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# The philosophical problem of relation in the philosophies of Aristotle, Aquinas and Hegel

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DISSERTATION

THE PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEM OF RELATION IN THE  
PHILOSOPHIES OF ARISTOTLE,  
AQUINAS AND HEGEL

by

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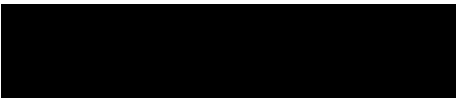
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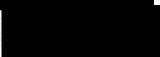
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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation undertakes to do two things: to defend the thesis that Hegel, via his concept of relation, solves certain inconsistencies germane to that concept present in both Aristotle and Aquinas, and to clarify, if not solve, some of the traditional problems that surround the concept of relation. It is suggested that a decision as to the nature of relation is not simply a logical decision but a metaphysical and epistemological one.

The aims of chapter I are to set forth the Aristotelian doctrine of the category of relation and to consider its effects on Aristotle's logic, epistemology and ontology. It is suggested that the theory of relation Aristotle defends and the theory of relation his philosophy requires, and at points presupposes, are mutually opposed and inconsistent.

The treatment of relation as a categorical accident, and so peripheral to the essential nature and scientific knowledge of substance, suggests a metaphysics of atomic entities and a syllogistic of only formal import. Yet Aristotle's epistemological doctrine of the four causes requires that a thing be known in terms of (some of) its relations. And Aristotle's metaphysics views things as

moving and growing in terms of their terminus ad quem and operating and functioning due to their interactions with others. Relations are not the transient shadows of an essentially relationless substance. Relations make a thing be/come what it is.

In chapter II it is argued that the conflicting demands of the Aristotelian doctrine of relation and the Christian doctrine of the Trinity force Aquinas, as a Christian Aristotelian, to use and refine a new kind of relation--subsistent relation--to accommodate the Triune God. This new relation makes it possible to transform Aristotle's substance-attribute ontology--shown to be inadequate in Aristotle's own terms in chapter I--into an ontology of relations, an ontology which Aristotle has but does not realize.

But Aquinas is unaware of the implications of such a re-valuation of relation. He confines the range of subsistent relations to the Divine nature, and accepts Aristotle's interpretation of relation. Though he develops a model to rid the Aristotelian philosophy of its inconsistencies, he perpetuates them in his own philosophy.

In chapter III it is argued that Hegel not only offers a satisfactory account of relation, but one that represents

the solution to the internal discrepancies within the two former philosophies. Such a reconciliation, moreover, is accomplished by a dialectical synthesis of both philosophies: the process philosophy of Aristotle with the trinitarian motif of Aquinas.

For Hegel, a thing only has actuality, a nature, truth, significance--only exists at all--in terms of and because of its relations. Thus Hegel dissolves subject-predicate logic into a logic of dynamic relations. This is how the Aristotelian Thomistic problem of locating species is transformed into uncovering the relations of any given thing. It is concluded that the source of Aristotle's inconsistency and of Aquinas' inadequacy is the source of Hegel's triumph.

The concluding chapter is an attempt to explicate the conception of relation suggested in the historical sections. The following proposals are made.

Not only are relations real; the real is the related. Relations are both internal and external; but ultimately they are neither. Relations cannot be insulated from the complexes in which they function; they are continuous with their terms. Relation is a primitive concept. Relations are not only necessary and constitutive, they are subsistent.

This is not to reify relations, but to relationize substance. Finally, it is suggested that Heisenberg's interpretation of the role of the observer in quantum physics is an interesting example of Hegel's rendition of the cognitive relation.

## PREFACE

This dissertation undertakes to do two things: to defend the thesis that Hegel, via his concept of relation,<sup>1</sup> solved certain inconsistencies germane to that concept present in both Aristotle and Aquinas, and to clarify, if not solve, some of the traditional problems that have surrounded the concept of relation.

Several factors, ranging from the trivial to (hopefully) the more profound, prompted me to pursue such a project. The problem of relation, first of all, has intrigued--better, plagued--me for over four years. My B.A. thesis was devoted to a discussion of relation's role in the medieval mental universe, and no sooner had I completed the final draft than more subtle questions about relation surreptitiously found their way into my head. They were to remain there, unresolved and nagging, until I met

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<sup>1</sup>Strictly speaking, the word relation should be enclosed by single quotation marks whenever one refers to the category or concept of relation, but since this concept constitutes the subject matter of the dissertation, this requirement has been bracketed.

G. W. Hegel mediated by R. S. Cohen and his two and a half year seminar. With that, my future intellectual labors became well-defined: to re-analyze relation and its role in the philosophies of the medieval Aristotle and his predecessor in light of Hegel. The more I scrutinized relation moreover, the more it grew in stature, until eventually it turned out to be the most important of the categorical accidents, a condition of truth, and, in fact, not an accident at all but the foundation of substance itself. Reading Hegel confirmed this. Thus, the final reason for my choice of topic: to deal with relation is to tackle the most fundamental questions in epistemology and metaphysics.

But, as Hegel warns in his own Preface to the Phenomenology of Mind: "The aim, taken by itself, is a lifeless generality . . . for the subject matter is not exhausted by any aim, but only by the way in which things are worked out in detail. . . ." <sup>1</sup> The preface alone is thus meaningless; the thesis untrue until its execution and end. The preface presupposes the conclusion; the above claim, the dissertation.

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<sup>1</sup>G. W. F. Hegel, Hegel: Texts and Commentary, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966), p. 10. Cited hereafter as Preface.

The scope of this dissertation is--to use a near tautologous cliché of prefaces--limited. It is inevitable that in a thesis of moderate compass, many philosophers should go unmentioned and several aspects of the nature and reality of relation should be dealt with only slightly, or not at all. For such limitations and for, more critically, the limitations present in a subject matter selected, I claim full responsibility. In other words, the mistakes are mine. As an Irish saying goes, "I missed their absence."

This endeavor owes a great deal to the philosophers themselves, in whose company I have lived for several years, and to the researches of others. My obligations are expressed in the bibliography and the footnotes. The length of both only accentuates my debts.

The most pleasant task of this thesis is to thank Dr. Donald Dunbar and Dr. Walter Emge for their interest in my topic. My thanks and deep appreciation are especially due to Dr. Robert S. Cohen, for without his constant advice, assistance and generosity this thesis could not have been written.

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<sup>1</sup>G. W. F. Hegel, Hegel: Texts and Commentary, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966), p. 10.

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## INTRODUCTION

The subject matter of this dissertation is the concept of relation; the topic of this dissertation, the problems it involves, as illustrated by the philosophies of Aristotle, Aquinas and Hegel.

This raises two questions: Why is relation a problem at all? And if it is a problem, is it a significant one? Such questions are best met by the dissertation itself. But let us give a preliminary reply, and by means of that reply, introduce the thesis to be defended, show how each chapter is relevant to that thesis and indicate the conclusions suggested by the thesis.

Relation begins to be a problem as soon as one utters the word. For its meaning is, as Aristotle warns<sup>1</sup> and as Averroes echoes him, "amphibolous."<sup>2</sup> Common

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<sup>1</sup>Topics 11<sup>a</sup> 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>H. A. Wolfson, "The Amphibolous Terms in Aristotle, Arabic Philosophy and Maimonides," The Harvard Theological Review, XXXI (April, 1938), 151, 163.

irritation must foster common opinion, for all concur. James declares it to be a "slippery word" because it has so many concrete meanings.<sup>1</sup> And, indeed, as Winn points out, relation does have an "amazing variety of senses, including the logical and psychological, physical and metaphysical, causal and epistemological, mathematical and social. . . ."<sup>2</sup> Moreover, relation is, as Alexander complains, "the vaguest word in the philosophic vocabulary,"<sup>3</sup> due to its uncertainty of reference. Relation, he continues, may be used for any connection between terms, and while the terms get defined, the relation is taken for granted.<sup>4</sup> Aquinas, finally, is the most direct. He claims that the concept of relation, though it can be described, cannot be defined in the proper sense (in terms of genus and

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<sup>1</sup>This reference is given by L.S. Stebbing, "Relation and Coherence," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII (1916-17), 457.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph B. Winn, "The Nature of Relations," The Monist, XXX (1920), 20.

<sup>3</sup>Samuel Alexander, Space, Time and Deity, I, p. 171 quoted by Winn, The Monist, XXX, 21; cf. Bertrand Paul Helm, "Systemic Relations and Valuation: The Problem of Internal and External Relations" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Dept. of Philosophy, Tulane University), P. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Samuel Alexander, "On Relations; and in Particular the Cognitive Relation," Mind, XXXVIII (1929), 306.

specific difference) as it is itself a supreme genus.<sup>1</sup>

But the question--what is relation?--so often avoided, could reasonably be claimed to be the capital philosophical question. First, an explication of this thesis, then the proof.

An attempt to deal with the general problem of relation discloses more radically and obviously than any other phase of critical thought the basis metaphysical assumptions which underlie a critic's position.<sup>2</sup>

Through the greater part of modern philosophy the question of how relations are known has shaped the answer to all of the other questions.<sup>3</sup>

One's conception of the meaning and function of relations contains the key to one's entire metaphysics.<sup>4</sup>

It is perhaps not too much to say that a philosopher's views on internal relations are themselves internally

<sup>1</sup>In I Sent. 2. 1. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Rudolph Kagey, "The Meaning of Relations," The Philosophical Review, XLII (1933), 287.

<sup>3</sup>D.S. MacKay, "An Historical Sketch of the Problem of Relations," Studies in the Problem of Relations, ed. G.P. Adams, J. Loewenburg, and S.C. Pepper ("University of California Publications: Philosophy," Vol. XIII; Berkely, Calif.: University of California Press, 1930), p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>J. A. Leighton, "On the Metaphysical Significance of Relation," Journal of Philosophy, I (1904), 701.

related to all his other philosophical views.<sup>1</sup>

Even if a philosopher never explicitly analyses relation, even if he never uses the word at all, relation still is the best clue to his philosophical standpoint, for the nature of relation--tacit or explicit--acts like a mirror which reflects both his epistemological standpoint and his ontology. Relation is the catalyst which exposes surreptitious assumption or implicit presuppositions. It is the agent which determines answers to other philosophical problems.

Monism, pluralism, realism, idealism, scepticism all depend upon the use and interpretation of the category of relation. If one denies the reality<sup>2</sup> of relations, for instance, one automatically limits oneself to the ontological options of extreme monism--where the two relata necessary for

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<sup>1</sup>Richard M. Rorty, "Relations: Internal and External," Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. Paul Edwards, VII (1967), 126.

<sup>2</sup>We define a real relation as does Aquinas: a "connection between two [or more] things in virtue of something real found in both." (S. T. I. 13. 7.) Real relations are independent of thought, and are opposed to logical relations which are constructed by the mind in order to better understand things.

any relation are ruled out--or monadism--where the many cannot/do not interact. And as thought is relational in some form, such a denial necessarily leads to the epistemological conclusion of a form of scepticism--either one cannot know reality or cannot know if one does--for reality might not be a network of relations, but trans/supra-relational. Moreover, to assert that all relations are external or accidental is to commit oneself to a form of monadism, for if relations cannot make a significant difference to things, the world turns out to be composed of insulated entities whose interactions are always trivial. Finally, to borrow Russell's expression for it,<sup>1</sup> the monistic theory of truth will collapse like an opera hat when the axiom of internal relations is removed.

So our thesis is this: once one has committed oneself to a position vis à vis the reality of relation and an interpretation of the nature of relation, certain epistemological and ontological routes are closed. This is what, as we shall see, Aristotle and Aquinas did not seem to recognize.

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<sup>1</sup>This reference is given by Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 463.

For as chapter I shows, Aristotle assigns relation the ontological status of an accident, and, declaring it to be the least real of all the accidents, a tertiary role in the world. Substance and its properties according to Aristotle do not depend on relations in any nontrivial way. But Aristotle, as we shall see, then develops an ontology which is grounded in functionalism and contextualism, both of which imply that relations can be essential and thus not only condition but constitute things. Not only does his logic have no relevance to his ontology, it contradicts it.

Chapter II shows how Aquinas accepts the Aristotelian analysis of relation--its accidental, nominal and dispensable character. But like Aristotle before him, Aquinas develops a philosophy which demands that some relations be essential and thus is inconsistent with the ontological and epistemological implications of such an analysis. The inconsistencies of Aquinas' philosophy, moreover, are more poignant than those of Aristotle's philosophy. For Aquinas uses an alternative interpretation of relation which represents the solution to both sets of inconsistencies. But Aquinas' use of such an interpretation is limited to the theological realm. God's nature alone and not the nature of finite beings is declared to be relational.

Hegel, however, the subject of chapter III, transposes this theological revaluation of relation to the logical, epistemological and ontological domains. And in/by doing so, he effects a reconciliation of the tensions in Aristotle's and Aquinas' philosophies. Such a reconciliation, moreover, is accomplished by a synthesis of both philosophers: the process philosophy of Aristotle with the trinitarian motif of Aquinas.

With this unmitigated application of trinitarian theology to every philosophical level, the category of substance is usurped by the category of relation. For substances are shown by Hegel to be constituted by their relations. Relation thus becomes the central category and reality of Hegel's philosophy.

The notion which caused one philosopher to be inconsistent and another to be Janus-faced is the source of Hegel's accomplishment. This dissertation shall advance the thesis that Hegel is the only one of the three men examined to give an adequate account of relation, that is, to recognize the omnipresence of relation and to utilize it. He is the only one to realize that this weasle word turns out to be the pivot of philosophy.

The three philosophical systems which make up the three chapters were chosen for several reasons. Aristotle

was chosen because he was the first great Western philosopher who attempted to grapple with the nature of relation as such and to disclose its specific properties. Moreover, he offered a clear-cut and fertile illustration of our thesis--that a decision as to the nature of relation is a metaphysical and epistemological decision. For with Aristotle there is a decisive contradiction between his interpretation of relation and the rest of his philosophy.

Though the neo-Platonic, Augustinian, Franciscan tradition had a more developed form of trinitarian theology, it is avoided and Aquinas is chosen precisely for this reason. For such a tradition included both a criticism of the Aristotelian categories and a more thorough-going application of such a theology to the finite world. With Aquinas, however, the confrontation between the Aristotelian doctrine of relation and the theological doctrine of the Trinity is more startling and the conflicting claims of each more clearly delineated.

Hegel was chosen not only because he offered a satisfactory account of relation, but because such an account represented the solution to the internal discrepancies within the two former philosophies.

Finally, as all three philosophers are Aristotelians, the story of their respective interpretations of the concept of relation is an illustration of a philosophical dialectic--in which Aristotle and Aquinas are aufheben and Hegel the apex.

## CHAPTER I

### THE INCONSISTENCY OF ARISTOTLE

The aims of this chapter are to set forth the Aristotelian doctrine of the category of relation and to consider its effects on Aristotle's logic, epistemology and ontology. It will be suggested that the theory of relation Aristotle defends and the theory of relation his philosophy requires and at points presupposes are mutually opposed and inconsistent.

On the one hand he maintains a doctrine of 'pluralistic isolationism'. This is a phrase adopted to describe a world composed of a plurality of distinct things which are absolute, independent and, as such, isolated from one another. This position, it will be argued, is a consequence of Aristotle's doctrine of relation articulated in his logic. For he there maintains that all relations are, properly speaking, accidental and as such non-defining. And in elaborating on this logical doctrine in the Metaphysics, he goes further, declaring all relations to

be trivial.<sup>1</sup> Each thing then, according to Aristotle, is distinct from every other thing and can be known as such. And this means that a thing's relations are incidental and superfluous. In fact it will be suggested that Aristotle, in effect, eliminates relation from (any possible scientific knowledge of) the world.

On the other hand, while maintaining (in the logic) that substance is essentially relationless, Aristotle develops an ontology of process which requires that at least some relations be essential to a thing's development. This inconsistency between the two branches of his philosophy might be explained if, e.g., his logic was intended to be merely formal or if his metaphysics maintained that some relations were essential. But neither is the case. It will be shown how his metaphysics endorses and elaborates the notion of relation set forth in the logic. And it will be argued that part of his logic, the Categories at least, is meant to be ontologically grounded and, as such, requires an alternate doctrine of relation.

Furthermore, it will be suggested that the doctrine of relation found in Aristotle's logic and developed in his

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<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1088<sup>a</sup> 20.

metaphysics is also inconsistent with his epistemology. For being both accidental and trivial, all relations are peripheral to attaining an adequate knowledge of any thing. But Aristotle's epistemological doctrine of the four causes requires that a thing be known in terms of (some of) its relations, e.g., its efficient and final causes. And since causal relations are responsible for any process, they constitute the necessary conditions of truth.

This chapter thus introduces the major interest and problem of the dissertation: a satisfactory account of the concept of relation. What is its nature? Is it real? How intimate are its ontological and epistemological connections? Final answers to these questions will only be suggested in the last chapter on Hegel and worked out in the conclusion. This chapter will seek to reveal the general problems and perils any doctrine of relation must face. And it will do this in terms of the writings of a great philosopher who was not completely successful in recognizing or avoiding them--Aristotle.

Aristotle, in his logical work The Categories, was the first philosopher in the history of Western philosophy to confront and analyze directly the nature of relation. The main concern of the Pre-Socratics was trying to account

for the phenomenon of change, and thus they were more preoccupied with their search for that "ageless and deathless"<sup>1</sup> substratum than with the kinds of relations between changing things. The being of relations was moreover, as Helm suggests,<sup>2</sup> too akin to what was passing or temporary for them. As a result, it never captured their attention.

