

## HEGEL'S SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF BEING

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### *I. Introduction*

The purpose of this paper is to explain Hegel's solution to the most fundamental problem of traditional metaphysics - how Being is absolute in its nature and also relative in its determinations. Two types of traditional approaches had been utilized to resolve the problem of Being: via immanence and via transcendence. Hegel was familiar with Spinoza's approach through immanence by which relative determinations (i.e., modes) are reducible to an Absolute Substance in which they subsist. Hegel was also cognizant of Kant's approach through transcendence by which the absolute is posited as the Unconditioned condition for relative determinations and remains unknowable through consciousness. In other words, one approach joins the relative determinations of being to their Absolute; while the other approach separates Absolute Being from relative being. This paper contends that Hegel's approach to the problem of Being encompasses both these previous approaches in order to provide a final solution to the problem.

These two basic approaches have different advantages and disadvantages to them. The advantage of the approach through immanence is that it explains fully the relationship of the relative determinations of being to their absolute. This relationship must ultimately be some kind of identity or self-identity. However, the approach through immanence collapses the distinction between the absolute and its relative determinations in the process of delineating their relationship. The disappearance of this vital distinction constitutes the disadvantage of the approach through immanence. The advantage of the approach through transcendence is the emphasis which it places upon the *distinction* between the Absolute and its relative determinations. The disadvantage of this approach is its failure to explain adequately the *relationship* between Absolute Being and relative being. Consequently, the strands and weaknesses of each of the

approaches complement each other. Hegel's approach to the problem of Being will incorporate the strengths of the approach through immanence and of the approach through transcendence; while it also avoids the weaknesses in each of these traditional approaches. Since it is without apparent contradiction or "inherent inconsistency", Hegel's "immanence-transcendence" approach constitutes a final solution to the problem of Being.

Hegel's solution may be judged in terms of how well it analyzes both the relationship and the distinction between Absolute Being and relative being. More precisely, it may be evaluated in accordance with its ability to delineate the relationship between Absolute Being and relative being while it still preserves their distinction. Hegel's approach to the problem of Being is simply more balanced than the approaches of his predecessors. Insofar as the Absolute and its relative determinations remain "in balance" with each other through their relationship to one another, and in their distinction from each other, Hegel's approach will be able to resolve the problem of Being.

## *II. Hegel's Concept of Absolute Spirit*

Absolute Being in its process of Becoming is Absolute Spirit. Absolute Spirit is the most universal dimension of reality. It is that which constitutes the process of reality. It expresses itself in different forms (i.e., God, Nature, and Man). It may be understood in its different manifestations (i.e. logical, objective, and subjective). It may be articulated through different cultural activities (i.e., art, religion, and philosophy). What permeates all existent being; what is the subject-matter for serious study; and what results when reason expresses itself through man's creative works - is Spirit. To understand reality as a creative process is to comprehend the development of Spirit.

Absolute Spirit is the *content* of Absolute Being; the Absolute Idea is the *categoreal form* of Absolute Spirit; Absolute Knowledge is the *relationship* between Absolute Spirit and the Absolute Idea. Thus, the three main aspects of Hegel's conception of Absolute Being are: Spirit, Idea, and Knowledge. When these three concepts of Absolute Being are fully explicated, then the problem of Being will be solved. Any analysis of these different conceptions of Absolute Being must be performed without losing sight of the problem under consideration. The concept of Absolute Spirit will be considered first.

## A. Absolute Spirit as Dialectic between Substance and Subject

Spirit may be understood as the movement between Substance and Subject. As living substance, Spirit also become truly subject. As subject it is pure and simple negativity - through the process of reinstating self-identity, whereby it reflects into its own self in and from its other. Spirit is the process of its own becoming; it is a circle which presupposes its end as its purpose or has its end for its beginning; it becomes concrete and actual only by being carried out.<sup>1</sup> The carrying out of this process constitutes the dialectical activity of Spirit in terms of its three moments of Substance, Subject, and Spirit. Substance is the positive or positing moment, Subject is the negative or opposing moment, and Spirit is the unifying moment in the *dialectic* of Absolute Spirit. Spirit is the *re-uniting* factor in the synthesis of substance and Subject. Absolute Spirit's dialectic culminates in this *unifying* activity. Before it culminates, Spirit constitutes its relative determinations as part of its dialectical activity. These determinations are opposed in the second moment as other to the initial positing moment. These relative determinations are then preserved in the third moment when Spirit is reflected into itself.

