turns out of its external actuality back into itself as essence, and 
the universal consciousness thus cognizes itself therein. – The forgiveness

\textsuperscript{182} Ausgleichung. \textsuperscript{183} aufgehobenen Diesen.
it extends to the first is the renunciation of itself, of its non-actual essence, 
an essence which it equates with this other consciousness which was actual 
action, and it bestows recognition as good on what thought had determined 
acting to be, namely, evil; or, instead, it lets go of this difference between 
determinate thought and its determining judgment existing-for-itself, just 
as the other lets go of its own, existing-for-itself, determining of action. – 
The word of reconciliation is the existing spirit which immediately intuits 
in its opposite the pure knowing of itself as the universal essence, intuits 
it in the pure knowing of itself as singular individuality existing absolutely 
inwardly\textsuperscript{184} – a reciprocal recognition which is absolute spirit. 

671. Absolute spirit comes into existence only at the point where its pure 
knowing of itself is the opposition and flux of itself with itself. Knowing 
that its pure knowing is the abstract essence, it is this duty knowingly\textsuperscript{185} in 
absolute opposition to the knowing that knows itself, as the absolute singular individuality of the self, as the essence. The former is the pure con-
tinuity of the universal which knows singular individuality knowing itself 
as the essence as nullity in itself, as evil. However, the latter is the absolute 
discretion which knows itself absolutely in its pure oneness, and it knows 
the universal as the non-actual and as what is only for others. Both aspects 
are refined into this purity within which, in the aspects themselves, there 
is no longer existence devoid of self, no longer the negative of conscious-
ness, but rather within which that former duty is the self-consistent char-
acter of its knowing-of-itself. This evil has its purpose just as much in its 
inwardly-turned-being\textsuperscript{186} and its actuality in its speech. The content of this 
speech is the substance of its stable existence; the speech is the assurance 
of spirit’s certainty in its inward turn. – Each of these self-certain spirits 
has no other end than its pure self and has no other reality and existence 
other than just this pure self. However, they are still different, and the dif-
ference is absolute because it is posited as lying in this element of the pure 
concept. The difference is also absolute not only for us but also for the 
concepts themselves which stand in this opposition. For these concepts are 
indeed determinate against each other, but at the same time they are in 
themselves universal such that they fill out the whole range of the self, and 
this self has no other content than this, its own determinateness, a deter-
mminateness which neither goes beyond the self nor is more restricted than 
it, for one of them, namely, the absolutely universal, is just as much pure 
self-knowing as is the other, the absolute discretion of singular individual-
ity, and both are only this pure self-knowing. Both determinatenesses are

\textsuperscript{184} der absolut in sich seienenden Einzelheit. \textsuperscript{185} wissende Pflicht. \textsuperscript{186} In-sich-sein.
thus the pure, knowing concepts whose determinateness itself is immediately knowing, or whose *relationship* and opposition is the I. *For-each-other*, they are thereby these utter opposites. It is the completely *inner* which has entered into confrontation with itself and has entered into existence. They constitute *pure knowing*, which, through this opposition, is posited as *consciousness*. But it is still not yet *self-consciousness*. It has its actualization in this opposition’s movement, for this opposition is instead itself the *indiscrete continuity* and *equality* of the “I = I.” Each of the I’s, *for itself* just through the contradiction of its pure universality which at the same time strives against its *equality* with the other and separates itself from it, sublates itself in its own self. Through this relinquishing, this knowing, which is estranged in its own existence, returns back into the unity of the *self*. It is the *actual* I, the universal *self*-knowing in its *absolute opposite*, in the existing knowing that has *taken the inward turn*, which, according to the purity of its separated inwardly-turned-being, is itself the completed universal. The reconciling *yes*, in which both I’s let go of their opposed *existence*, is the existence of the I extended into two-ness, which therein remains the same as itself and which has the certainty of itself in its complete self-relinquishing and in its opposite. – It is the God that appears in the midst of those who know themselves as pure knowing.

187 wissenden. 188 Entäußerung. 189 sich gleich bleibt. 190 der erscheinende Gott.