Plato likewise was primarily engaged by finding an explanation for the corporeal world and its changing states. His solution lay in the relation of participation in the realm of Ideas, and this led to the problem of implications among and interrelations between the Ideas themselves. But despite his use of the concept and the problems such a use involved, Plato never explicitly examined relation per se. He was aware of the concept<sup>3</sup> and even anticipated

<sup>1</sup>This is an expression used by Anaximander, and is quoted by John Burnet, Early Greek Philosophy (1st ed. rev.; New York: The World Publishing Co., 1957), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Helm, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup>For example, in the Sophist, Theatetus grants to the stranger that: "Among beings some are always said to be in themselves, some in reference to others." (Sophist 255<sup>d</sup>.).

Aristotle's notion of correlations,<sup>1</sup> but he never made much of it as such. The only text comparable to the Categories is in the Sophist where Plato draws up the five most universal characteristics of reality, and relation is not among them. Perhaps it, to him too, seemed too transitory to be real.

The Categories<sup>2</sup> is a treatise which attempts to draw up a list--in no place claimed to be exhaustive--of the different kinds of predicates,<sup>3</sup> that is, a list of the

<sup>1</sup>"But surely, whenever you have two correlative terms, if one is qualified, the other must always be qualified too; whereas if one is unqualified, so is the other." (Republic 438<sup>a</sup> 1-3.).

<sup>2</sup>This dissertation shall bracket both the issues of the chronology and the authenticity of the Categories, for the debate as to whether it is an early or late work does not affect our thesis, and the first nine books of the Categories--the ones which contain the doctrine of relation--are generally admitted to be authentic by the Aristotelian scholars (e.g., Ross, Jaeger, Robin, Hamelin, Cook, Kapp, Zeller, Maier, Brandis, Gomperz, and the Scholastics in general from Boethius onward). Moreover, the doctrine of relation found in the Categories is not just confined to that work, but reverberates throughout the rest of the Organon, and is present in the Metaphysics, and Ethics, and the Physics, as we shall see.

<sup>3</sup>The word 'category' was derived from the Greek κατηγορεῖν which means 'to predicate'; see Victorino Tejera, Aristotle's Analytics (New York: American R. D. M. Corporation, 1966), p. 16.

different senses in which the words is or are are used when one asserts x is y or x is a y or x's are y's. Though he does not indicate his method of arriving at them,<sup>1</sup> Aristotle draws up ten.<sup>2</sup> They are:

substance	οὐσία
quantity	ποσόν
quality	ποιόν
relation	προς τι
place	πού
time	ποτε
position	χέισθακι
condition	ἔχειν
action	ποιεῖν
passion	πάσχειν

All but the first are termed 'accidents' (συμβεβηκότα) by Aristotle.

<sup>1</sup>This is a source of great speculation. Was it empirically, by an inspection of reality (Ross and Zeller)? Or was it one-removed from reality, via his biological psychology (Anton)? Was it by means of the study of grammar (Trendelenburg)? But such questions are tangential to this dissertation. For we are concerned with what relation as a category is claimed to be, and not with the method (if any) used to determine whether it was a category.

<sup>2</sup>The list of ten occurs only here in the Categories and in the Topics 103<sup>b</sup> 22-23. Position and condition (or state) are, in the Metaphysics for instance, not mentioned; see Joseph Owens, "Aristotle on Categories," Review of Metaphysics, XIV (September, 1960), 78. For tables showing what categories Aristotle lists in his various works, see M. Marina Scheu, The Categories of Being in Aristotle and St. Thomas (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1944), pp. 12, 22.

But these summa genera<sup>1</sup> are, according to Aristotle, not only basic types of predicates; they are ways of being. Though Aristotle at no point argues for such a position, he often states it. The texts are explicit:

The kinds of essential being are precisely those that are indicated by the figures of predication [the categories]; for the senses of 'being' are just as many as these figures. Since, then, some predicates indicate what the subject is, others its quality, others quantity, others relation, others activity or passivity, others its 'where', others its 'when', 'being' has a meaning answering to each of these.<sup>2</sup>

The categories are thus not merely subjective classes. Unlike the Kantian categories, they are assumed to characterize not only thought but being, in its most universal aspects. The Aristotelian doctrine of the categories is not therefore concerned exclusively with words or linguistic usage. It is grounded upon the nature of things.

Hence, for Aristotle, relation, as the fourth of the ten categories, has an ontological as well as a logical application, as we shall see. That is, relation, because it is a category, is real.

<sup>1</sup>De Anima 402<sup>a</sup> 22.

<sup>2</sup>Metaphysics 1017<sup>a</sup> 22-27; see also Ibid 1024<sup>b</sup> 13; 1028<sup>a</sup> 17; 1029<sup>b</sup> 20-21; 1051<sup>a</sup> 35; 1089<sup>a</sup> 27; 1089<sup>b</sup> 12; Physics 210<sup>a</sup> 9; Prior Analytics 49<sup>a</sup> 6; Topics i. 4-9.

Several difficulties strike one immediately. How can substance be a category? For is not everything else predicated of it? And thus is it not a predicate, but the ultimate subject? The answers to these questions depend upon more fundamental issues--namely, what does Aristotle mean by substance and, by contrast, by accident? This first complex of problems is important for substance, as we shall see, turns out to be the criterion of reality for Aristotle. Moreover what does Aristotle mean when he claims that relation as a category is real? To answer this question is not simply to establish the meaning of a technical term; it is to make certain claims about the way the world is structured and, in turn, to make a claim about the nature of relation.

At the beginning of the Categories, Aristotle distinguishes between two sub-classes of substance ( $\text{OYBIX}$ ): primary and secondary.<sup>1</sup> The first sense of substance is declared to be "truest" sense of the word and is defined as "that which is neither predicable of a subject nor present in a subject; for instance the individual man

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<sup>1</sup>Categories 2<sup>a</sup> 11-19.

or horse."<sup>1</sup> Secondary substance is, on the other hand, said to refer to the two universals predicable of all, for example, individual men: the species (e.g., man, the more specific universal) and the genus (e.g., animal, the more general universal).

After setting up such a distinction, Aristotle proceeds to give us a profile of primary substance.<sup>2</sup> It is a self-subsistent unit. It cannot be predicated of another thing as it has no contrary. It does not vary in degree and so it is not an attribute of something else. Though it never changes in its essential nature, it is the seat of change. It is in short, the concrete, existing individual.

But ousia is a troublesome word. For in the Metaphysics Aristotle states that no universal can be a substance:

For it seems impossible that any universal term should be the name of a substance. For firstly that substance of each thing is that which is peculiar to it, which does not belong to anything else; but the universal is common, since that is called universal which is such as to belong to more than one thing. Of which individual

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. 11-13.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 1a 21-2<sup>b</sup> 21; 3<sup>b</sup> 10-4<sup>a</sup> 21; Metaphysics 1028<sup>a</sup> 10-1030<sup>b</sup> 6; Helm, p. 30.

then will this be the substance? Either of all or of none; but it cannot be the substance of all. And if it is to be the substance of one, this one will be the others also; for things whose substance is one and whose essence is one are themselves also one. Further, substance means that which is not predicable of a subject, but the universal is predicable of some subject always.<sup>1</sup>

And thus he denies the secondary sense of substance as given in the Categories. Furthermore he declares that form (μορφή καὶ εἶδος ) or essence<sup>2</sup> is the primary substance: "By form I mean the essence of each thing and its primary substance."<sup>3</sup> Does the teaching of the Categories conflict with that of the Metaphysics?

Contrary to Dupréel, De Rijk and others,<sup>4</sup> I think not. It seems rather that the meaning of substance in the Metaphysics is a refinement of the meaning of substance as

<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1038<sup>b</sup> 8-16; See also Ibid. 1041<sup>a</sup> 5.

<sup>2</sup>John Herman Randall, Jr. notes that though there are half a dozen Greek words that can be so translated, strictly speaking the word 'essence' is a Latin invention (Aristotle [New York: Columbia University Press, 1965], p. 47, f. 13).

<sup>3</sup>Metaphysics 1032<sup>b</sup> 1; See also Ibid 1037<sup>a</sup> 28.

<sup>4</sup>Owens, Review of Metaphysics, XIV, 83-84. For Joseph Owens' discussion of the relation between form and the individual thing in Aristotle, see The Doctrine of Being in Aristotle's Metaphysics (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1957).

presented in the Categories, for the following reasons.

From both the logical and ontological viewpoints, substance is the ultimate subject, of discourse and of predication.<sup>1</sup> All else is predicated of it. Furthermore, in both works, substance primarily refers to this here thing.<sup>2</sup> But the Metaphysics, specifically book 7, goes on to deal with the issue of what makes a specific thing be what it is--question not raised in the logic and rightly so, as it is not a logical question. The answer of book 7: the essence. But Aristotle does not define essence as one might suspect--as what is common to each individual of a particular sort, e.g., as humanity is common to all men. What he means by essence is this: "The essence is precisely what something is."<sup>3</sup> And again, "Clearly then, each primary and self-subsistent thing is one and the same as its essence."<sup>4</sup> So the thing and its essence are identical. The essence is the principle of

<sup>1</sup>Categories 2<sup>a</sup> 11-13; Metaphysics 1029<sup>a</sup> 6-8.

<sup>2</sup>Metaphysics 1029<sup>b</sup> 14; 1039a 1; 1039a 16.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. 1031<sup>a</sup> 2.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. 1032a 5-6.

the structure of this individual thing, not of all individuals like it. It is what makes a thing this particular thing. Thus, though the Metaphysics drops the secondary sense of substance, it adopts and refines the primary sense of substance as given in the Categories. In both works, substance means the concrete thing. And this shall be the meaning of the term 'substance' throughout this paper.

Substance is a category because even though all else is predicated of it, it still can function as a predicate. The most general response to the question 'What is it?' is 'It is an individual thing'. Hence the first category can function as a predicate, even though it is, properly speaking, the ultimate subject.

The nine other categories by contrast are, properly speaking, predicates, and are held to be accidental by nature. What does this mean? To be an accident, according to Aristotle,<sup>1</sup> is to be a concomitant of substance --something which is "external"<sup>2</sup> to the individual thing.

<sup>1</sup>Topics 102<sup>b</sup> 4-46; Metaphysics 1025<sup>a</sup> 14-35.

<sup>2</sup>Metaphysics 1025<sup>a</sup> 35.

For Aristotle, how big a thing is (quantity), of what sort it is (quality) or of/to what it belongs (relation) is irrelevant to a thing's being what it is ( $\tau\lambda\ \epsilon\sigma\tau\lambda$ ). A clear cut line is thus drawn between the accidental and the essential, and relation is confined to the accidental realm.

In drawing this distinction, Aristotle is not saying that a thing can exist stripped of all accidents. Indeed, a thing to be at all must have accidents; a relationless, qualityless, quantityless existing substance is an impossibility in Aristotelian terms. In this sense then accidents are essential. But the point of the distinction is not that a thing may exist apart from all accidents, but that a thing may exist apart from any specific accident and still be, essentially, the same thing. All relations are hence held by Aristotle to be non-defining and as such extraneous. On this point, Hegel will prove to be a powerful contender.

But relation, Aristotle continues, because it is a category, is nevertheless said to be real, or a mode of being. This means that relation is grounded in individual existents and is not merely a convenient conceptual device, a useful way of describing things. To say that

something is relative is therefore not dependent upon language alone; such a statement can depend upon the way things are.

This concludes a sketch of the Aristotelian position in general. Such a sketch is by no means claimed to be complete. Rather it is highly selective, treating only those aspects of Aristotle's philosophy relevant to the task of this thesis. We have established what the categories are for Aristotle, what he means when he says they are ontologically based and why substance is a category. We have stated what we take the nature of substance to be, both in its primary and secondary sense; we have given a profile of the nature of substance and have delineated the differences between essence and accident. Such a sketch was necessary for it sets up the terms of Aristotle's inconsistency.

My purpose in the following section is to make an exhaustive analysis of Aristotle's discussion of relatives.<sup>1</sup> This will provide the framework for an examination of the meaning and repercussions of such an

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<sup>1</sup>Aristotle, as we shall see, had no word for relation. Thus the word 'relative' or the phrase 'relative term' is more precise.

interpretation. Such an analysis will concentrate on chapter 7 of the Categories and chapter 15 of the Metaphysics, book v, for it is here that Aristotle most clearly commits himself to a specific reading of the nature of relation.

Chapter 7 of the Categories, the chapter devoted to a discussion of relative terms, opens with a definition:

Those things are called relative, which, being either said to be of something else or related to something else, are explained by reference to that thing.<sup>1</sup>

This definition, Babin notes,<sup>2</sup> comprises two classes of relatives--those whose relation is expressed by the genitive,<sup>3</sup> as 'double', 'science', 'disposition',

<sup>1</sup>Categories 6<sup>a</sup> 35-38.

<sup>2</sup>A. Eugène Babin, "The Theory of Opposition in Aristotle" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Philosophy, Notre Dame University), p. 3. This dissertation was found to be very helpful, as will be evident from the plethora of footnotes throughout our analysis.

<sup>3</sup>The Loeb translation points out, as does Ackrill in the notes to his translation of the Categories, that, unlike English, 'of' and 'than' both represent the Greek genitive (The Organon, trans. H. P. Cooke, H. Tredennick and E. S. Forster [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938] I, 46; Categories and De Interpretatione, trans. J. L. Ackrill Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1966, p. 98).

'perception', 'position', and those whose relation is expressed via the dative, accusative or ablative, as 'the knowable', 'the similar', 'the perceptible' and 'the large'. Having proffered a definition and embellished it with illustrations, Aristotle proceeds to establish tentatively the properties of relative terms.

The properties proposed by Aristotle are four: contrariety, variation of degree, correlativity and natural co-existence. We shall examine each in turn.

The first property is found to be limited in scope, for while some relatives admit of contrariety, such as vice or ignorance, others, like double, do not. Double provides the exception to the second property as well, for it does not vary in degree like other relatives such as similarity or equality. But the third characteristic --correlativity--is said to be predicable of all relative terms. A difference in case does not constitute an exception to this according to Aristotle: though perception is of the perceptible, while the perceptible is such to perception both are nonetheless correlatives. Nor does the fact that the correlative term is not always apparent. For this is due either to the dearth of strictly reciprocal terms (e.g., the rudder has no proper term that specifies that to which it is related; the wing or the rudder is not

related to a bird or a boat, for bats are winged and there are boats without rudders, but to the winged or the ruddered) or to the mis-use of language (e.g., when the slave is referred not to a master, but to a biped or a man, the correlation will not appear, for not all bipeds/men possess slaves). And, having dealt with the counter-examples, Aristotle concludes that correlativity has a catholic application to all relative terms. If correctly stated, all relative terms have a correlative.

The length (over a third of the Chapter) to which Aristotle goes to establish and defend the property of reciprocity of relative terms is striking. Not content with multifarious examples and extensive explanations, Aristotle also offers a method<sup>1</sup> for locating the correct correlative of each relative. Aristotle's insistence on this point should be underscored, for reciprocity is to become the specific difference of relative terms proper.

Finally, Aristotle analyzes the fourth possible property of relatives--natural co-existence. Relatives

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<sup>1</sup>Categories 7<sup>a</sup> 23-7<sup>b</sup> 15. The method consists in removing all attributes which are irrelevant or accidental to the correlative.

appear to exist together by nature and to disappear simultaneously (without a master, no slave; without a half, no double). Exception is taken however with knowledge and perception, for though knowledge is dependent upon knowable objects, the dependence, according to Aristotle, is not returned. To the epistemological realist, the knowable and the perceptible have a natural (temporal, logical, ontological) priority.<sup>1</sup> Such an exception will soon be seen to have enough importance to constitute a unique type of relative.

With this, the first part of the treatise on relatives ends. Having offered a definition and, by means of examples, drawn up four marks of relative terms, only one of which is inviolable, Aristotle turns to deal with the question of whether substance in whole or part is relative; and seeking to evade an affirmative answer, he introduces a revised criterion for being relative.

Concerning primary substances, Aristotle has no apparent difficulty responding in the negative, for neither in whole nor in part are they relative in the sense defined above. Indeed, they are declared to be

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<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1010<sup>b</sup> 30-1011<sup>a</sup> 1.

absolute by their very nature. As Babin puts it,<sup>1</sup> when speaking of this man or of a certain ox one does not say, in point of fact it is linguistically improper to say,<sup>2</sup> that he or it is a man or ox of something; and the same principle applies to their parts. This hand is not called a hand of something or someone. So, too, generally, with secondary substances, when one refers to the wood, one need not (though it is linguistically correct to do so) be referring to the wood of somebody (in so far as it is the species 'wood' and not somebody's property). But the case is not so clear with the parts or secondary substances. If one said: the head, it is not natural to ask, the of whom? Such terms appear to be relative.

But this would contradict Aristotle's statement in Chapter 5 of the Categories to the effect that secondary substances and consequently their parts are qualifications of the primary substance, to be taken absolutely and not with regard to something. Furthermore, for Aristotle, genus and species are, as we shall see,<sup>3</sup> predicables

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<sup>1</sup>Babin, pp. 8-9.

<sup>2</sup>Ackrill points this out, p. 101.