The dialectical movement of Absolute Spirit constitutes the relative determinations of being. This dialectical activity of Spirit is *immanent* because it takes place through a relationship of *identity* between Substance and Subject. This relationship of identity then passes into self-identity. This self-identity is to be understood as a type of self-relation. Before Spirit becomes self-related, it constitutes relative being in the second moment of its process of Becoming.

In the dialectic of Substance and Subject, Spirit constitutes the relative determinations of being. One side of the distinction between Absolute Being and relative being has been accounted for - namely, the relative determinations of being. Through its relationship of identity Spirit constitutes the relative determinations of being and is *immanent* within them. Now, the other side of the distinction - the Absolute - must be considered. What makes Spirit Absolute? What enables it *to ground* that which it constitutes as relative to itself?

## B. Absolute Spirit qua Absolute

What grounds the dialectical activity of Spirit and determines it as Absolute? The dialectical activity of Spirit is in fact a self-grounding process. Its truth is its whole process of devel-

opment.<sup>2</sup> Spirit comes to the realization of its nature and purpose only at the end of its process. The end is also the same as the beginning because it is merely the beginning having returned upon itself in self-relating identity and simplicity. Absolute Spirit *qua* absolute is the *result* of its process of dialectical development. The absoluteness of Absolute Spirit is teleological in the sense that it constitutes the *purpose* of the dialectical activity of Spirit. The final end of Spirit is the same as its beginning with the important difference that the end represents the fully manifested Spirit. In its beginning Spirit is immediate and simple in its being. At the end of its development it is mediated and still simple. The only difference between Spirit in its beginning and at its end is its dialectical development. Hence, dialectical activity is grounded in Spirit and *not* vice versa. Dialectic is the means of manner of Spirit's development. Spirit is dependent upon it for the purpose of its self-actualization. However, this dependence does not ground Spirit in its dialectical activity. Dialectical process is merely the way in which Spirit moves throughout its development. Spirit as Absolute grounds its own dialectical activity (as if it had chosen this means of self-development). What permits Spirit *qua* Absolute to ground its dialectic and to determine its own Absoluteness is the *simplicity* of its nature. This simplicity exists in the beginning and at the end of the dialectical process. Spirit as Absolute is present *simply* to itself before and after its development. Spirit grounds itself through the simplicity of this presence to itself.

This approach through transcendence is connected closely with the previous approach through immanence. Nevertheless, each approach is also clearly distinct from the other. Spirit as *Absolute* is *simple* in its modes of being before and after the mediations of its dialectical process. On the other hand, dialectic is anything but simple. Spirit is *related* to the relative determinations of being by virtue of its dialectical process. From the viewpoint of the Absolute, Spirit is *distinct* from its relative determination by virtue of its simplicity. The approach through immanence, which accounts for the constitution of relative determinations of being by virtue of the dialectical process, explains the *relationship* between Absolute Being and relative being. Likewise, the approach through transcendence, which accounts for the Absoluteness of Spirit by virtue of the simplicity of its Being, explains the *distinction* between the Absolute and its relative determinations. The question which remains to be answered is the following: does this approach of "immanence-transcendence" make sense? Or, are the approaches of immanence and of transcendence compatible with one another?

### C. Compatibility of Dialectic and Absolutism Within Absolute Spirit.

After having explained the immanence of Spirit in accordance to its dialectical determinations, and the transcendence of Spirit in accordance with the simplicity of its Absolutism, it is necessary to determine whether or not these two explanations are mutually compatible. If so, then the relationship between the Absolute and its relative determinations will have been delineated, while the distinction between them will have been maintained. The approach through immanence accounts for Spirit's relationship to its relative determinations. The approach through transcendence accounts for their distinction from each other. But what accounts for the synthesis of the two approaches in order to explain the phenomenon of Absolute Being and relative being in the first place? In other words, why does the problem of Being necessarily require as twofold "immanence-transcendence" approach? This question is crucial because it strikes at the heart of the matter by directing itself to that aspect of the problem of Being which had defeated Hegel's predecessors. Progress will have been made toward a final solution only if the co-factors of the "immanence-transcendence" approach are compatible with each other.

Emil Fackenheim claims that the concept of Absolute Spirit is capable of bringing about the synthesis of the immanent and transcendent aspects of Being. Hegel's most decisive step in the *Phenomenology of Mind* is the affirmance that Reason is not the final form of self-hood in life, that just as Reason is the "truth" of self-consciousness so the truth of Reason is Spirit.<sup>3</sup> According to Fackenheim the concept of Absolute Spirit is capable of overcoming the seemingly unbridgeable gap between Absolute Being and relative being by virtue of its own spiritual activity. Finite, relative determinations are preserved in the activity of Spirit as an *aspect* of Absolute Spirit. At the same time, moreover, the distinction of Absolute Being from its relative determinations is maintained. Spirit is also the inner bond between substance and self.<sup>4</sup> Thus the approaches through immanence and transcendence seem to be compatible with each other at least to the extent that there is no apparent conflict, contradiction, or inconsistency between them. Reason is spirit when it is *consciously* aware of itself and of the world as itself.<sup>5</sup> It is a self-contained and self-sufficient reality. Spirit is a self-supporting, absolutely real, ultimate being. Spirit comes to its truth when the reason, which it "has", is seen to be reason as it actually *is* its spirit and *is* its world. Thus, Absolute Spirit may

be comprehended in its immanence and transcendence because it is the most fundamental determinator of *both* relative being and Absolute Being.

Spirit constitutes its relative determinations by virtue of its dialectical development. It also remains intact in its absoluteness by virtue of its simplicity. Without its dialectical development, the Absolute Spirit would not be immanent. Without its simplicity in being Absolute, Spirit would not be transcendent. These immanent and transcendent aspects characterize Absolute Spirit in both its relationship to (via dialectic) and distinction from (via simplicity) Absolute Being and the relative determinations of being. The approach of "immanence-transcendence" has resolved the problem of Absolute Being and relative being at least in regard to Absolute Spirit.

### *III. Hegel's Concept of Absolute Idea*

As previously mentioned, Absolute Spirit is the content of Absolute Being, the Absolute Idea is the categoreal form of Absolute Spirit, and Absolute Knowledge is the relationship between Spirit and the Idea. In this classification scheme the three Absolutes are *not* meant to be understood as separate absolutes. Of course, it must be understood clearly that the same Absolute Being is viewed from three different perspectives. There is only *one* Absolute, *not* three. Since Absolute Spirit has been analyzed in the previous section, Absolute Idea must be comprehended as its categoreal form in this section.

As the last category in the dialectical development of Spirit, the Absolute Idea is not understood easily. The Absolute Idea is Spirit in its fully manifested form. How it contributes to the resolution of the problem of Being may be understood only in conjunction with the previous analysis of Absolute Spirit.

#### A. Absolute Idea as Form of Spirit

How does the Absolute Idea function as a categoreal form of Spirit? According to G.R.C. Mure, Absolute Idea is the absolute self-definition of spirit as a category of knowing.<sup>6</sup> When the Absolute Idea knows itself through its own development, it is truth. According to Hegel, the logical Idea has itself as infinite form for its content. The form-determination of the Absolute Idea is the pure Notion as its own perfected totality.<sup>7</sup> As the universal element of its form, the Absolute Idea is the method of Absolute Spirit. This universal element of the Absolute Idea is

the development of the pure Notion. The Absolute Idea is the categorial form of Absolute Spirit as its form-determinations of Spirit. The Logical Idea, which has itself as infinite form for content, is the fully developed notion. This aspect of the Absolute Idea is the Idea as Absolute. However, Absolute Idea also has relative form-determinations as its content in the developing Notion. This aspect of the Absolute Idea is the categorial form of Spirit. The former aspect of the Absolute Idea is characteristic of the dialectical activity of Spirit in its categorial form. This immanent dialectical activity of the Absolute Idea as the categorial form of Spirit is also the methodological development of the Notion. Dialectical method is the movement of the Notion itself. This knowledge of the Notion is *both* object to itself and the subject of its own cognitive activity.<sup>8</sup> The method of Absolute Spirit constitutes the determinations of the Notion itself and their relations to one another. Thus, the Absolute Idea is the formal aspect of the dialectic of Spirit through which relative determinations are posited in being. These determinations lie on the relative being side of the Absolute-relative distinction. They are posited as the content of the Absolute Idea as the categorial form of Spirit.