<sup>3</sup>Topics 100<sup>a</sup> 18-102<sup>b</sup> 26; see below, pp. 44-46.

not predicaments and as such they constitute a different type and order of relation, referring to relation between terms which are not necessarily relative and not between relative things. Finally, Aristotle was concerned to find a definition of relation proper which would remove it from any connection to other categories (specifically the category of substance), allotting in its peculiar sphere. For according to Aristotle, no category can be reduced to any other.<sup>1</sup>

So Aristotle adopts a second and revised definition:

Those things only are properly called relative in the case of which relation to an external object is a necessary condition of existence. . . .<sup>2</sup>

According to this definition, being for a relative is impossible without being related to something; the relative has no being except in relation to something.<sup>3</sup> And,

<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1024<sup>b</sup> 12-16.

<sup>2</sup>Categories 8<sup>a</sup> 32-34; see also Topics 142<sup>a</sup> 28; 145<sup>a</sup> 13-32; 146<sup>b</sup> 3-5.

<sup>3</sup>In the Topics (146<sup>a</sup> 3-5), Aristotle goes further: the being of a relative is said to be "identical" with, and thus equivalent to, being in relation to something. Being in relation to something thus becomes a sufficient condition of a proper relative. But the criterion stated in the Categories is sufficient for our purposes.

Aristotle continues, the fact that something may be explained with reference to something else "does not make it essentially relative."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, according to this stronger criterion, "if a man apprehends some relative thing definitely, he necessarily knows that also definitely to which it is related."<sup>2</sup> That is, to know any relative, we must of necessity know that to which it is related. Why? Because to know a thing means to grasp its essence, and in this case its essence is to be relative. If x is declared to be more beautiful than y or 24 the double of 12, the statement is not fully meaningful unless one known the less beautiful object or the half.

Of course, one could object, as does Ackrill,<sup>3</sup> and say that one can know that 1,534 is half of some other number without knowing what that number is, or that Alpius is a slave without being acquainted with his master. Surely one knows that every human is a daughter or son without knowing of whom each is the son or the daughter.

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<sup>1</sup>Categories 8a 33.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 8b 13-14.

<sup>3</sup>Akrill, p. 102.

This objection is crucial because epistemological correlation turns out to be the specific test of pure relatives. But what Aristotle meant to stress was that one could not "definitely know"<sup>1</sup> 1,534 as a half or Alpius as a slave or x as a daughter, that is as relatives, unless one also knew the respective correlatives. As Aristotle puts it: "For if he does not know at all that to which it is related, he will not know whether or not it is relative."<sup>2</sup> Thus the above objection, while true, becomes irrelevant.

With this definition in tow, Aristotle can establish that no substance whatsoever, i.e., primarily or secondarily, in part or in whole, is relative. For one can essentially know what a hand is or the hand is without referring to anything else. It can be know en soi, absolutely. Its being does not consist in being related to somebody or something. And, conversely, one cannot know whose hand this is simply by knowing what a hand is.

Thus Aristotle makes a distinction between proper and improper relatives. The first definition is not so

<sup>1</sup>Categories 8<sup>a</sup> 35.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 8<sup>b</sup> 2-4.

much wrong as insufficient, for it covers all the cases of relatives indiscriminately, applying analogously to both kinds of relatives. Its main weakness is that it includes all things which are predicated of some other thing in any way whatsoever.<sup>1</sup> Both definitions cover those things which are said to be relative or towards something else, ad aliquid. But to be said (dicitur, λέγεται) of other things according to one's being is not the same as to have (se habet, ΕΧΕΙΝ)<sup>2</sup> one's being in relation to something else; one is linguistic, the other is ontological. And the τό εἶναι τάντιόν, peculiar to the second definition, is used to specify the mode according to which the relative is towards something else, not, as Babin puts it,<sup>3</sup> quocumque modo, but simpliciter.

While a relative proper cannot be known in itself but must be known qua πρὸς τι, an improper relative is only secondarily and in a derivative way related to something external. The Scholastics<sup>4</sup> expressed the distinction as

<sup>1</sup>This applies to predicables, as we shall see (below, p. 44), and to all the categorical accidents, for as non-substance terms they are all dependent upon substance (e.g., tranquility must be someone's/thing's).

<sup>2</sup>Babin, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>4</sup>Below, pp. 130-31.

relatives secundum dici and secundum esse. So the distinguishing feature of pure relatives is seen to be a strict reciprocity of correlation between the terms: a linguistic or terminological correlation (for the term to be a proper one according to linguistic rules it must have a correlative), an epistemological correlation (the two terms are known simultaneously and in a definite manner), and an ontological correlation (the very existence of each depends upon the existence of the other). The last correlation provides the raison d'être of the second, for it is because they naturally exist together that they are known together.

Aristotle concludes chapter 7 on a cautious note: "It is no easy matter to take any definite stand on these problems without making many inquiries."<sup>1</sup> Let us take heed.

Babin brings up the point<sup>2</sup> that if correlation (which Aristotle went to such pains to establish as being common to all relatives, wings and heads as well as doubles and slaves) is shared by all relatives,<sup>3</sup> how can

<sup>1</sup>Categories 8<sup>b</sup> 22-23.

<sup>2</sup>Babin, pp. 19-20.

<sup>3</sup>"All relatives have correlatives." (Categories 6<sup>b</sup> 29-30.).

it be the distinctive difference of proper relatives? The answer is found in the Metaphysics, book V, chapter 15, where Aristotle distinguishes between determined and undetermined relations. In the case of pure relations, the correlation is determined (e.g., as double is to one), whereas in the case of improper relatives, it is undetermined (e.g., as the many is to the one, for many could be any number greater than one). So correlation is a term capable of degrees of refinement, and epistemological correlation becomes the critical test of proper relatives, for if the correlation is undetermined, one cannot know the correlative term. Science is science of the knowable, but which science and of which knowable? On the contrary, however, one cannot know a double unless one simultaneously knows that of which it is the double.

Babin then<sup>1</sup> gives a summary of the two definitions and their corresponding properties. There are two definitions and their corresponding properties. There are two distinct kinds of relatives, proper or pure and improper and impure. The latter are those things which are merely predicated of others; their existence is not

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<sup>1</sup>Babin, p. 21.

jeopardized by the removal of such a relation. They are either parts of substances (the head or the hand) or qualities (knowledge, perception, disposition, vice). They have only one common property: correlation (undetermined).<sup>1</sup> The proper relatives are ontologically dependent on another and for this reason they constitute a category of their own. They have three properties: natural co-existence, simultaneity of knowledge and correlation (determined).

Now there is one serious objection to the interpretation of relation as being a distinct category

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<sup>1</sup>The first two characteristics Aristotle dealt with (contrariety and variation of degree) are now properties peculiar to any kind of relatives as such, while the fourth mark (natural co-existence) applies only to pure relatives. The first two properties are common to action, affection and qualities. Moreover, vice as an improper relative (a quality) has a contrary; the same is true of knowledge. But they admit of contrariety as qualities, not as relatives (Babin, p. 21, f. 96). Knowledge is not contrary to the knowable, but to ignorance; vice is not contrary to the unjust. So too, like and equal admit of degrees, but as qualities or quantities, not in so far as they are related to something. This clears up John Peter Anton's difficulty (Aristotle's Theory of Opposition [London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1957], p. 56). For he suggests that though we are told that virtue and vice are contrary as relatives (Categories 6<sup>b</sup> 15-20), Aristotle must have used the term 'contrary' in a "non-technical sense," for Aristotle admits that there is no change in relatives (Metaphysics 1088<sup>a</sup> 27-35), and contrariety is necessarily linked to process, change and development (Anton, p. 61). Virtue and vice are contraries as qualities, which do admit of change.

unlike any other. This challenge comes in chapter 8 of the Categories, the treatise on quality. For Aristotle had spoken of knowledge, habit and disposition as relatives in chapter 7 and now he speaks of them as qualities. He had made the remark<sup>1</sup> that though position as such is a relative, this particular position, e.g., sitting, is not. Where is the clear distinction between the two?

Here: "The genus is relative, the individual not. . . ." <sup>2</sup> Knowledge, as a genus, is explained by reference to another, knowledge of something. But each specific kind of knowledge, music for example, is not dependent upon, or relative to, anything external to its subject matter. Music is a kind of knowledge, not music of something. The particular sciences are qualities; only their genera are relatives. And Aristotle adds (to be safe): "Moreover, if anything happened to be both a relative and a quality, it would not be absurd to include it in both these genera."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Categories 6<sup>b</sup> 15-20; see also Topics 125<sup>a</sup> 35.

<sup>2</sup>Categories 11<sup>a</sup> 23; see also Topics 147<sup>a</sup> 23-31; Metaphysics 1021<sup>b</sup> 5.

<sup>3</sup>Categories 11<sup>a</sup> 38-40.

Pacius, the Latin commentator of the sixteenth century, raises the objection: is it not absurd to place a genus in one category and a species in another, for one is part of another? And Aristotle himself declares that: "The genus must fall under the same division as the species; . . . if the species be a quality, so too the genus should be a quality."<sup>1</sup> But Aristotle, anticipating the scholastic distinction between the orders of specification and exercise, answers:<sup>2</sup> primarily and properly speaking, knowledge/science is a quality of the mind, but it is improperly and secondarily a relative.

The distinction between pure and impure relatives is central therefore, for if by relative all Aristotle meant was that it bore a reference to something else, then all the other categories could be said to be relative, and relation would, according to the doctrine of the categories, be primary. But while Aristotle allows for attributing the category 'relation' to other categories, the other category does not become primarily relative, i.e., not definitely knowable unless related to something.

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<sup>1</sup>Topics 121<sup>a</sup> 8-9; see also Ibid. 124<sup>b</sup> 38; 147<sup>a</sup> 23-31.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 124<sup>b</sup> 15-35; see also Babin, pp. 22-24.

We can now turn to chapter 15 of book v of the Metaphysics, where Aristotle again classifies relatives, though the principle of classification is not, like chapter 7, according to the propria ratio or essence of relatives as such, but according to the species of both types of relatives.<sup>1</sup> There are three kinds, whose distinction rests upon their respective fundamentals: relatives in number, as double to half or that which exceeds to that which is exceeded, relatives according to the active and the passive, as that which can heat to that which can be heated, and relatives according to the measure and the measured, as the known to knowledge or the perceived to perception.

The first type of relatives, which is based on quantity<sup>2</sup> (as one and many), may be, Aristotle remarks, related either indefinitely or definitely (the double is definitely related to its half, while the many is indefinitely related to the one). But of all these

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<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1020<sup>b</sup> 26-1021<sup>b</sup> 11; see also Physics 200<sup>b</sup> 29; Babin, pp. 25-33.

<sup>2</sup>Quantity must be taken here in its improper sense; otherwise quantity would, in itself, be a relative, and the category of relation would swallow up all the other categories.

relatives, Aristotle declares, one is the principle and measure, as they are all determinations of number, though in different ways (definitely or indefinitely).<sup>1</sup> The second type, based on quality<sup>2</sup> (as active and passive), refers to relations between the active and the passive potency and the acts of these potencies (that is, that which heats is related to that which is capable of being heated, because it can heat, as an active being). And while the actualizations of numerical relations is one of only formal causality,<sup>3</sup> the actualizations of the relative according to active and passive potency is one of efficient causality. Included in this division are temporal relations, some social relations (e.g., father and son, for one has acted and the other has been acted upon), and relative terms which imply the privation of potency, such as 'incapable', 'indivisible' and the like. In conclusion, Aristotle remarks that terms relative in number or potency,

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<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1056<sup>b</sup> 32-1057<sup>a</sup> 16.

<sup>2</sup>Likewise, the second type is not based on quality taken in itself (e.g., heat is not, properly speaking, a relative, but a quality), but on quality as a potency, both active and passive, and as a principle of action.

<sup>3</sup>This is so because mathematical objects are unchangeable and thus are not subject to movement (Metaphysics 1046<sup>a</sup> 1).

are relative according to their very being, essentially, and not because something else is referred to them.

This characteristic of non-mutuality, just denied of the former two, is the distinguishing mark of the third type--things which are called relative because something else is referred to them, e.g., the measured, the known and the thought. Being (as measure--measured) is their basis.<sup>1</sup> Knowledge and the knowable is related to knowledge only because knowledge is related to it. The relationship in this direction is thus secondary because derivative. "All knowledge is knowable but not all that is knowable is knowledge," says Aristotle.<sup>2</sup> The knowable is the measure and is said to be relative only because of something else, the measured.<sup>3</sup> Unlike Hegel, for whom,

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<sup>1</sup>That is, any being is their basis in so far as it has the property of a measure for things (and Babin, p. 30, translates this to mean: as it is the cause whereby something else exists and is known). Thus, substance would qualify here, being the cause of the existence of accidents and the principle whereby they are known; act and form would also meet the requirements, as matter is relative to form and as being in potency exists by and is known through being in act.

<sup>2</sup>Metaphysics 1057<sup>a</sup> 10-11.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. 1053<sup>a</sup> 31-33.

as we shall see,<sup>1</sup> an object is not fully real until it has been apprehended by thought--an act which discloses its rational structure--the act of knowing has for Aristotle so little effect on the known that no real relation is produced due to such an activity.<sup>2</sup> Knowledge is hence determined by such a relation,<sup>3</sup> but the knowable is impervious to being known.

To these main species, Aristotle adds three more: those things which are said to be relative (1) because their genera are (medicine is relative because its genus,

<sup>1</sup>Below, pp. 239-40, 268-69, 296-303, 346-47.

<sup>2</sup>Metaphysics 1050<sup>a</sup> 23-27. Though his position is clearly implied by this third species of relatives, Aristotle never confronted this issue directly, and thus he never dealt with any counter-examples (e.g., the changes which result from a person being known). I grant that for Aristotle the known is the universal or the intelligible form, but could not a person's realization of his form or essence be altered through his being known by somebody?

<sup>3</sup>In fact, Aristotle went so far as to say that the sense organ was actually assimilated to the object through the activity of sensing, e.g., the eye colored, the tongue flavored, et al. (De Anima 425<sup>b</sup> 22; W. D. Ross, Aristotle: A Complete Exposition of His Works and Thoughts [New York: The World Publishing Co., 1959], p. 135). Moreover, thought was nothing but "a certain capacity" according to Aristotle, and the mind before it thinks was "not actually any real thing." (De Anima 429<sup>a</sup> 20-25.) It was pure potency, a tabula rasa (De Anima 430<sup>a</sup> 1), and had, as such, no nature of its own. To quote Aristotle: "Actual knowledge is identical with its object." (De Anima 430<sup>b</sup> 20.).

science, is said to be relative),<sup>1</sup> (2) because certain qualities are (equality, the property, is relative because the quality, equal, is), and (3) by accident (I might be relative because I happen to be half your size).

Babin suggests<sup>2</sup> that the basis of proper relatives are improper relations. Though Aristotle never makes such a statement, Babin's suggestion seems to be correct. For undetermined relations, as the one and the many, underlie determined relations, as the double and the half, for the double is a determined many. So too, father and son, what heats and what is heated, depend upon and are specifications of the undetermined relative, the active and the passive. For what is now actually heating/being heated was what was previously capable of heating/being heated; likewise the father of today was the potential procreator of yesterday. And heating and heated, generating and generated, are sub-divisions of the active and the passive.

Babin notes that this dependence is not so evident in the case of knowledge and perception, but this is because

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<sup>1</sup>Here we are speaking of 'genus' improperly.

<sup>2</sup>Babin, pp. 31-33.

knowledge as such is not purely a relative, and because there is no specific term like fatherhood or doubleness to directly express the relation (of 'knowledge-hood') possessed by the knowing man. We say of a number that it is twice another, thus expressing the relation doubleness possessed by this number. But we simply say of a man who knows that he is knowing. Despite this, a specific kind of knowledge is still a particularization of knowledge in general, and all present knowledge is, in turn, a determinate aspect of the knowable. Proper relatives, consequently, are differentiae of improper relatives and in this way are dependent upon them.

This chapter of the Metaphysics thus supplements the doctrine of relation put forth in the Categories, contributing some important points: on the kinds of species of relatives, on their fundamentals, which are, it turns out, improper relatives, and on a new species of non-mutual relatives. These last two points especially will soon be seen to be critical--the first for establishing the significance of relation according to Aristotle, the second for the development and application of the medieval notion of mixed relations.

And thus ends our exposition of the main sections of Aristotle's treatment of  $\tau\pi\rho\acute{o}s\ \tau\epsilon$ .

Before we begin our analysis of such a treatment and show what it involves, let us note one more point which may be teased out of Aristotle. Aristotle drew a distinction between the predicables and the predicaments.<sup>1</sup> In so doing, he implicitly distinguished between two orders of relations: the logical and the ontological.

Predicamental relations entail real relations between things, for example the relation between father and son<sup>2</sup> whose two terms are related just by virtue of what they are. Predicables, however, were simply the logical relations possible between a subject and a predicate,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The categories in Latin were called predicaments.

<sup>2</sup>This, however, is a sensitive example for the medievals, some of whom claimed that the relation of filiation for the Second Person of the Trinity was an ens rationis.

<sup>3</sup>Aristotle thought that four such relationships were possible: definition, property, genus and accident. Genus according to Aristotle included difference. The locus classicus of such a discussion of predicables is in the Topics 100<sup>a</sup> 18-102<sup>b</sup> 26. Porphyry was the one responsible for substituting the predicable 'species' for the original Aristotelian 'definition', and for making 'difference' a distinct predicable (Aristotle and Porphyry, The Organon or Logical Treatises of Aristotle with an Introduction of Porphyry, trans. O. F. Owen [2 vols.; London: George Bell and Sons, 1885-87]).

or the different ways in which a term (a universal) may be related to (can exist in) many individuals. Here the terms do not necessarily exist extramentally and thus the relationship can be between things and/or terms. Thus the diagram:

predicamental relation

father - paternity - son

a relation that constitutes the predicables

man - definition or species - rational animal

While paternity is a real relation based on something in the two terms of the relation, definition is merely a word which shows how that predicate relates to the subject.