The Absolute Idea as a categorial form posits the forms of the relative determinations of being. This aspect of the Absolute Idea is comprehended through the immanent part of the "immanence-transcendence" approach. It correlates with the immanent side of the basic distinction within Being and accounts for all its relative determinations. The *relationship* between Absolute Being as Absolute Idea and its relative determinations is Spirit's formal dialectical activity.

Now, the *distinction* between Absolute Being and relative being must be considered from the other side of the basic metaphysical distinction - that of the Absolute Being itself. Hence, the Absolute Idea *qua* Absolute must be examined in a manner similar to the previous inquiry into the concept of Absolute Spirit *qua* Absolute. In other words, how is the Absolute Idea *distinct* from its relative form-determinations? Exactly how does the Absolute Idea *qua* Absolute ground those determinations?

#### B. Absolute Idea *qua* Absolute

What is the Absolute Idea as Absolute? Although the Absolute Idea is the *form* of Spirit and constitutes its relative form-determinations through dialectic, the Absolute Idea also has a developed content through which it determines itself as Abso-

lute. On the one hand, the Absolute Idea returns to Life by reason of the immediacy of its objective identity. On the other hand, it has equally transcended this form of immediacy and contains the highest opposition within itself. The Notion is free and subjective, which is for itself, and has personality. Notion, as determined in and for itself, is impenetrable. It is universal for itself; and in its Other it has its own objectivity for its object. Everything else is error, gloom, opinion, striving, caprice, and transitoriness. The Absolute Idea is the whole of truth<sup>9</sup> (that is, *metaphysically* because truth *is* rather than being known for Hegel). The Absolute Idea *qua* Absolute is the complete development of the Pure Notion. It contains being-for-itself or the subjectivity of personality and being-in-itself or the objectivity of natural reality as determined through itself. In short, being-in-and-for-itself is the content of the Absolute Idea *qua* Absolute. In the developed Notion all the relative forms of being are transcended. The Absoluteness of the Absolute Idea may be found beyond these determinations.

Through the developed content of the Absolute Idea as Absolute or in the fully developed Notion, the relativity of the form-determinations of the Absolute Idea have been transcended. The Absolute Idea is seen as grounding itself through the determination of itself as that in which are posited dialectically all relative form-determinations. The developed content of the Absolute Idea as Absolute has transcended the immediacy of its own objective identity and returned to itself (via return to Life).

The Absoluteness of the Absolute Idea is comprehended through the transcendent part of the "immanence-transcendence" approach. Through its developed content the Absolute Idea is able to ground the form-determinations of relative being. It also maintains its *distinction* from them by transcending the relative determinations of the immediacy of its objective identity through its own self-identity. Because it returns to itself, and because the Absoluteness of the Absolute Idea is based upon self-relation, the Absolute Idea constitutes the developed content of its own self as Absolute.

The Absoluteness of the Absolute Idea is the transcendent stage at the end of the dialectical process of Spirit. As the final self-definition of spirit, Absolute Idea is spirit as living dialectic or the zenith of its culmination. The Absolute Idea reconstitutes itself as the summary of its developmental process. The conclusion verifies the presupposition - there is nothing but the spirit of pure activity.<sup>10</sup> The transcendent aspect of the Absolute Idea pertains to the reconstitution of the developing relative form-

determinations of being. This reconstitution of relative being at the end of the dialectical process of Spirit is the Absoluteness of the Absolute Idea.

The question which remains to be answered is - *whether or not* the Absolute Idea as *form* of Spirit, which dialectically constitutes relative form-determinations in terms of immanence, *is compatible* with the Absolute Idea as Absolute, by virtue of which its developed content is the self-constitution of its own Absoluteness in terms of transcendence. If so, then here as well as in the discussion concerning the concept of Absolute Spirit, the third alternative of combining both previous solutions to the stated problem will have succeeded.

### C. Compatibility of Dialectic and Absolutism within Absolute Idea

It must be understood that the question being posed at this point in the analysis is essentially the same question which was raised in part C of section II. However, Absolute Spirit is different from the Absolute Idea. In the analysis of Spirit the dialectic between substance and subject referred to the determination of relative being. In the analysis of the Idea the dialectical activity of the Idea as the categoreal form of Spirit referred to the constitution of the form-determinations of relative being. This distinction between the different aspects of the dialectic is very subtle, but significant, if any difference is to be understood between the analyses of Spirit and of the Idea. Likewise, in regard to Absolutism the Absoluteness of Spirit was discovered to be the simplicity of Being, while that of the Idea was based upon the self-relation of the pure Notion. Since a detailed discussion of the Notion qua notion would involve too much of a digression at this point, it must be taken as proven that simplicity and self-relation are entirely different aspects of Absoluteness.

Without collapsing these distinctions, it must also be understood that the same dialectic and the same Absoluteness refer both to Spirit and to the Idea. However, they are analyzed from different abstract concepts, and in different philosophical contexts. Consequently, dialectic and Absoluteness do not change in themselves. Since our perspective does change, any solution to the stated problem must be reanalyzed to see if it still stands up.

The immediate task at hand is an analysis of the compatibility of the dialectic and Absolutism of the dialectic and Absolutism for the Absolute Idea. As with the concept of Absolute Spirit, it seems that in the case of the concept of the Absolute Idea there

is no basis upon which the two factors could be considered incompatible with each other. Furthermore, it appears that the concept of Absolute Idea may be comprehended through the "immanence-transcendence" approach. For a case may be made that the manifestation of the Spirit through the Idea. As with the concept of Absolute Spirit, it seems that in the case of the concept of the Absolute Idea there is no basis upon which the two factors could be considered incompatible with each other. Furthermore, it appears that the concept of Absolute Idea may be comprehended through the "immanence-transcendence" approach. For a case may be made that the manifestation of the Spirit through the Idea is Love. The state of consciousness which would exemplify the Absolute Idea is love. With love there is a state of harmony in which neither the subject nor the object can be considered as determinant.<sup>11</sup> By love is meant a concrete determination of Life as the highest form of spiritual development which consciousness is capable of attaining. As life becomes perfect all other elements, such as knowledge and volition, would actually die away. Love would reveal itself as the highest and only thing in the universe.<sup>12</sup> Although this highly romantic appraisal of the significance of the Absolute Idea may be guilty of overstating its case, it certainly claims that there is a strong element of harmony present in the Absolute Idea. Knowledge and volition by themselves *cannot* completely express the harmony of spirit. Their very existence implies that spirit is in relation with a not-self which is divorced from knowledge and volition. This not-self is found through love.<sup>13</sup> If the complete expression of harmony as love is the ultimate form of Spirit, it becomes obvious that the absolutism and dialectic of the Absolute Idea must be compatible with each other in order to manifest this harmony of Spirit. Formerly, in the discussion of Absolute Spirit there were no categorical forms by virtue of which Absolutism and dialectic may or may not seem to be compatible. Here, however, the category of love as harmony sheds at least some light onto the matter of the compatibility of the dialectic and Absolutism of the Absolute Idea.<sup>14</sup> Through love the dialectic and Absolutism of the Absolute Idea become compatible with one another. Love is the ultimate reality for the Absolute Idea as it manifests Spirit through its dialectical development. By virtue of its harmony love is brought into being in order to combine the relative form-determinations with the content of the Absolute Idea. Thus, from the side of relative being - harmony - and from the side of Absolute Being - Love - there is present the condition for the compatibility of the dialectic and the Absoluteness of the Absolute Idea. Conse-

quently, the approach of "immanence-transcendence" resolves the problem of Being in regard to the Absolute Idea.

#### IV. Hegel's Concept of Absolute Knowledge

As alluded to previously, Absolute Knowledge is the *relationship* between Absolute Spirit and the Absolute Idea. In other words, *via* Absolute Knowledge the Absolute Spirit knows itself through its categorical form of the Absolute Idea. Spirit and its moments fall within the sphere of figurative thinking and within the form of objectivity. The *content* of this figurative thought is Absolute Spirit.<sup>15</sup> The form of Absolute Spirit as objectivity may be transcended through the dialectical modes of consciousness. The purpose of this discussion is to inquire into the nature of Absolute Knowledge as the relationship by which Absolute Spirit knows itself through its Idea.