Aristotle hence differentiated the logical relation of subject and predicate from the metaphysical relation of father and son, for instance.<sup>1</sup> The problem of predication and that of relation are thus clearly separated by Aristotle.<sup>2</sup> To specify the ways in which things are predicated of one another is not to exhaust the modes of

<sup>1</sup>Though in the former example, the relation is real in only one direction, from attribute to substance.

<sup>2</sup>Though, in fact, they may overlap. The answer to how two distinct things can or cannot be predicated of each other may involve certain ontological commitments, such as Aristotle's view that substances cannot be predicated of each other.

relationships between things. Man is an animal, but the double is not its half.

Aristotle was the first philosopher to corner and define the nature of the relative proper. But it is clear that he did so only to make sure that substance was not in any way contaminated by such a nature. His definition of relation was revised and his criterion of what is relative made stronger so as to rule out the possibility of any individual thing being essentially relative. The upshot of chapter 7 of the Categories and chapter 15 of the Metaphysics, book v, is clear. It is not relation which is the fundamental category for Aristotle. It is substance.

A substance is by nature prior to a relation into which it can enter: relatedness it, as it were, an offshoot or logical accident of substance.<sup>1</sup>

All the other categories, in fact everything else, including species and genera, exist by their relation to substance. "If it were not for the first substances it would be impossible for anything else to be."<sup>2</sup> The only relations substance is engaged in are non-mutual. If

<sup>1</sup>Nicomachean Ethics 1096<sup>a</sup> 20-22.

<sup>2</sup>Categories 2<sup>b</sup> 5-6; see also Metaphysics 1028<sup>a</sup> 13ff.; 1045<sup>b</sup> 25ff.; 1003<sup>b</sup> 16ff.; 1070<sup>b</sup> 30ff.; 1054<sup>a</sup> 18-20; 1069<sup>a</sup> 25; Posterior Analytics 73<sup>b</sup> 1-4; 81<sup>b</sup> 28; 83<sup>b</sup> 11-16.

substance is related to anything else, it is so only secondarily--because all other things are necessarily related to it.<sup>1</sup>

First substance is thus supreme in Aristotle's philosophy. It alone is independent.<sup>2</sup> And, being independent, it is devoid of any meaningful (i.e., non-accidental) relations.

But not only is relation confined to the status of an accident, and an essentially relationless substance declared to be primary. Relation is said to be totally insignificant.

But what is relative is least of all things a kind of entity or substance and is posterior to quality and quantity. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Despite the fact that he lists relation as one of the ten categories, and that therefore not all relations are logical, Aristotle asserts that it is the least substantial, that is, the least real, of all the categories. Why?

The first thing to note is that Aristotle is probably referring to relatives proper, for secondary

<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1070<sup>b</sup> 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 1028<sup>a</sup> 33; Physics 185<sup>a</sup> 32.

<sup>3</sup>Metaphysics 1088<sup>a</sup> 20.

substances were not excluded from the class of impure relatives. But pure relatives, as we have seen, are dependent upon undetermined or improper relatives, which, in turn, if not substantial themselves, are dependent upon substance. Relation thus is crippled by a special sort of dependence. It can be an accident of an accident.

If we examine Aristotle's strictures carefully, several more reasons for relation's announced triviality appear. Let us quote the text which belittles relation in full.

What is relative is least of all things a kind of entity or substance, and is posterior to quality and quantity; and the relative is an accident of quantity, as was said, not its matter, since something of a distinct nature of its own must serve as matter both to the relative in general and to its parts and kinds. For there is nothing either great or small, many or few, or, in general, relative to something else, which without having a nature of its own is many or few, great or small, or relative to something else. A sign that the relative is least of all a substance and a real thing is the fact that it alone has no proper generation or destruction or movement, as in respect of quantity there is increase and diminution, in respect of quality alteration, in respect of place locomotion, in respect of substance simple generation and destruction. In respect of relation there is no proper change.<sup>1</sup>

Relation, it is maintained, has no effect on process, change or movement, for a variation in the relative

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid 20-34.

attributes of a thing does not affect the thing's nature intrinsically. If any, change vis à vis relation is due to an alternation in one of the relative terms and this is an accidental change. "In respect of relation there is no proper change; for, without changing, a thing will now be greater and now less or equal. . . ."1 "There is no movement in respect of . . . relation (for it is possible that if one of two things in relation changes, the relative term which was true of the other thing ceases to be true, though this other does not change at all--so that their movement is accidental). . . ."2 Apart from substantial change there are, it turns out, only three kinds of motion or change for Aristotle: change of quantity, of quality and of place.<sup>3</sup> Anton comments:

Change in relations is contingent upon more fundamental processes: substantial, qualitative, quantitative, and spatio-temporal.<sup>4</sup> What is challenged in the above quotation is not the ubiquity and universality of relation but its significance as a standard of reference and its degree of being.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. 34-36; see also Physics 225<sup>b</sup> 11.

<sup>2</sup>Metaphysics 1068a 10-14.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. 9.

<sup>4</sup>See Physics 225<sup>b</sup> 5-9.

<sup>5</sup>Anton, p. 162.

Relation's contingency on other processes to implement change is hence a signal for Aristotle that relation could not be significant.

Moreover, the above quotation implies that relation's reality is tenuous as substance is the measuring-stick of what it means to be real. And, in fact, if we rate relation in terms of the main characteristics of substance, it possesses none of them: relation must be in a subject, it admits of contraries, of degrees and of variation, and it cannot entertain contrary qualities.<sup>1</sup> As Cassirer in his book on Substance and Function puts it:

Only in a fixed thing—like substratum which must first be given, can the logical and grammatical varieties of being in general find their ground and real application. Quantity and quality, space and time determinations, do not exist in and for themselves, but merely as properties of absolute realities which exist by themselves. The category of relation especially is forced into a dependent and subordinate position by this fundamental metaphysical doctrine of Aristotle. Relation is not independent of the concept of real being; it can only add supplementary and external modifications to the latter, such as do not affect the real 'Nature'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Categories 3<sup>b</sup> 10-19.

<sup>2</sup>Ernst Cassirer, Substance and Function, and Einstein's Theory of Relativity, trans. W. C. Swabey and M. C. Swabey (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1923), pp. 8-9.

Relation is thus forced into a position of irrelevance by Aristotle's doctrine of substance.

Finally, the above quotation contains the most basic reason for the depreciation of relation. A thing, it is claimed, must have a distinct nature of its own to be relative to something else. That is, a thing has to be something to be related--a seemingly innocent and superficially compelling doctrine.

This is how, then, relative terms come to stand for the least determinate and constant feature of existence.

But Aristotle not only found relations to be peripheral. He went further, and, in effect, eliminated relation altogether.

Like Leibniz, Aristotle, notwithstanding his (debatable<sup>1</sup>) recognition of relational judgments,

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<sup>1</sup>I. M. Bochenski thinks that Aristotle both recognized the logic of relations and offered a number of laws to govern relations (A History of Formal Logic, trans. and ed. Ivo Thomas [Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961], pp. 95-97; Ancient Formal Logic [Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1963], p. 68). But in the Prior Analytics (40<sup>b</sup> 23), Aristotle claims that all valid arguments involve syllogistic reasoning of the categorical sort, thus implying that relational syllogisms were reducible to the categorical syllogism. Moreover, Bochenski's opinion is opposed by both Ross and William and Martha Kneale (Ross, p. 40; The Development of Logic [Oxford: The

believed that every position was reducible to the attribution of a predicate to a subject, which inheres in it like a quality.<sup>1</sup> For, according to Aristotle, every sentence can be squeezed into the subject-predicate form.<sup>2</sup> That is, he believed that every sentence ultimately states that something necessarily belongs or may belong to

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[Clarendon Press, 1962], pp. 96-100, 128), and it goes directly against De Morgan's famous reproach that the whole of Aristotle's logic could not prove that because the horse is an animal, the head of a horse is the head of an animal.

<sup>1</sup>Bertrand Russell, A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz (London: George, Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1900); The Problems of Philosophy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 94-95. While I insist with Russell on the irreducibility of relational propositions, I do so for different reasons. He maintains that a denial of such irreducibility leads to monism, while I maintain that it can lead, as with Aristotle, to a form of monadism. For even if one believes that all propositions are of the subject-predicate form, one need not be committed to the position that ultimately everything constitutes the environment of one subject. It is still possible for a Russellian to hold that there are many independent substances, whose interactions are always trivial.

<sup>2</sup>"Everything is predicated of substance as subject." (Physics 185<sup>a</sup> 32.) "Now the same relation which subsists between primary substance and everything else also exists between the species and the genus, for the species is to the genus as subject is to predicate, since the genus is predicate of the species . . . and not vice-versa. . . ." (Categories 2<sup>b</sup> 18-21.) See also Ibid. 3<sup>a</sup> 1-3.

something else.<sup>1</sup> And this 'something' was substance, the ultimate subject. Just as substance was the central category of the logic, it was the primary form of being--all else was derivative from it and thus definable in terms of it.

But, contrary to Aristotle, some sentences are not convertible into the subject-predicate form. The proposition 'The tortoise is an awkward lover' attributes a quality to a substantive; but the proposition 'Most lizards are larger than a preying mantis' asserts a quality neither of the lizard, nor of the preying mantis, nor a common attribute of both, such as different magnitudes of both. Rather, it expresses a relationship between them. Such a relation may be based<sup>2</sup> on a quality (e.g., the certain size of both) and may generate a relational property (e.g., large than), but this is not to say that it is reducible to the quality.<sup>3</sup> And so, relations cannot be translated

<sup>1</sup>Categories 2<sup>a</sup> 34; Prior Analytics 25<sup>a</sup> 1ff.

<sup>2</sup>Relations are not based on qualities ultimately however. Hegel will argue, and we shall concur, that qualities can be successfully dealt with in terms of quantified relations (below, pp. 257-59).

<sup>3</sup>John Ellis McTaggart, The Nature of Existence (Cambridge, Eng.: The University Press, 1921-27), I, 83.

into predicates. They are autonomous.

Though he did at one point distinguish affections (παθή) from relations (πρός τι),<sup>1</sup> in piling up attributes to define his cherished primary substance, Aristotle slighted this fact. He maintained that relational propositions were attributes and thus that relations were reducible to qualities or attributes. Cassirer speaks of such reduction as the predominate viewpoint of Aristotle:

The fundamental categorical relation of the thing to its properties remains henceforth the guiding point of view; while relational determinations are only considered in so far as they can be transformed, by some sort of mediation, into properties of a subject or of a plurality of subjects.<sup>2</sup>

The assumption that led to this subject-predicate logic, and its counterpart, the substance-attribute ontology, is clear. There is no place for anything in Aristotle's universe if it is not predicable of some subject. To exist, anything other than substance must inhere in an absolute substance. On such a platform, relations are dispensable: if they do not inhere, they do not exist, and if they do inhere, they are "inconsequential

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<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1089<sup>b</sup> 20.

<sup>2</sup>Cassirer, pp. 8-9.

hangers-on to qualities."<sup>1</sup> To make relation a phase of an object is, in effect, to make relation evaporate.

But the assumption behind such a platform is illegitimate. As McTaggart puts it:

There is no justification for the assumption that a relation is impossible, if it cannot inhere in something as a quality does. To the question 'in what is a relation?' we may fairly answer that it is not in anything, but that it is between two or more terms, or between a term and itself, and that the conception of 'between' is as ultimate as the conception of 'in', and has as much claim to be regarded as valid. Both are ultimate, neither contains any contradiction, and the justification of our use of both lies in the fact that it is impossible to state anything whatever without asserting or implying the reality of both qualities and relations.<sup>2</sup>

A thing, thus, does not (just) have a relation. In fact, as we shall see, it is a certain way because of its relations. Before we do, two qualifications.

The first qualification is simply the dismissal of a common misunderstanding. To maintain that relations are not in things is not therefore to hypostatize relations. They are not things. That is to make the same unwarranted assumption as Aristotle: existents either are things or

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<sup>1</sup>John Passmore, A Hundred Years of Philosophy (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1957), p. 126.

<sup>2</sup>McTaggart, I, 82.

are in things. As McTaggart points out, and as we shall illustrate later in this dissertation, the relational way of being is as legitimate as the substantial.

We are not, therefore, committing a category mistake, as Owens would accuse us of doing.<sup>1</sup> We are not placing something in an alien category--namely the category of relation in the category of substance. For we are not substantizing relation. What we shall do however, with Aquinas' analysis of the trinity as our model and Hegel's doctrine of the person as our guide, is to 'relationize' substance.

The second qualification is to note that Aristotle cannot be held completely responsible for being anti-relational. The Greek language offered no direct or immediate means to overcome it. While it afforded the most meagre tools for indicating the word 'relative',<sup>2</sup> it had no noun meaning 'relation'. This is not, however, to completely exonerate Aristotle--a word could have been invented. At any rate, to a Greek mind, there was de facto

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<sup>1</sup>Owens, Review of Metaphysics, XIV, 88.

<sup>2</sup>Aristotle had to exploit a preposition having the appropriate force (Ackrill, 78).

no distinction between a relative term and a relation.<sup>1</sup>

The limitation is indicative. For relation is more fundamental than relative terms: terms are related by a relation; relation makes terms into 'relative terms'. This concentration on the relata or terms of any relation, and blind spot vis à vis the actual activity of relating, underscores and in part accounts for Aristotle's preference for a substance ontology and a logic of attribution.

So in summation: Aristotle maintains that substance is primary, and that relation is accidental, the most nominal of the accidents, and dispensable. What I hope to show is that Aristotle was wrong on all counts. And, moreover, not only that Aristotle was wrong, but that he neatly anticipates this by contradicting himself. Let us begin by stating an objection to the above contentions.

Rorty's article on relation in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy plainly holds that Aristotle mediates between two extreme views--that all relations are essential or internal on the one hand, and that all relations are

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<sup>1</sup>MacKay, Studies in the Problem of Relations, p. 17. MacKay refers such an opinion to Sir William Hamilton, but he cites no reference.

accidental or external on the other<sup>1</sup>--maintaining that relations for Aristotle may be both.<sup>2</sup> As this undermines our thesis that for Aristotle all relations are accidental, almost unreal and dispensable, it deserves attention.

The author bases his opinion on the Aristotelian distinction between essence and accident, from which it follows that each thing stands in a necessary relation to some of its properties (versus the thesis of externality), and in a contingent relation to others (versus the thesis of internality), e.g., my humanity is essential to me absolutely, not just according to a convenient or habitual way of looking at me or describing me. As an essentialist, Aristotle held that some predicates necessarily apply.

That Aristotle distinguished between essence and accidents is undeniable, and that he had a doctrine of essential versus accidental attribution whereby an attribute is essentially related to a subject is true.<sup>3</sup> But to

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<sup>1</sup>For more precise definitions of these terms, see below, pp. 337-38. In the meantime, let us translate 'internal' as essential and 'external' as accidental.

<sup>2</sup>Encyclopedia of Philosophy, VII, 125-133.

<sup>3</sup>Posterior Analytics 73<sup>a</sup> 21-74<sup>a</sup> 3; Metaphysics 1007<sup>a</sup>

maintain that some attributes are essential to a subject's being what it is, is not to maintain, as we have seen, that some relations are essential. Moreover, certain predicates are necessarily related to every subject in the Aristotelian framework, but only in the logical domain. Ontologically speaking, a thing is and is not related to its primary being for Aristotle.<sup>1</sup> Finally, if Rorty is right, then Aristotle contradicts himself, for relation is clearly defined as being a categorical accident. All real relations are thus accidental, that is, external.

Aristotle does, in fact, contradict himself. But Rorty's misunderstanding might, in part, be due to an ambiguity in Aristotle himself which we shall treat first. MacKay neatly pinpoints it for us:

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<sup>1</sup>"Each individual thing is one and the same with its essence, and not merely incidentally, because to have knowledge of the individual is to have knowledge of its essence; so that it is evident that both must be identical." (Metaphysics 1031<sup>b</sup> 19-23.) Furthermore, Aristotle in the Topics (101<sup>a</sup> 25-101<sup>b</sup> 4), maintains that a subject and its definition are convertible. I think Aristotle is overstating himself here, for though the individual is his essence and though his form is more critical to his being than the material aspect of him (Metaphysics v. 7), the individual is not exhausted by his essence.