##### A. Determination Through Absolute Knowledge

Through Absolute Knowledge Spirit knows itself in its relative form-determinations. Absolute Knowledge is the final shape of Spirit.<sup>16</sup> Spirit gives itself complete and true content through the form of selfhood. It realizes its Notion while it remains within its Notion. In other words, by virtue of the relative determination of the self Spirit realizes itself within its own Notion. The self is the most significant form-determination of Spirit. It is the most significant form-determination of Spirit. It is the basic factor at work in the determination of Absolute Knowledge. The Notion is its truth in unity with its externalization. It is awareness of pure cognition because it is an essential being which *is this* knowledge.<sup>17</sup> The Notion is both an individual pure self-consciousness with an objective existence or a genuine *object*. Through a process of action Spirit has become the form of pure universality of knowledge or the simple unity of knowledge. Thus, Spirit determines itself as the form-determination of the self by a process of action or Absolute Knowledge.

Needless to say, the determination of self as the highest relative form-determination of Spirit comprises the means through which Spirit is made *immanent* through Absolute Knowledge. Such activity constitutes the *relationship* between Absolute Being and relative being. For the third and final time, the *distinction* within Being must be explained. It must be shown how Spirit is transcendent from its relative determinations. In other words, the Absoluteness of Spirit in terms of Absolute

Knowledge must be understood in order to advance the "immanence-transcendence" approach another step toward the solution of the problem of Being.

#### B. Absolute Knowledge qua Absolute

Since Absolute Knowledge is the relationship by which Spirit knows itself through its Idea, it will not be surprising if Knowledge absolutizes itself in a manner similar to Spirit and the Idea. Through Absolute Knowledge Spirit gives its complete and true content the form of self.<sup>18</sup> Spirit knows itself in the shape of spirit; it is knowledge which comprehends itself through its notions. Absolute Knowledge takes place by virtue of the realization of its notion. As with the Absolute Idea, the last stage in the development of Spirit grounds knowledge and makes it absolute.

It is through the Absoluteness of Absolute Knowledge that the reconciliation between self and substance occur in Spirit. Spirit is reconciled with itself in its consciousness as self in the form of being for-itself. It is also reconciled with itself in its self-consciousness as substance in the form of being in-itself.<sup>19</sup> In other words, at the last stage of consciousness in Absolute Knowledge there is no longer a distinction between self and substance. In the Absoluteness of Absolute Knowledge there is no longer a distinction between being-for-itself and being-in-itself. Within Absolute Knowledge the for-itself and in-itself are united through their dialectic. Being, Self, and Concept become equated with each other; and their truth becomes certain. The mutual "absolutes" ground the "Absolute" in pure knowledge. In Absolute Knowledge Absoluteness is found in the transcendence of distinctions within Being. The Self (or Concept) becomes identical with Substance (or being). Absolute Knowledge grounds itself in its Absoluteness by identifying Self with Substance. By this identification Absolute Spirit comes to know itself as itself through its Absolute Idea.

Through Absolute Knowledge being-for-itself and being-in-itself are *preserved* in the unity of their reconciliation. Although they were constituted relationally via the dialectical process, *transcendence* necessitates their *preservation* within Absolute Being if the Absoluteness of Absolute Knowledge is to be distinct from the relative being of ordinary knowledge. Only in this manner may the transcendent factor of Absoluteness in Absolute Knowledge be comprehended through the "immanence-transcendence" approach.

## C. Compatibility of Dialectic and Absolutism within Absolute Knowledge

If dialectic and Absolutism are compatible within the context of Absolute Knowledge, then the "immanence-transcendence" approach will have solved the problem of Being. The compatibility of dialectic and Absolutism depends upon the validity of Absolute Knowledge as the *immanent relationship* by which Spirit knows itself through its idea. It also depends upon the *sublation* of immanent dialectical moments in which the *distinctions* are preserved in the *transcendent* Absoluteness of Absolute Knowledge. The goal of Absolute Knowledge or Spirit knowing itself as Spirit finds its pathway in the recollection of spiritual forms within a spiritual kingdom.<sup>21</sup> In other words, Absolute Knowledge is at once the consummation of experience and constructive philosophy.<sup>22</sup> As the consummation of experience Absolute Knowledge immanently constitutes spiritual reality; and as constructive philosophy Absolute Knowledge knows Spirit itself in its full development. Through Absolute Knowledge, Spirit knows the Idea to be the same Absolute as itself.

The self of Absolute Knowledge is based upon dialectic for its determination as the highest relative form of Spirit. This self of Absolute Knowledge characterizes the *immanent* aspect of the *relation* between Absolute Being and the relative determinations of being. The preservation of distinctions in Absolute Knowledge is a consequence of the feature of "aufgehoben" in the dialectical process which leads to Absolute Knowledge. "Aufgehoben" accounts for the transcendence within Absolute Knowledge by virtue of which the *distinction* between Absolute Being and relative being is maintained throughout the dialectical process.

There is a special difficulty involved in comprehending the transcendent nature of the Absolutism of Absolute Knowledge. It must be clear how this Absolutism accounts for the maintenance of the distinction of Absolute Being and relative being. Such difficulty is encountered because of the *relational* capacity of Absolute Knowledge. It must be remembered that as a *relation* it is the purpose of Absolute Knowledge to unite Absolute Spirit with itself as Absolute Idea. This reunion is so powerful and event that the *distinctions* within relative being become threatened with extinction. If it were not for Absolute Being's characteristic feature of "uplifting" in sublation, which preserves distinctions throughout the process of dialectic, relative being would vanish within Absolute Being (à la Schelling). However, it must be kept in mind that throughout the rigorous immanent dialectical activity of Spirit, distinctions are posited relatively

within it. These distinctions are also preserved and "uplifted" in the process of dialectic. These distinctions are then transcended in the Absoluteness of Absolute Being. At this stage in its development Spirit knows itself to be the Absolute Idea through its Absolute Knowledge.

#### V. Conclusion

The basic feature of the "immanence-transcendence" approach is its ability to provide a synthesis which contains both the relation between Absolute Being and relative being in immanent terms and the distinction between Absolute Being and relative being in transcendent terms. Through this approach the problem of Absolute Being and relative being is solved without either destroying their relation or collapsing their distinction. This approach represents a re-working of other traditional approaches to the problem. Its improvement over other approaches is its ability to relativize Absolute Being dialectically; while at the same time it keeps Absolute Being distinct from its relative determinations. Absolute Being is determined dialectically as relative being (via immanence) and the determinations within relative being are preserved and "uplifted" (via transcendence). The result of this approach is the solution to the problem of Absolute Being and relative being as they are both related to and distinct from one another.

Hegel solved the problem of Being by taking three steps in his twofold approach to it. On the one hand, he asserted that the *relationship* between the Absolute and its relative determinations is determined immanently by the positing activity of the dialectic in its *first moments*. On the other hand, Hegel also claimed that the *distinction* between Absolute Being and relative being is sustained transcendentally in the opposing and nullifying activity of the dialectic in its *second moments*. Hegel then maintained that the *relationship and distinction* between Absolute Being and relative being remained intact through the transcendent aspect of the preserving and "uplifted" (via transcendence). The result of this approach is the solution to the problem of Absolute Being and relative being as they are both related to and distinct from one another.

Hegel solved the problem of Being by taking three steps in his twofold approach to it. On the one hand, he asserted that the *relationship* between the Absolute and its relative determinations is determined immanently by the positing activity of the dialectic in its *first moments*. On the other hand, Hegel also claimed that

the *distinction* between Absolute Being and relative being is sustained transcendentally in the opposing and nullifying activity of the dialectic in its *second moments*. Hegel then maintained that the *relationship and distinction* between Absolute Being and relative being remained intact through the transcendent aspect of the preserving and "uplifting" activity of the dialectic toward Absoluteness in its *third moments*. The effectiveness of the Hegelian solution lies in these three steps of the twofold "immanence-transcendence" approach. Immanence between the Absolute and its relativity is established in the first moments of the dialectic; negation of the immanence between Absolute Being and relative being is accomplished through the second moments of the dialectic; transcendence of immanence within Being occurs in the third moments of the dialectical process of Becoming.

It is obvious that Hegel could not have solve the problem of Being without the use of dialectical logic. Should this type of idealist logic be accepted as valid for the purpose of developing an approach to the problem of Being? It should with one qualification - namely, it must be remembered that it is not logic in the traditional sense (e.g., formal logic, symbolic logic, or mathematical logic). Dialectical logic is a philosophical method for the resolution of traditional metaphysical problems. In fact, it is a type of idealist metaphysics. If Hegel's dialectical "logic" is understood in this way, then it is an appropriate method for attempting to solve problems in traditional metaphysics.

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#### NOTES

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