Aristotle, indeed, never doubts that there are certain necessary and demonstrable relations. Otherwise his theory of the syllogism, implying the validity of class inclusion and exclusion, would represent no more than a verbal manipulation. His problem is to show how individual substances, although they are essentially non-relative, do nevertheless stand in various relations to one another. The reference to something external to a substance, which is what constitutes its relations, cannot be any real part of its nature. It is difficult to understand, therefore, how any relations can be permanent and necessary if the modifications of things, in which relations inhere, are accidental and variable.<sup>1</sup>

So while one part of his logic, namely the doctrine set forth in the categories--and one that, as we have seen, reverberates throughout the Organon--denied essential relations, another aspect of his logic, namely his theory of the syllogism, demanded that some relations be necessary, that is, non-accidental. For the validity of any syllogism depends upon the way two extremes or terms relate to one another through the mediation of a middle terms. "Whenever three terms are so related to one another that the last is contained in the middle as in a whole, and the middle is either contained in, or excluded from, the first as in or from a whole, the extremes must

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<sup>1</sup>Studies in the Problem of Relations, pp. 18-19.

be related by a perfect syllogism."<sup>1</sup> And Aristotle goes on to say that if the relationship between the two extremes is not necessary, "there will be no syllogism."<sup>2</sup>

Such an ambiguity could be resolved by pointing out that the Categories denied essential relations which were real, while the structure of the syllogism in the Prior Analytics just required that there be necessary relations (e.g., relations of class inclusion) which were logical, and thus that the two viewpoints expressed in the logic do not in fact conflict. But such a resolution is complicated by the thesis stated by MacKay and argued for by Randall<sup>3</sup> that the Aristotelian syllogism is applicable to the real world. If this were the case, then the logical relations of the syllogism would be the correlate of real relations in nature, and both kinds would be necessary relations. To deny nature any necessary relations would be to confine the syllogism to the purely formal domain.

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<sup>1</sup>Prior Analytics 25<sup>b</sup> 32-34.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 26<sup>a</sup> 3; see also Ibid. 26<sup>b</sup> 26-28.

<sup>3</sup>Randall, pp. 48-51.

Aristotle was acutely aware of the problem of the relation between logic and metaphysics. It formed the basis of his criticism of Plato's realism of classes and the consequent doctrine that the relation of class inclusion was real. But the question being raised here is not whether Aristotle was aware of the problem, but whether he got around it.<sup>1</sup>

I think not. I agree with Randall's thesis that Aristotle was "no advocate of a logic without ontological implications,"<sup>2</sup> and hence that the syllogism, though an instrument, had a material component built in. For it would seem that Aristotle, as a realist and as a proponent of a science of species, would require that syllogistic reasoning be more than mere "verbal manipulation," as MacKay puts it.

But such a thesis can be contested. Aristotle never expressed such an opinion directly, and, in fact, his syllogistic, according to the careful textual analysis of

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<sup>1</sup>This point was brought to my attention by Dr. Walter Emge.

<sup>2</sup>Randall, p. 49.

Jan Lukasiewicz's work Aristotle's Syllogistic from the Standpoint of Modern Formal Logic,<sup>1</sup> both in terminology and in content deliberately avoids all metaphysical overtones. Thus Aristotle could still be consistent: relations, while logically necessary, could still be really accidental.

But while the conflict between relation as a categorical accident and relation as the guarantee of syllogistic validity and truth can be resolved by deleting the word 'truth', there is another and in fact more critical equivocality in Aristotle's philosophy, which we hope to show is less debatable.

Contrary to the doctrine of the syllogism, it is clearly established that the doctrine of the categories has ontological implications and is ontologically grounded.<sup>2</sup> The conclusions reached in the Categories, then, are metaphysical conclusions. And this point, plainly stated by Aristotle, is underscored by the fact that the doctrine

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<sup>1</sup>Jan Lukasiewicz, Aristotle's Syllogistic from the Standpoint of Modern Formal Logic (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957); see Randall, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Above, pp. 14-16.

set forth in the Categories is complimented by book v, chapter 15 of the Metaphysics.

But it is the contention of this dissertation that given Aristotle's interpretation of the nature of relation, all relations of any entity would necessarily be trivial. No relationship could make any significant difference to any thing. What the world turns out to be, according to such an interpretation, is a world of distinct and independent things--so distinct as to be pluralistic, so independent as to be isolated from each other: a pluralistic isolationism. But the ontology developed by Aristotle flatly contradicts such a conclusion. And thus the categories, declared to be the connecting link between the logic and the metaphysics, turn out to be the source of the fissure between the two.

Before, however, we expand this claim, elaborating on Aristotle's ontology to show how it is inconsistent with his logic, a critical objection must be dealt with. The objection is this.<sup>1</sup> To make all relations insignificant

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<sup>1</sup>This objection was raised by Dr. Walter Emge, and is implied by Rorty in his article in the Encyclopedia of Philosophy, VII, 125-133.

is not to bungle into atomic individualism as long as one has a doctrine of essential predication. Aristotle can afford to dispense with relations, for the properties of an individual thing provide an adequate substitute for relations, and set up a guard-rail against inconsistency.

I agree that Aristotle wanted (ideally, at least) a necessary science of species, and not a world of atomic entities. But I contend that what Aristotle did not realize was this: that his doctrine of relation was what had to accommodate such a science. He could not both remain consistent and shortchange relation. For the supposedly adequate substitute--essential properties--turns out to be contingent on the existence of essential relations.

To establish this point it is necessary to anticipate an argument developed by Hegel.<sup>1</sup> Hegel maintains that a

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<sup>1</sup>G. W. F. Hegel, Hegel's Science of Logic, trans. A. V. Miller (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1969), pp. 484-498; The Logic of Hegel, trans. W. Wallace (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904), pp. 231-241, pars. 124-131; see also below, pp. 260-63. The former work will be cited hereafter as Logic, and the latter as E. L., as it constitutes the first part of Hegel's Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences.

thing has no substantial existence apart from its properties. Stripped of its properties, a thing is a bare identity unrelieved by any distinction or difference, that is, an abstract void. A thing is therefore "not a substrate . . . lying beyond its external Existence."<sup>1</sup> It does not have properties; it is its properties. Moreover, Hegel continues, the distinctiveness of a thing stems from and in fact is due to its interactions with other things. For it is only by being set off from other things that any thing can have properties peculiar to it. That is, the nature of a thing is only brought out by opposing realities. As Hegel puts it:

(The thing-in-itself has colour only in relation to the eye, smell in relation to the nose, and so on.) Its diversity consists of the ways in which it is regarded by an other, specific relations which this other forms with the thing-in-itself and which are not the latter's own determinations.<sup>2</sup>

A thing's properties, that is, its very nature, is contingent upon a network of relations. And if all the relations within the network are trivial, so too are the properties.

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<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 488.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 485.

Thus Aristotle's doctrine of the essential properties of individuals hinges on his analysis of relation. Without essential relations there can be no essential properties. This is how Aristotle's interpretation of relation leads to a pluralistic isolationism, or worse, a universe of isolated blank one-knows-not-what. Now let us see how Aristotle's ontology conflicts with such an interpretation.

Aristotle is a thorough-going teleologist. Everything in nature, according to him, exists, either directly or indirectly, for an end. "For everything in nature exists for an end or else will be accessory to things which exist for an end. . . ."1 "Action for an end is present in things which come to be and are by nature. . . ."2 "Nature is for the sake of something. . . ."3 All natural processes, for Aristotle, (except the motion of the heavenly bodies which is eternal) have a terminus ad quem at which they naturally come to rest.<sup>4</sup> Each thing has its own distinctive end, peculiar to its species (e.g., man's

<sup>1</sup>De Anima 434<sup>a</sup> 30-31.

<sup>2</sup>Physics 199<sup>a</sup> 7-8.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. 198<sup>b</sup> 4; see also De Partibus Animalium 641<sup>b</sup> 24-642<sup>a</sup> 14.

<sup>4</sup>Ross, p. 70.

end, unique to his class, is to know), and within each is an impulse or drive (hormé) to realize that end. Aristotle's world is thus a world of processes, of things striving to fulfill themselves, that is, to reach their natural goal.

The goal can be internal;<sup>1</sup> man's telos for example is potentially within him. He has a specific nature, to know, and he can only become what he had the power to become: he cannot become a llama. His goal is hence to realize what he, in effect, is, to actualize his potentialities, or, in other words, his essence. As Aristotle puts it, things "become so because they are so and so," and not-vice-versa;<sup>2</sup> and in the Metaphysics he illustrates his meaning: a statue of Hermes, he says, has to be in the block of wood even before the sculptor sets to work on it.<sup>3</sup>

Teleological relations, therefore, turn out to be reducible to formal relations, for the essence of anything

<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1046<sup>a</sup> 1ff.; 1047<sup>b</sup> 30ff.

<sup>2</sup>De Generatione Animalium 778<sup>b</sup> 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>Metaphysics 1048<sup>a</sup> 32-34.

is the telos. But such a relation (let us call it the relation between means and end) is crucial to a thing's development. For even though according to Aristotle a thing is its essence and is not related to its essence, strictly speaking (e.g., I am rational otherwise I could not become so), yet genetically speaking, there is a sense, a critical sense, in which a thing is not what it could be--otherwise the distinction between potency and act would collapse--and so is related to its consummation.

Moreover, apart from the teleological (or formal) relations necessary to a thing's development (ones which were to be more fully explored by Hegel), a thing also needs the agency of something other than itself to actualize it. According to Aristotle any movement involves internal qualitative transformation: motion is defined as the actualization of the potential.<sup>1</sup> And even though the soul is specifically defined by Aristotle as the power of a living thing to move itself, whatever is needs to be stimulated to move itself or into motion by some outside agent. Without an environment to respond to, even the soul's

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<sup>1</sup>  
Physics 201a 10-12.

internal principle of motion to operate in a self-determined way would be impossible. The process of a thing's fulfillment is contingent therefore on its relations to an external stimulus, which provides the necessary (though not sufficient) conditions for a response of (self) actualization.

Aristotle tells us that the source of change is the desired, and that the Unmoved Mover originates motion by being the primary object of desire.<sup>1</sup> So the Unmoved Mover, though the mediation of the eternal rotation of the heavens, is the ultimate source of change. It is, as Ross puts it, the efficient cause by being the final cause.<sup>2</sup>

Aristotle's world is not therefore one of rigid and internally complete aggregates whose relations are always accidental. It is a world whose very being depends on its relations with outside stimuli. Relations, it turns out, make a thing be/come what it is.

Thus substance, seemingly so protected against any

<sup>1</sup>De Anima 433<sup>b</sup> 13-19; Metaphysics 1072<sup>a</sup> 20ff.

<sup>2</sup>Ross, p. 177; see also Physics, xiii; De Caelo ii. 3; De Generatione et Corruptione ii. 10; De Meteorologica i-iii.

contact with relative entities, comes down with a good case of the 'relative disease'. A thing has no life and activity except in relation to its context; Aristotle's assumption that a thing has to be something to be related is complimented by the fact that it has to be related to be something.

Hence all primary substances comply with the second definition and stronger criterion of what a relative is: relation to an external object is a necessary condition of existence. And secondary substance/forms, though they do not strictly speaking change (an acorn never becomes a dandelion), are capable of degrees of perfection, and without an actualizing agent, no essence would ever be completely incarnate.

Moreover, Aristotle's statement that a change in a thing's relations never implicates anything essential to that thing is overstated. If the Unmoved Mover were annihilated, the world would be frozen, in potentia; if the Unmoved Mover were to change, surely the response of the world to its stimulus would also.

But does the critical test of proper relatives--epistemological correlation--apply? To know a substance, must one know it in terms of its relations? As relations

are held to be accidental, Aristotle declares that they may be left out of the definition of anything without incurring any dire consequences.<sup>1</sup> Relations, it is claimed, might tell us about an individual, but they could never reveal its nature.

But Aristotle admits that to understand a thing is to understand it in terms of its functional and teleological (or formal) relations.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, as we have already noted,<sup>3</sup> being in potency exists by and is known through being in act for Aristotle,<sup>4</sup> specifically, an actualizing agent. Finally to know a thing, according to Aristotle, is to know it in terms of its four causes.<sup>5</sup> And to treat a thing's relations as trivial is to disregard its efficient and final causes and thus to forego the possibility of a complete knowledge of anything. To know a thing's relations is thus a necessary condition of truth.

<sup>1</sup>Topics vi.

<sup>2</sup>De Partibus Animalium 639<sup>b</sup> 16-21; 655<sup>b</sup> 21.

<sup>3</sup>Above, p. 40, f. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Metaphysics xii. 6. especially 1072<sup>a</sup> 8.

<sup>5</sup>Physics 198<sup>a</sup> 14-35.

Aristotle's distinction then between proper and improper relatives is not an ontological distinction. It just characterizes two points of view on any one thing: for relations are the sine qua non of a thing's being and thus of having anything at all, let alone improper relations.

Thus Aristotle's ontology and epistemology defy the analysis of relation given in the Categories and elaborated in the Metaphysics. Each demands that some relations be essential. The category declared to have the lowest grade of existence and to be so barren as to be superfluous turns out to be critical. Relations are not the transient shadows of an essentially relationless substance. Relations, it turns out, make things actual.

Aristotle's doctrine that no substance, primary or secondary, in whole or in part, is relative, is overturned by his own philosophy. Such a reversal, however, though the conceptual tools were present in Aquinas, was not fully accomplished until Hegel.

## CHAPTER II

### THE INADEQUACY OF AQUINAS

The preceding chapter was devoted to an exposition and criticism of Aristotle's doctrine of relation, both as a grammatical form and as an ontological reality. The conclusion reached was that Aristotle's notion of relation failed to provide adequate support for, in fact was inconsistent with, his own ontology.

In this chapter it will be argued that the demands of the Aristotelian doctrine of relation and the (relational) demands of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity are incompatible, and that since Aquinas is a Christian Aristotelian, he is forced to use and refine a new kind of relation--subsistent relation--to accommodate the Triune God. According to this new kind of relation, God is declared to be constituted by, and in fact nothing but, relations: the three divine relations of the Trinity.

Such a development revolutionizes the concept of relation. For this re-definition not only frees relation from its specific connections with the categorical accident and with relative terms, but opens up the possibility of transforming the Aristotelian substance-attribute ontology--

shown to be inadequate in Aristotle's own terms in the last chapter--into an ontology of relations, an ontology which Aristotle in fact has but does not realize. For given the relational nature of the Absolute Substance, not only could terms be relative, but so, too, could substances. And in fact it will be suggested that they are.

But Aquinas did not pursue the implications of such re-valuation of relation, and he confined the range of subsistent relations to the divine nature. And hence, though he developed the perfect model to rid the Aristotelian philosophy of its inconsistencies, he perpetuated them in his own philosophy.

For, as a later-day Aristotelian, Aquinas accepts the accidental status of all finite relations of the causal, quantitative and qualitative order. Moreover he endorses Aristotle's opinion that relation has the most tenuous being of all the accidents. Finally he maintains that an essentially relationless substance is the criterion of reality. Like Aristotle's, Aquinas' philosophy is, by his own admission, a substance philosophy. And this, as it did with Aristotle before him, causes Aquinas to be inconsistent, for Aquinas' world turns out to be saturated

by relations, some of which are constituent.

Thomas Aquinas was a revolutionary thinker--to his contemporaries. For he was one of the first<sup>1</sup> among the thinkers of the "Occidental Century" to break with the prevalent hesitant attitude toward Aristotle (notably the Franciscan school with its neo-Platonic Augustinian leanings), and to firmly endorse him, adopting his view of the nature and scope of metaphysics, its first principles (substance/accident, matter/form, potency/act), and its epistemological corollaries, as well as his theory of *πρός τι*.

Though Aquinas' knowledge and grasp of past and contemporary philosophy was rather overwhelming,<sup>2</sup> and

<sup>1</sup>Though Siger de Brabant, the Latin Averroist (1235-c. 1282), once declared that he preferred Aristotle to truth.

<sup>2</sup>The Greek commentators of Aristotle--Porphyry, Themistius, Simplicius, Alexander of Aphrodisias--as well as Boethius, were frequently cited by Aquinas. The tradition afforded by Ovid, Horace, Cicero, Seneca, Terence, Livy, Maximus and Hippocrates was his. He was well acquainted with certain Arabian and Jewish philosophers, namely Avencebrol, Avicenna and Moses Maimonides. Of the neo-Platonic writings, Pseudo Dionysius and Proclus were available to him. The patristic works of Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, John Damascene, Hilary of Poitiers, Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville--along with St. John Chrysostom and St. Cyril of Alexandria--were included in

though he paid tribute to Plato,<sup>1</sup> the predominate figure in the vast heritage who, along with Christian revelation, supplied the stimulus as well as the substance of Aquinas' thought, was Aristotle.<sup>2</sup> The phrase Unde dicitur apud Aristotelem vibrates throughout his works--so much so that Aristotle is simply referred to as 'the Philosopher'.

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his compass. Of the earlier scholastics, he cites Anselm of Canterbury, Rupert of Deutz, Bernard of Clairvaux, Gilbert de la Porrée, Hugh of St. Victor and Joachim of Flora. Nor were Abelard and Alain de Lille unknown to him. He knew Peter the Lombard and finally the theologians of the thirteenth century. A Greek Plato, a Persian Avicenna and a Jewish Maimonides were to Thomas philosophical contemporaries. See E. Gilson, History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages (New York: Random House, 1955).

<sup>1</sup>Plato looms large as well, particularly vis à vis the Platonic doctrines of participation and similitude. But Aquinas' contact with Plato was only indirect, through the complex tradition of neo-Platonism, as there is no convincing evidence that he was directly acquainted with either Cicero's or Chalcidius' translation of the Timaeus--the only Platonic dialogue available to thirteenth century Europe. See Cornelio Fabro, Participation et causalité selon S. Thomas d'Aquin (Louvain: Universitaires de Louvain, 1961); L. B. Geiger, La participation dans la philosophie de S. Thomas d'Aquin (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1955); R.J. Henle, Saint Thomas and Platonism (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956); Raymond Klibansky, The Continuity of the Platonic Tradition (London: Warburg Institute, 1950).

<sup>2</sup>Aquinas' access to Aristotle was good. He first made contact with Aristotle when he was a student of liberal arts in the first state university of the Western world, in Naples (1239-1244). Naples was graced by a somewhat freer atmosphere vis à vis the 'new Aristotle' than the

Aquinas however re-made Aristotle in part in order to bring him into a Christian framework. After all, one of Aquinas' presuppositions was, à la John Scotus Erigena and Augustine, that true philosophy was true religion,<sup>1</sup> and his goal was to reconcile the demands of orthodox theology with the claims of reason. And it was this framework which, in the end dis/transfigured Aristotle beyond recognition. For it was the Christian doctrine of a Triune God which, as we shall see, offered the notion of subsistent relations.

Having briefly established the intellectual apparatus of Aquinas and assessed his relationship to Aristotle, let us move on to the Thomistic treatment of relatio per se.

Aquinas never wrote a commentary on the Categories. But throughout scattered works, he deals with the structure

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University of Paris, where papal restrictions on certain doctrines were strictly enforced. Aquinas also in his maturity possessed the purest translation of Aristotle's works available at the time from his friend William of Moerbeke. See Ternand Van Steenberghen, Aristotle in the West (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961).

<sup>1</sup>E. Gilson remarks: "The theology of Saint Thomas is a philosopher's theology; his philosophy is a theologian's." (The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas [New York: Random House, 1956], p. 8).

of relation at length. And as one gathers the source materials, Aquinas emerges as a pure Aristotelian on relation/categories--with one difference: Aquinas' analysis is far more detailed, more sophisticated and sometimes more complete. Aquinas' debt to and development of Aristotle will be pointed out en route.

Aquinas adopted the ten Aristotelian categories (namely: substance, quantity, quality, relation, action, passion, when, where, position and condition), and viewed them the same way: they represented ten ultimate classes which specify the ways for a subject to be actualized, expressed or just simply to be. While the categories, logically considered, were a classification of our widest concepts, they also had an ontological extension/status; they were both aspects of the various ways a thing could exist, as well as modes of predication. Being is predicated in many ways, because being is in many ways, according to Aquinas.<sup>1</sup> For both Aquinas and Aristotle then,

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<sup>1</sup>"Nothing is assigned to a predicament unless it exists outside the mind." "In nullo enim praedicamento ponitur aliquid nisi res extra animam existens." (De Pot. 7. 9.) See also In I Sent. 26. 2. 1; De Ente c. 7 n.; Quodlib. IX. 2. 4; C. G. I. 4. c. 14; In IV Meta. 1. n. 535-36; Liber V. 9. n. 893.

the mind reflects reality. The outcome of this is the same as it was for Aristotle: predicamental relations can be real.<sup>1</sup>

Aquinas, however, is more complete than "the Philosopher" in his discussion of the categories, for in his Commentary on III Physics of Aristotle and his Commentary on V Metaphysics of Aristotle, he presents, via an analysis of predication, a plan whereby the predicaments may be logically derived. Predication falls within three main divisions, Aquinas tells us, according to the ways in which the object signified by the predicate may be related to the subject: (1) that which is the subject or of the essence of a subject, (2) that which is in (inest) the subject or inheres in the essence of the subject (intrinsic accidents), (3) that which is outside the subject or is an extrinsic denomination of the subject (extrinsic accidents).

Substance is the sole form of absolute predication, as it alone refers to independent existence, par soi.

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<sup>1</sup>Though we shall use the concept of real relations in what follows, we shall not directly confront the issue of what this means until below, pp. 117-21.

Division 1 is thus exhausted by substance, leaving the nine other accidents to be divided among the second and third ways in which a predicate may be related to a subject. Aquinas acknowledges that division 2 must apply to any accident by definition, but that some accidents (such as place), though inhering in a subject, are named by reason of something external to the subject.

As we descend the scale of accidents, inherence becomes gradually more tenuous. Quantity and quality are absolute accidents, as they arise respectively from the material and formal composition of the subject in which they inhere. Action and passion are still partly in the subject, as the subject is either the principle or terminus of the action,<sup>1</sup> but both require another object or subject, a terminus ad quem or a terminus a quo.<sup>2</sup> Time, place, posture (position) and habitus (habit or condition) are, according to Aquinas, not named from any intrinsic

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<sup>1</sup>"Action is not defined as being in but from the agent." "Actio non significatur ut in agente, sed ut ab agente." (De Pot. 8. 2.).

<sup>2</sup>De Pot. 7. 8; In III Phys. 5; In V Phys. 2 & 3; In XI Meta. 9. n. 2312-13; C. G. II. 57; In I De An. 6. 726; S. T. I. 28, 3. ad. 1; I. 41, 1. ad. 2.

modification of a subject; rather they are described via something partly or entirely external to the subject in which they inhere by nature, some extrinsic measure or adornment.<sup>1</sup> What of relation?

Relation, along with quantity and quality, is viewed as inhering in another, but unlike quantity and quality, it inheres in a subject only via reference to another (e.g., the relation 'fatherhood' is not predicated of a man en soi but only due to his link with a--namely his--son). Relation, then, like quantity and quality, is an intrinsic accident, but, unlike them, it does not rest or remain in the subject (manens in subjecto); it is not, to use Cajetan's phrase, absolutum a termino.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In V Meta. 9. n. 890-92; In III Phys. 4. The case is not so clear with habit, but habit is an extrinsic accident because, according to Aquinas, habit, like position, is based on the extension of the body and characterizes the external surroundings of the body. Habit is similar to attire or equipment for Aquinas, such as armour.

<sup>2</sup>Clifford Kossel, "Principles of Saint Thomas' Distinction between the Esse and Ratio of Relation," Modern Schoolman, XXIV (November, 1947), 101, f. 24. Cited hereafter as Esse.

As Aquinas puts it: "It is not essentially complete through its existence in its subject."<sup>1</sup> It requires something external/extrinsic to its subject for its completion; it involves reference to another. In this context, relation assumes a central position (along with action and passion) for its/their own proper ratio demand/s a transitus or procession to another, an external reference, while being in the subject. Moreover, the last four predicaments (when, where, position and condition) are themselves aspects of a relationship. And finally, each of the categories, when analyzed, will be seen to be grounded upon relation--substance not excluded.<sup>2</sup> But we shall deal with scope of relation presently. Let us first specify the proper concept of relation according to Thomas Aquinas.

Though relation both as a word and as a concept is familiar to everyone, it is elusive and difficult to define. The ordinary is not always the obvious. Aquinas

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<sup>1</sup>"Sua ratio non perficitur prout est in ipso subjecto." (De Pot. 7. 9.) See also In I Sent. 8. 4. 3; 20. 1. 1; 26. 2. 1; De Pot. 8. 2; Quodlib. I. 2; S. T. I. 2; S. T. I. 28. 1 & 2

<sup>2</sup>Below, pp. 161-66, 169ff.

recognizes this, for he admits<sup>1</sup> that relation as an ultimate concept cannot be properly defined (i.e., in terms of genus and specific difference) since, like substance, it is a supreme genus. Nevertheless, he continues, the intellect can grasp the significance of its name, and hence its ratio or proper concept can be clarified by a descriptive 'definition'.

Relation is generally thought of as the order/influence of one thing to/on another (even though the something 'other' may be, in some instances, the subject itself; e.g., a warm body will heat) or the ways in which two or more things may be compared, or as a bond which established a specific unity-in-difference between things.<sup>2</sup> Thomas 'defines' it as a connection between two things in

<sup>1</sup>In I Sent. 2. 1. 3.

<sup>2</sup>M. C. Cahill, The Absolute and the Relative in St. Thomas and in Modern Philosophy (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1939); James Mark Baldwin (ed.), Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1957), II, 439; André Lalande, Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1928), II, 699.

virtue of which something is found in both,<sup>1</sup> and Krempel, in his systematic historical exposé of the doctrine of relation in Aquinas, echoes this position: "La relation consiste uniquement dans la référence à autre chose."<sup>2</sup> But what is its formal specification, its proper ratio?

The first characteristic of relation, as Murin points out, seems to consist in its irreducible opposition to being 'defined' in the same way as the other accidents are.<sup>3</sup> Relation, Murin continues,<sup>4</sup> presents an intelligibility altogether different from the other eight accidents, since it cannot be 'defined' as they are--by reference to substance.

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<sup>1</sup>"Quaedam vero relationes sunt quantum ad utrumque extremum res naturae; quando scilicet est habitudo inter aliqua patet secundum aliquid realiter conveniens utrique; sicut patet de omnibus relationibus quae consequuntur quantitatem." (S.T. I. 13. 7.).

<sup>2</sup>A. Krempel, La doctrine de la relation chez Saint Thomas (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1952), p. 41. For an historical study of the various definitions of relations, see Ibid., pp 39-53.

<sup>3</sup>C. Murin, "Inquiry into the Nature of Moral Being in the Works of Saint Thomas," Slovak Studies II (Rome: Slovak Institute, 1961), 149.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid. 149-50.

In this differs 'ad aliquid' from the other genera, for these others posit from their very nature that they are something real, as for instance quantity posits something, as is likewise true of the others. But 'ad aliud' does not have as its own nature the positing of something.<sup>1</sup>

This is curious since Aquinas categorizes relation as a predicament. How could it be 'defined' without reference to substance, since it is an accident of substance?

Aquinas solves the apparent dilemma in his customary fashion--by means of a distinction between ratio and esse or, in other terms, between relatio ut relatio and relatio ut accidens.

Bear in mind that two aspects can be considered in each of the nine categories of accidental being. The first of them is the existence which belongs to each as an accidental entity. This always is existence in a subject, since for an accident to exist is to exist in a subject. The other aspect that can be considered in each category is its own specific character.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"In hoc differt ad aliquid ab aliis generibus, quod alia genera ex propria sui ratione habent quod aliquid sint, sicut quantitas aliquid ponit, et similiter est de aliis. Sed ad aliud ex propria sui generis ratione non habet quod ponat aliquid." (Quodlib. IX. 4.).

<sup>2</sup>"Ad cujus evidentiam considerandum est quod in quodlibet novem generum accidentis est duo considerare. Quorum unum est esse quod competit unicuique ipsorum secundum quod est accidens. Et hoc communiter in omnibus est inesse subjecto; accidens enim esse est inesse. Aliud quod potest considerari in unoquoque est propria ratio uniuscujusque illorum generum." (S. T. I. 28. 2.).

The very relation that is nothing but the order between one creature and another may be considered as an accident, or as a relation. Considered as an accident it is something adhering to a subject; but not as considered as a relation or order, for then it is mere towardness, something passing as it were from one thing to another and assisting that which is related. Accordingly a relation is something inherent, but not because it is a relation. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The ratio of relation is, he affirms, reference to another and as such it is indifferent to inherence.<sup>2</sup> But the note of inherence is essential to it as an accident. Esse in describes its character as an accident, but esse ad denotes its formality as a relation.<sup>3</sup> Each is a different way of considering the same reality; either one is inadequate. Esse in makes (some) relations real;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 7. 9. ad. 7.

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 33. 1. 1. ad. 1; In III Sent. 8. 1. 5. ad. 2; Quodlib. IX. 4. ad. 3.

<sup>3</sup>"Si vero consideretur relatio secundum quod est accidens, sic est inhaerens subjecto, et habens esse accidentale in ipso." (S. T. I. 28. 2.) See also William J. Kane, "The Philosophy of Relation in the Metaphysics of St. Thomas" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Philosophy, The Catholic University of America), p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>Given the ontological implication and basis of the categories, it is clear that when Aquinas refers to an accident, he means accidental existence. For instance: "If, however, we consider relation as in the category of accident, it is inherent in the subject in which it has accidental existence." "Si vero consideretur relatio secundum quod est accidens, sic est inhaerens subjecto et

esse ad makes them (all) relations.<sup>1</sup>

None of the other accidents, though they may be considered from two points of view as well--as accidents or according to their proper ratio--can be defined without reference to their subject. But respectus ad aliud does not include inherence as for example quantity, "the measure of substance" does. The ratio of relation, as Kane notes,<sup>2</sup> simply says ad aliud.<sup>3</sup>

habens esse accidentale in ipso." (S. T. I. 28. 2.)  
So, in general, to say something is an accident is to commit it to being real. According to Aquinas, relation is the only predicament which has a logical being.

<sup>1</sup>Clifford Kossel, "St. Thomas' Theory of the Causes of Relations," Modern Schoolman, XXV (March, 1948), 159, f. 28. Cited hereafter as Causes.

<sup>2</sup>p. 13.

<sup>3</sup>"In categories other than relation, for example, quantity and quality, even this is defined in terms of the subject; for instance, quantity is said to be the measure of substance and quality its disposition. In relation, on the other hand, the specific character is thought of with regard to something other, not the subject in which it is. So that, if we think of relations precisely as such, even in created things, we find that they are their accompaniments, not bound up inside them, for they signify a reference contingent in some way on other things, and bearing on something else." "Et in aliis quidem generibus a relatione, utpote quantitate et qualitate, etiam propria ratio generis accipitur secundum comparationem ad subjectum; nam quantitas dicitur mensura substantiae, qualitas vero dispositio substantiae. Sed ratio propria relationis non accipitur secundum comparationem ad illud in quo est, sed

Relation is thus the only accidental predicament which can be 'defined' independent of its subject in which it in-exists. It is indifferent to reality and transcends the predicaments. It is this versatility of relation which marks it off from all of the other predicaments. Its ratio can be predicated univocally as a being of reason or as a reality.<sup>1</sup> Its esse alone has an analogical character. Although no being of reason can fulfill the ratio of the predicamental relation, a being of reason can fully verify the ratio of relation.<sup>2</sup> Its nature does not posit any reality in the subject of which it is predicated.<sup>3</sup> By its nature relation is not confined to

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secundum comparationem ad aliud extra. Si igitur consideremus, etiam in rebus creatis, relationes secundum id quod relationes sunt, sic inveniuntur esse assistentes, non intrinsecus affixae, quasi significantes respectum quodammodo contingentem ipsam rem relatum prout ab ea tendit in alterum." (S. T. I. 28. 2.) See also: "Relatio vel ordo, in quantum enim accidens est, habet quod sit in subjecto, non autem in quantum est relatio vel ordo; sed solum quod ad aliud sit." (De Pot. 7. 11. ad. 7.).

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 7. 8.

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 20. 1. 1; 26. 2. 1; De Ver. 1. 5. ad. 16; De Pot. 1. 1. ad. 10; Kossel, Esse, 101-102.

<sup>3</sup>"Ea vero quae dicituntur ad aliquid, significant secundum propriam rationem solum respectum ad aliud." (S. T. I. 28. 2.) See also Kossel, Esse, 101.

an accidental esse.

So the ratio of relation entails neither the accidental character of relation, nor, by implication, the reality of relation. According to its ratio, relation --reference to another--can be either the ordering of one being to another or the ordering of one thought to another or both. It is silent about reality.<sup>1</sup> The ratio of relation does not involve being in se or in alio; it does not signify something, but simply to something (nōn aliquid, sed ad aliquid).<sup>2</sup> But just as its ratio (ad) does not determine its esse, it does not rule out its substantiality.<sup>3</sup> As Kossel points out,<sup>4</sup> the exclusion of in esse from its ratio also excludes the imperfections of dependence on and composition with substance which normally characterizes accidents.

<sup>1</sup>Quodlib. IX. 4; S. T. I. 28. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Kossel, Esse, 102.

<sup>3</sup>S. T. I. 28. 2. ad. 1; In I Sent. 22. exp. text; 33. 1. 1. ad. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Esse, 102.

By means of the distinction then between relatio ut relatio and relatio ut accidens, the scope of the term relational or relative is, for the first time, broadened by an Aristotelian.<sup>1</sup> And by the process, it is freed from its specific connections with the categorical accident and thus open to the possibility of being non-dependent. In fact it is this liberation that allows relation to be predicated of God. And, in turn, it is this predication which revolutionizes the concept of relation.

But Aquinas does not grasp all the implications of his distinction. He is still bound by the same presupposition as Aristotle:<sup>2</sup> relative modes must be dependent upon non-relative standards--namely substances with their essential properties. This will be seriously challenged by Hegel.

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<sup>1</sup>Though Aquinas has his non-Aristotelian predecessors --namely, the whole neo-Platonic, Augustinian tradition. Even Galen, that famous Greek physician of the second century A. D. who commented on the Categories, distinguished (though at points incoherently) the relational syllogism from both the hypothetical and the categorical, thus anticipating the logic of relations (Galen, Institutio Logica. Trans. with an intro. and commentary by J. S. Kieffer [Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964], p. 122)

So something must limit ad aliud and render it contingent. Aquinas is no McTaggart. Fortified by his assumption of the dependency of relative modes and equipped with his exclusive and exhaustive<sup>1</sup> categories of substance and accident, he is not prone to allot 'betweenness' or 'towardness' any self-sufficiency or to grant relation an ens per se. Aquinas like Aristotle is a substantialist. The relations of a concrete, finite thing are always accidental.

Moreover, that there are some real relations is a necessary metaphysical inference. Aquinas is also no Hume. Fortified by the religious conviction that the world, as God's creation, must be intelligible as the world exists for man's sake, logic and epistemology cannot be divorced from metaphysics.

What therefore determines the reality and non-substantiality of relation? Aquinas advises us not to regard relations formally but fundamentally for the answer. For him, all relations are caused, and as no effect is greater than its cause, if the cause is real and limited,

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<sup>1</sup>A property is considered an "inseparable" accident.

so must the relation be. Hence, it is the basis, foundation or cause of relation which determines it to be real as well as in alio.<sup>1</sup>

Aquinas never, as we shall see, explains the major premise of his reasoning: why relations must be caused at all. And so, he is begging the question, as caused means unsubstantial. But this *petitio principii* is simply another indication of Aquinas' assumption that relation has to be founded, an assumption which itself is unfounded.

Thus, in order to grasp how Aquinas conceived the esse of relation, we are led to ask: what are the causes of real relations, how do they cause and why need there be causes? And the discussion of causes will provide the framework for an examination of the claim that there are real relations.

According to Aquinas, there are three components, in any relation: the subject (the thing referred), the

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<sup>1</sup>Equality, for instance, is a real relation because its foundation--quantity--is real. See In I Sent. 26. 2. 2. ad. 4; 33. 1. ad. 2; Quodlib. IX. 4.

term (that to which it is referred)<sup>1</sup> and the cause/basis/foundation of the connection/link between the two. Both the subject and the term are known as extremes or relatives. Now, it might seem that since a real relation is a predicamental accident, substance would serve directly for its basis (substratum)--the third element of relation. But substance, according to Aquinas' conception, is a-relational, being independent and self-contained. If therefore one thing is related to another, it must be by reason of something other than substance--namely accidents. And though substance may be termed an indirect foundation for relation, as all accidents are contingent upon substance, it is left to the accidental realm to render a subject open for reference.<sup>2</sup>

Before we proceed to find out what other qualifications the basis of relation must have, one critical point must be noted. For with Aquinas' declaration that substance cannot

<sup>1</sup>Though this distinction, in some cases, is arbitrary (e.g.,  $x=y+2 \equiv y+2=x$ ).

<sup>2</sup>"Cum relatio habeat debilissimum esse, quia consistit tantum in hoc quod est ad-aliud-se-habere, oportet quod super aliquod aliud accidens fundatur; quia perfectiora accidentia mediatibus, alia accidentia insunt." (In III Phys. l. n. 6.).

serve as a direct foundation for relation, another Aristotelian assumption--again, one to be seriously challenged by Hegel--is exposed. The assumption is this: the radical discrimination between substance and relation. Just as in the Categories, the term relative was re-defined in order to remove it from all possible connections with substantial terms, so too here, Aquinas turns to the accidental realm to seek a possible foundation for relation in order to prevent substance from being too intimately connected with relation. What Aquinas is doing is setting the stage for the incongruities which shall beset his philosophy. For Aquinas' coddled substances will, upon analysis, dissolve into relations.

What are the requirements for such a foundation, apart from an accident's capacity of opening up one subject to another? If we compare one thing (which is really related to it) with another, we must, according to the Angelic Doctor, do so in virtue of something real found in both, for the cause transfers its nature to the relation. Furthermore, the cause must be absolute (i.e., not inhering in either of the extremes), for according to Aquinas, to avoid an infinite regress, relation cannot be founded on

relations. Finally, relation, being an intrinsic accident, must be based upon something inherent.

What kind of accident satisfies the requirements? Aquinas' response: only in the quantitative and operative orders can such a foundation be found. "Every relation is based either on quantity, as double and half; or on action and passion, as the doer and the deed, the father and the son, the master and the servant, and the like."<sup>1</sup>

What is the rationale of such an answer? Let us sort out Aquinas' reply. First, the last four predicaments, being extrinsic, are disqualified. Moreover, as we have noted, Aquinas explicitly says that when, where, position and condition are themselves founded upon relations and hence cannot be the cause of relations.<sup>2</sup> This, then, leaves the two absolute accidents and action and passion (in so far as they are inherent) as possible candidates

<sup>1</sup>"Relative opposita vel supra quantitatem fundatur, ut suplum et dimidium, vel super actionem et passionem, ut dominus et servus movens et motum, pater et filius." (C. G. 4. 24.) "Relatio omnis fundatur vel supra quantitatem, ut duplum et dimidium; vel supra actionem et passionem, ut faciens et factum, pater et filius, dominus et servus, et hujusmodi." (S. T. I. 28. 4.).

<sup>2</sup>In V Meta. 17. n. 1005.

for the cause of ad aliud.

Why is quality alone slighted? Apparently Aquinas thought, like Hegel and Marx, that any seemingly qualitative relation could be treated in terms of the quantitative order. Commenting on the third book of the Sentences, and referring to the Metaphysics of Aristotle for support, he asserted that all relations are caused either by quantity or what may be reduced to the genus of quantity or by action and passion. By way of illustration, Aquinas added that 'one' can be reduced to quantity as the principle of discrete quantity. Equality (one in quantity), relations of specific identity (one in substance) and similitude (one in quality) are thus subject to such a reduction.<sup>1</sup> And when, in later passages,<sup>2</sup> he refers to other causes, they are all abbreviated to quantity or action-passion.

We shall examine this claim later when we examine the two types of foundations in detail. Let it suffice here to say that quality like substance may be an indirect

<sup>1</sup>In III Sent. 5. 1. 1. sol. 1; Kossel, Causes, 153.

<sup>2</sup>C. G. IV. 24; De Pot. 7. 9; 8, 1; S. T. I. 28. 4.

cause of relation, but that neither are ever the causes directly or per se.

The problem on quality raises another parallel problem vis à vis the number of possible foundations. Aquinas apparently derives support for his two-fold division by relying on Aristotle's discussion of relations in the Metaphysics. The text is frequently cited and corroborated by Aquinas.<sup>1</sup> But the text seems to conflict with Aquinas' two-fold division. Does Aquinas contradict himself or does he reject quality as a foundation as his theory of relation develops?

Kossel traces the development of Aquinas' theory as to the causes of real relations<sup>2</sup> and he notes<sup>3</sup> that

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<sup>1</sup>"Cun enim relatio, quae est in rebus, consistat in ordine quodam unius rei ad aliam, oportet tot modis hujusmodo relationes esse quod modis contingit unam rem ad aliam ordinari. Ordinatur autem una res ad aliam, vel secundum esse, prout esse unius rei dependent ab alia . . . vel secundum quod una res ab alia recipit vel alteri confert aliquid . . . vel secundum quod quantitas unius rei potest mensurari per aliam." (In V Meta. 17. n. 1004) "Accipitur autem hic mensura et mensurabile non secundum quantitatem . . . sed secundum mensurationem esse et veritas." (Ibid. n. 1003).

<sup>2</sup>Causes, 152-54.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 152.

Thomas did settle upon a two-fold division of foundations early in his writing career, despite a brief previous period of hesitation.<sup>1</sup>

But how could Aquinas derive support for this two-fold division by relying on the Aristotelian text which apparently suggests a three-fold division? As we have seen, the Aristotelian text divides relations into three types. The first two types are mutual relations founded on quantitas (Aquinas) or number (Aristotle), and the active and passive powers or their exercise respectively. The third mode is mixed. One term, i.e., the measurable, perceptible, or knowable, is a relative because something else is referred to it. It is thus not really relative, but merely, in Aquinas' terminology, a relation of reason, and hence it requires no foundation. Knowledge and perception, however, are, according to both philosophers<sup>2</sup> actually related to the first term, and thus they demand a basis. It is this last kind of real relation which causes

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<sup>1</sup>A certain indecisiveness may be noted in the commentary on the first book of the Sentences, e.g., In I Sent. 2. exp. text; 26. 2. ad. 4; 33. 1. 1.

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 30. 1. 3. ad. 3; In V Phys. 3; S.T. I. 13. 7.

the difficulty. Both John of St. Thomas<sup>1</sup> and Cajetan<sup>2</sup> maintain that this relation requires a distinct foundation.

The divergent texts may be reconciled<sup>3</sup> by taking into account the fact that Aristotle was not proposing a division of relations, but of relatives--that is, a division of sets of related terms or extremes. Aquinas thus employs the Aristotelian division for his own purposes, editing as he goes. And Aquinas obviously seems to think that Aristotle had accidentally hit upon the two sole direct causes of relations--quantity and action/passion. And contra his own commentators, Aquinas settles upon the latter cause as a suitable foundation for the third mode of relations.<sup>4</sup> In doing so, he expands the use of the two terms--action/passio--to include the creative and knowledge-getting orders of activity (action: passion:: creator:created::knowing:the known). He thus, as Kossel points out,<sup>5</sup> commits himself to a usage which transcends

<sup>1</sup>Ars Logica. II. 17. 2; Kossel, Causes, 154, f. 11.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. I. 28. 4. ad. 2; Kossel, Causes, 154, f. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Kossel, Causes, 154.

<sup>4</sup>De Pot. 7. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Causes, 154.

the Aristotelian categories. Why he does will hopefully be made clear when mixed relations are discussed in detail.

The first question--what are the causes?--has been answered. The immediate foundation of relations in creatures is always an accident and these accidents are ultimately only two: quantitas and actio/passio.

Let us turn to the second question--how do foundations cause?

The first class of relatives generally depends upon quantity, considered under the aspect of measure-measured being the external or relative aspect of the quantitative form. As an absolute, quantity is manens in subjecto and hence extrinsic to the ratio of relation--but in its competence as a measure it is included in that ratio.<sup>1</sup> That is, to use Aristotle's term for it, quantity is an improper relative.

Now, since number is what gives quantity the character of a measure (ratio mensurae), why not à la Aristotle call this first foundation number?<sup>2</sup> Aquinas responds by maintaining that number is dependent on quantity,

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 159.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 168.

but number is not always quantity, though all are mathematical expressions of reality. Some quantitative relations are incommensurable (e.g., the diagonal of a square vis à vis its sides) and hence cannot be reduced to number.<sup>1</sup> And so the real foundation of the first class of relatives, is attributed to quantity.

Before we move on to relation based on actio/passio, one point needs to be noted. There is a certain sense in which quantity is a basis for all classes of relations, for all the other accidents of material substance inhere indirectly in substance through quantity, in the sense that any material thing must first be extended to be anything else. But though in principle reducible to the quantitative order, the causal relation, as we shall see, presents a radically different type of relation.

The formal cause of quantitative relations, like all relations, is reference to another, for this is what any relation is. The final cause is the terms of the relation because the extreme is the end to which the subject is referred. Finally, for Aquinas, quantity, as the foundation,

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<sup>1</sup>In V Meta. 17. n. 1007 & 1020.

functions as the efficient cause, as it produces the extremes, as well as the material cause, because it is the accident out of which the relation is made. Causal relations, the second class of relations, break down in much the same way--the formal cause is reference to another, the efficient cause is action, as it is the agent of the relation, and the final cause is passion, because it is the terminus ad quem to which the action is directed. But there is one exception. Since action and passion are in the order of efficiency, they cannot be the material cause. Rather the attendant circumstances particular to the relation provide material aspect (such as the shape/position of two billiard balls which collide).<sup>1</sup>

Causal relations are much more complex than quantitative relations, in that they include both mutual and non-mutual relations. All causal relations in the finite order are mutual according to Aquinas.<sup>2</sup> This characteristic extends to all the following cases: when

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Charles A. Hart, Thomistic Metaphysics (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959), p. 235.

the cause provokes a reaction by which the patient becomes agent and the agent patient, or when the effect is in the same class as the cause (univocal causation, as father-son, and even in equivocal causation, when the effect is in a different order and of an inferior nature as Trojans building a wooden horse). Equivocal causation is the limit case; it is claimed to be mutual, for the cause-- though seemingly self-sufficient--is, according to Aquinas, dependent upon divine concurrence which involves a change in the cause, indicating a real relation of the cause to the effect. But while the relation between creatures and God is claimed to be real, the relation between God the Creator and creatures is deemed to be merely logical. And so, although effects are always related to their causes, as the cause, according to Aquinas, need not be really related to its effect/s, the paradigm case of the latter being the relation of Creator-creature.<sup>1</sup>

Causal relations are also complicated by the fact that the specific causal action is brief. This raises the question: Is the real foundation of the relation

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<sup>1</sup>Aquinas will argue for this last point below, pp. 159-60, 166-69.

something which is left by the causal action or something which precedes the causal action?<sup>1</sup>

Aquinas makes this point: the relations of action and passion are founded on either the actual exercise of causality or the future or past exercise of the causal powers.<sup>2</sup> But he also maintains that future relations are not actual and thus not real, for a real relation requires that a term be actualized. For example, the relation of paternity will not be realized until the son has been born.<sup>3</sup>

This requirement of actuality for reality applies to quantitative relations as well. But this necessary actualization takes place in a different way in each of the two types.<sup>4</sup> The mere presence of two quantified objects in the same universe plus the measurement of the mind is all that is required for the reality of the relation between them. Distance is irrelevant. Once can measure the size

<sup>1</sup>This question is raised by Kossel, Causes, 162.

<sup>2</sup>In IV Sent. 41. 1. 1. sol. 2; In V Meta. 17. n. 1023-25.

<sup>3</sup>In II Sent. 20. 1. 1. 5. ad. 8.

<sup>4</sup>Kossel, Causes, 166; see also Aristotle, Metaphysics 1021<sup>a</sup> 18.

of a woman in Rome by the size of a slender hippo in Dar es Salaam, because they are, en soi, potentially measurable. The mind merely renders the relation actual. But though there be a million hockey sticks and a million pucks in Canada, and though there be a million attuned hockey fans, there will be no realization or determination of any causal relation until the stick hits the puck (much to the dismay of all those advocates of action at a distance).

So actual action/passion relations depend upon the exercise of some power. But what of past causal relations? Does the causal relation continue after that action has ceased? Aquinas answers that the causal relation does endure (e.g., the father-son relation continues after the father's momentary causal generative process has ceased). For, as a result of the causal action, both the cause and the effect (if they are in the same order of existence) have a natural inclination or tendency toward each other-- what Aquinas calls a "natural form" ("forma naturalis").<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"A natural form, being a form that remains in that to which it gives existence, denotes a principle of action according only as it has an inclination to an effect." "Forma naturalis, in quantum est forma manens in eo cui dat esse, non nominat principium actionis; sed secundum quod habet inclinationem ad effectum." (S. T. I. 14. 8.) See also De Pot. 3. 3; S. T. I. 45, 2. ad. 2: I. 45. 3.

Moreover, both are perfected as a result--the effect efficiently determined or perfected, the cause formally perfected. These respective forms and mutual non-transient determinations are the source of the permanence of the relations and in this sense the enduring foundations of the relation.<sup>1</sup> But the cause of the actuality of the relation is the actual exercise of causality in which the extremes are (simultaneously in the father-son example) determined to one another.

This, then, is how quantitas and actio/passio cause. Still to be explained is the question of how substance and quality can indirectly be the foundation of relations.

The answer is briefly this: that both can share the ratio either of action or of quantity and thus they can possess the virtual relativity which founds the real esse of relation.<sup>2</sup> Let us expand it somewhat.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Kossel, Causes, 167.

<sup>2</sup>De. Pot. 7. 9.

<sup>3</sup>For the following treatment, see Kane, pp. 20-21; Kossel, Causes, 161-69.

How can/do they participate in the ratio of action?

Though there is nothing relative about either, both are necessary for any kind of causal operation. Two necessary conditions of any causal relation are: first, something which is operative and second, a mediator, that is the power to operate. Hence, substance is the first principle of operation, while the accidental form of quality functions as the immediate principle of operation, as the "accidens medium."<sup>1</sup> And as principles of operation, both possess a reference to something extrinsic, despite their absolute and intrinsic natures as categories. As principles of action, they partake of the ratio of relation. Hence, per accidens, they are foundations of relation. Quality helps to make a subject capable of action and thus capable of reference to another, and substance participates in virtual relativity by being the subject which is ad aliud. Furthermore, they may both be considered in terms

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<sup>1</sup>"Omne illud quod est principium actionis, ut quo agitur, habet potentiae rationem; sive essentia sive aliquod accidens medium, puta qualitas quaedam inter essentiam et actionem. In creaturis tamen corporalibus vel vix vel numquam invenitur aliqua actio alicujus naturae substantialis nisi mediante aliquo accidente. . . ." (De Pot. 2. 1. ad. 6.) See also Ibid. 3. 3; 3. 17. ad. 12; S. T. I. 45. 3. ad. 2; 54.1. ad 3.

of quantity, and, as such, become foundations of relation per accidens. There is unity in the concept of things which share the same species or quality,<sup>1</sup> and it is this unity that provides the basis of the possibility of the relation of knower-known, those relations of reason involving logical classifications such as predicability, universality and genus, as well as the basis of classification in the empirical sciences. But is not this unity of substance, say, a common species, merely a logical relation? If so, substance considered in terms of quantity, would not indirectly found any real relation.

Aquinas thinks not. And his justification proceeds by way of a distinction--one which was to be used at greater length by Hegel. There is a difference, Aquinas claims, between simple (material) identity (which is merely a conceptual relation) and a substantial identity such as generic or specific identity.<sup>2</sup> Things that are one in

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<sup>1</sup>"Specie autem unum, est indivisibile, quod est unum secundum scientiam et notitiam. Non enim in diversis singularibus est aliqua natura una numero quae possit dici species." (In X Meta. 1. n. 1930.).

<sup>2</sup>In V Meta. 11. n. 912; S. T. I. 28. 1. ad. 2.

species are also numerically distinct. And the basis of this numerical distinction, which keeps this unity from being a simple identity and hence merely a logical relation, is quantity. Things in the same species are not individuated by their form or essence which they share, nor by their common matter, but by this matter, i.e., by quantified matter. Quantity thus becomes the reason why substantial identity is a real relation.

The same line of reasoning is applicable to qualitative identity or similitude. Qualities are individuated by their subjects and derive their numerical distinction from quantity. Furthermore, as we have seen, sensible qualities inhere in substance through the medium of quantity, rendering them doubly dependent upon quantity.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, Aquinas declares that similarity between two things can be effected in only two ways. Either one thing is the cause of the other and has impressed its form on the effect, or both things derive from one cause and thus share the same form.<sup>2</sup> Thus similitude entails a

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<sup>1</sup> In IV Sent. 12. 1. 1. sol. 3; Kossel, Causes, 169.

<sup>2</sup> De Ver. 2. 14; 8. 8; Kossel, Causes, 170.

cause. Again, this similarity is not always mutual. Though the effect is always similar to the cause, the similarity is not reciprocated unless the effect fully (i.e. univocally) expresses the cause. If not (as with creation), cause and effect are in different orders of being and demand different foundations.<sup>1</sup>

To conclude the answer to the second question: things which are one in substance involve a relation of identity; things which are similar are one in quality, and both are numerical relations, and, as such, both are grounded in quantity.

As to why there need be any causes--the third question--Aquinas, equipped with his Aristotelian bias in favor of the primacy of a virtually a-relational substance, was certain that relation, being contingent, required something in which to inhere--namely, the medium of another accident. Thus, there must, he reasoned, not only be a cause for why x is related to y, why x is capable of being so ordered, why R(x, y) arises at all, but a sufficient reason for every relation. For given the non-

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<sup>1</sup>In I Sent. 19. 1. 2; De Pot. 7. 10; S. T. I. 4. 3. For a discussion of the plausibility of this type, see below, pp. 159-60, 166-69.

substantiality of relation, a causal and genetic explanation is required/demanded for all relations in general. This, as mentioned above, is an assumption which Hegel will take to task, for with Hegel, relation becomes a primitive.

This, then, completes the discussion of the causes of relation. From its cause, relation derives its reality, its unity (for being and unity are convertible terms, according to Thomas<sup>1</sup>), its accidental character as well as its specific nature; its cause determines it to be quantitative, operative or logical.<sup>2</sup> In fact, there are as many different types of relation as there is diversity in the foundation. For when an accident is defined, its genus is drawn from the predicament or mode of being to which it belongs, while its specific difference is drawn from its causal principles, in this case, another accident. On this basis, Kossel declares: "To seek the essential

<sup>1</sup>Quodlib. IX. 4. 3.

<sup>2</sup>"Habet autem relatio quod sit aliquid reale ex eo quod relationem causat. . . . Quia vero ex eodem res habet esse et unitatem, ideo realis unitas relationis pensanda est ex ipso relationis fundamento vel causa." (Quodlib. IX. 2. 3.).

differences of relations is the same thing as to seek their causes."<sup>1</sup> But before we consider the kinds/varieties of relations in detail, let us pause to consider first the origins and the source of the multiplication of one type of relation--real relations.

How does a real relation come into being? Like Aristotle,<sup>2</sup> Aquinas felt that motion is accidental to the category of relation--something else (namely, the cause of the relation) has to change for there to be any change in the relation. Furthermore, a relation may begin or cease without any internal change/movement (e.g. the slender hippo in East Africa could die without involving any internal change in the woman in Rome). But though relation is not itself a term of motion, Aquinas asserts that a new real relation cannot arise without some change --a change in something else--that is, a change in the cause/s of the relation/s.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Causes, 152.

<sup>2</sup>Physics 251<sup>b</sup> 1-10; Metaphysics 1068<sup>a</sup> 11. For a more detailed discussion of the following, see Kossel, Causes, 157.

<sup>3</sup>In I Sent. 9. exp. text; In III Sent. 2. 2. 2. sol. 3; In IV Sent. 1. 1. 4. sol. 2; C. G. III. 62; De. Pot. 7. 8. ad. 5; In XI Meta. 12. n. 2385; In V Phys. 3.

On this basis, Aquinas divides relations according to their origin. They may arise due to: (1) a change in one term without any change in the other (e.g., any/all non-mutual relations, such as the relation between our fluctuating knowledge and the stable knowledge, by which new relations of reason are attributed to the knowable due to the changes in our knowledge); (2) from a motion in both terms either (a) concomitantly (e.g., father-son) or (b) due to a present change in one term as a result of a past change in another (e.g., A might become equal to B because B has recently grown in size).

It is this last relation which is the most interesting, for here a subject may acquire a new relation, a new category of being with no intrinsic change/development in the subject. But given Aquinas' own statement that "nothing new comes to a thing without a change in it"<sup>1</sup> how is this possible?

Aquinas' reply is this:

If anyone by a change in himself becomes equal to me without a change in me, that equality was first in me in some way, as in its root ('in sua radice'), from which it has its real 'esse': for from the fact that

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<sup>1</sup>In V Phys. 3.

I have such a quantity, I am competent to be equal to all who have the same quantity ('ex hoc enim quod habeo talem quantitatem, competit nihi quod sim aequalis omnibus illis qui eandem quantitatem habent'). When therefore someone newly acquires that quantity, that common root of equality ('ista communis radix aequalitatis') is determined to him and nothing new comes to me from the fact that I begin to be equal to another through a change in him.<sup>1</sup>

Aquinas appeals to a virtual or indeterminate relativity which the subject possesses in virtue of its foundation. Of course, as noted above, the foundation considered as an absolute is indifferent to any external completion and hence apathetic to the ratio of relation; but considered in terms of one of its capacities--its ability to measure--it partakes of the ratio of relation. Furthermore, this virtual relativity does not coincide with the ratio, which requires a completed transitus, an external term. But with the removal of that external term, the real esse of relation remains, for its cause remains--the source of its reality as an inherent accident.<sup>2</sup> And thus this virtual relativity is the source of relation's esse as an inherent accident (esse in), and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.; Kossel, Causes, 157-58.

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 8. 4. 3; 26, 2. 1; S. T. I. 28. 2.

the cause of its capacity to be open to other things; it hence founds the possibility of a real relation.

Now, what of the multiplication of relations?<sup>1</sup> Relations in different subjects are numerically distinct according to Aquinas, since the primary cause of individuation of accidents is their substantive subject. Furthermore, due to their immediate cause, relations based upon different foundations in the same subject will be distinct. Finally, the unity or plurality of relations in one subject--the number of terms to which a subject is related--is irrelevant to the unity or plurality of relations in that subject. Though, being four feet tall, I might be related to one in quantity with all the pygmies in central Africa, there is still only one relation of equality in me.

Causal relations can get a little more complicated. Both father and mother give rise to a son. So, in terms of active generation, there are two subjects, two causes and hence two relations. But from the son's point of view, there is but one real relation--filiation--founded upon

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<sup>1</sup>Kossel, Causes, 159-61.

one cause, although the cause has two terms. On the other hand, many patients may be related to one agent, and though each relation in the patient is numerically distinct, from the point of view of the agent there is but one real many-termed relation<sup>1</sup> (e.g., the relation of a ruler to many subjects).

In dealing with the ratio, causes, origin and multiplication of relations, an implicit distinction was drawn between the real and logical orders: three kinds of relations were mentioned en passant--the real, the logical and the mixed. Let us now confront each of them in turn, and then examine Aquinas' claim that there are real relations.

Since a relation needs two extremes, there are three conditions that make a relation to be real or logical.

(1) Sometimes both extremes are ideas only, as when a mutual order or relation be between things only because they are apprehended; as when we say that the same is the same itself. . . .

(2) Now there are other relations which are realities as regards both extremes, as when a relation exists between two things according to some reality that belongs to both. This is clear of all relations consequent on quality, for example, as with the relations of . . . being father of and being son of. . . .

(3) Again, sometimes a relation in one extreme may be

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<sup>1</sup>In III Sent. 8. 1. 5; Quodlib. IX. 4. & ad. 2; I. 2; S. T. III. 35. 5. & ad. 3.

a reality, while in the other extreme it is only an idea. This happens whenever two extremes are not of one order, as sense and science refer, respectively, to sensible things and to knowable things, which, in as much as they are realities existing in nature, are outside the order of sensible and intelligible existence. Therefore, in science and in sense a real relation exists, because they are ordered to the knowledge or to the sensible perceptions of things; whereas the things looked at in themselves are outside this order. Hence there is no real relation but only an idea inasmuch as the intellect apprehends them as terms of the relation of science and sense.<sup>1</sup>

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- <sup>1</sup>"Cum relatio requirat duo extrema, tripliciter se habere potest ad hoc quod sit res naturae et rationis.
- (1) Quando enim ex utraque parte est res rationis tantum; quando scilicet ordo vel habitudo non potest esse inter aliqua, nisi secundum apprehensionem rationis tantum, utpote cum dicimus idem eidem idem. Nam secundum quod ratio apprehendit his aliquod unum, statuit illud ut duo; et sic apprehendit quantum habitudinem ipsius ad seipsum. Et similiter est de omnibus relationibus quae sunt inter ens et non-ens, quae format ratio, inquantum apprehendit non-ens ut quoddam extremum. Et idem est de omnibus relationibus quae consequuntur actum rationis, ut genus et species et hujusmodi.
- (2) Quaedam vero relationis sunt quantum ad utrumque extremum, res naturae, quando scilicet est habitudo inter aliqua duo secundum aliquid relatiue conveniens utrique. Sicut patet de omnibus relationibus quae consequuntur quantitatem, ut magnum et parvus, duplum et dimidium, et hujusmodi, nam quantitas est in utroque extremorum. Et simile est de relationibus quae consequuntur actionem et passionem, ut motivum et mobile, pater et filius et similia.
- (3) Quando vero relatio in uno extremorum, est res naturae, et in altero res rationis tantum. Et hoc contingit quandocumque duo extrema non sunt unius rationis. Sicut sensus et scientia referuntur ad sensibile et scibile, quae quidem, inquantum sunt res quaedam in esse naturali existentes, sunt extra ordinem esse sensibilia et

In this triptych of relation, sketched by Aquinas in the prima pars of the Summa Theologica, relation is divided into three kinds: real, rational, mixed. They are distinguished by the nature of their extremes/terms/relata. If both terms are "creations of reason," the relation is rational; if both are natural or real, so too is the relation. And if one term is real the other rational, the relation is mixed.

In contradistinction to logical relations, which are constructed by the mind in order to better understand things ("ordo intellectum"),<sup>1</sup> real relations are independent of thought. Aquinas describes a real relation as a "connection between two things in virtue of something real found in both,"<sup>2</sup> and he sets up certain conditions

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intelligibilis; et ideo in scientia quidem et sensu est relatio realis, secundum quod ordinatur ad sciendum vel sentiendum res; sed res ipsae in se condiseratae sunt extra ordinem hujusmodi. Unde in eis non est aliqua relatio realiter ad scientiam et sensum; sed secundum rationem tantum in quantum intellectus apprehendit ea ut terminos relationum scientiae et sensus." (S. T. I. 13. 7; see also In I Sent. 30. 1. 3. ad. 3; In V Meta. 17. n. 1026-27.).

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 7. 11.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. I. 13. 7.

which must be fulfilled for a relation to be real.<sup>1</sup> Both terms must be real and distinct and capable of being ordered to one another, via a distinct foundation. A relation to be real must be really distinct from all the elements which comprise it. It must involve (1) a real individual subject, (2) a second distinct entity which functions as the term (termination) of the relation, and (3) a foundation for the relation which is some real, absolute, accidental determination in the subject or term or both, by which the subject acquires its reference or ordering to the term.

How many real relations can there be? Or in other words, what counts as a real accidental determination? Aquinas' response is: "Since a real relation consists in the bearing of one thing upon another, there must be as many relations of this kind as there are ways in which one thing can bear upon another."<sup>2</sup> And Aquinas has already

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<sup>1</sup>"Et hic quidem contingit secundum quod aliqua non habentia secundum se ordinem, ordinate intelliguntur; licet intellectus non intelligat ea habere ordinem, quia sic esset falsus. Ad hoc autem quod habeant ordinem, oportet quod utrumque sit ens, et utrumquo distinctum (quia eiusdem ad seipsum non est ordo) et utrumque ordinabile ad aliud." (De Pot. 7. 11.).

<sup>2</sup>In V Meta. 17. n. 1004.

delineated the basic ways: in active and passive power, and according to quantity whereby one thing is measured by another. Hence not all real relations are causal. If the foundation be real in both, the relation is real. And if the foundation pertains to both extremes, correlation is established, yielding the fullest possible real relation (e.g., father-son, smaller-larger).

Hence a relation is real if subject, term and foundation are real.<sup>1</sup> And a relation is mutual if there is a foundation in both extremes which established co-relation, and which cannot be abstracted from either term as it enters into their very natures. If, however, the foundation lies only in one extreme, such that one extreme is referred to another but not vice-versa (e.g., the relation of real dependence of a finite mind on reality),<sup>2</sup> the relation is mutual or mixed--so named because

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<sup>1</sup>"Relationes sunt quantum ad utrumque extremum res naturae; quando scilicet habitudo inter aliqua duo secundum aliquid realiter conveniens utrique." (S. T. I. 13. 7.).

<sup>2</sup>This example is partial to Aquinas' epistemological presuppositions, for a Hegelian would contend that being known can make a great difference to an object.

it is a marriage of real and logical relations.

This third class of relations, based on Aristotle's third species of relatives (relatives according to the measure and the measured), is characterized by the fact that the two extremes are not of the same order, and this duality of orders can be described in terms of dependence or absence of dependence.<sup>1</sup> One extreme is dependent upon the other but the converse is not true, as the relation of measure-measured.<sup>2</sup> For example in Aristotle's three-fold division of the kinds of relation, both mode 1 (the quantitas relation as duplum ad dimidium), and mode 2 (the actio-passio relation as pater ad filium) are real, whereas mode 3 is not, even though both Aristotle and Aquinas regard it as an actio/passio relation. Mode 3 (as scientia ad scibile) is regarded as a mixed relation and is name aliud ad ipsum--because the relation from the

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<sup>1</sup>"Quandocumque aliqua duo sio se habet ad invicem quod unum dependet ab altero sed non e converso, in eo quod dependet ab altero, est realis relatio; sed in eo a quo dependet, non est relatio nisi rationis tantum, . . . ut patet in scientia quae dependet a scibili, et non e converso." (De Ver. 4. 5.).

<sup>2</sup>"Et propter hoc non muto dicuntur mensura ad mensurabile et e converso, sicut in aliis modis, sed solum mensurabile ad mensuram." (In V Meta. 17. n. 1003.).

relative aliud (scientia) to the relative ipsum (scibile) is real, whereas the ipsum to aliud is not.<sup>1</sup> The relation is real on the side of knowledge, but not on the side of the knowable object. The object is the measure of knowledge, and enters into a logical relation with the knower, according to Aquinas and the Aristotelian tradition. It is only a being of reason because it is (as known) entirely a function of our way of knowing. Its proper name is that of a model or measure, whereas the proper name for the knowledge is a copy, image or measured.<sup>2</sup> Science depends upon the existence of reality to be science and as such is really related to reality, but reality is just that, regardless of any science, and is only made to stand in relation to anything at all.

Mixed relations may be classified as logical and from time to time they are so treated by Aquinas. To see how they fit such a description, let us examine Aquinas'

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. n. 1001-1032.

<sup>2</sup>"Relatio qua scientia refertur ad scibile, est realis; relatio vero qua scibile refertur ad scientiam, est rationis tantum: dicitur enim scibile referri; . . . non quia ipsum referatur, sed quia aliud refertur ad ipsum. Et ita est in omnibus aliis quae se habet ut mensura et mensuratum, vel perfectivum et perfectibile." (De Ver. 21. 1.; see also S. T. I. 13. 7.).

division of logical relations.

Relation's peculiarity as a predicament is that some relations are merely entis rationis which, by definition, depend upon our minds. "There are found certain types of relation which do not exist in the things of nature but only in the intellect, which does not happen in the other predicaments."<sup>1</sup> What are these kinds of relations? McInerny sketches out this answer:<sup>2</sup> given the conditions of a real relation, Aquinas proceeds to list four relations of reason which fail to comply with at least one of these requirements.

The relation which violates the first condition--that both of the extremes be real beings--is alterum tantum vel neutrum ens.<sup>3</sup> Here a being is compared with a

<sup>1</sup>Quodlib. IX. 4; see also S. T. I. 28. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph M. McInerny, The Logic of Analogy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1961), pp. 41-45.

<sup>3</sup>"Quandoque autem intellectus accipit aliqua duo ut entia, quorum alterum tantum vel neutrum est ens: sicut cum accipit duo futura, vel unum praesens et aliud futurum, et intelligit unum cum ordine ad aliud, dicens alterum esse prius altero; unde istae relationes sunt rationis tantum, ut opte modum intelligenti consequentes." (De Pot. 7. 11; see also De Ver. I. 5. 16.).

non-being, if, for example, we say that we are prior to future generations. Next, the relation of self-identity (identitas) transgresses the rule that the extremes be really distinct.<sup>1</sup> Thirdly, the relation between a relation and the subject of that relation (relatio relationis) falls short of the third condition--that the two extremes can be ordered to one another. The relation between a father and paternity is, in fact must be, a relation of reason, Thomas declares, due to a *reductio ad absurdum*: if it were real, it would entail an infinite regress.<sup>2</sup> This suggests a solution to Bradley's dilemma vis à vis *rêlation* which forced him to admit the un-reality or at least inadequacy of relation in general.<sup>3</sup>

The last kind of non-real relation for Aquinas is the mixed relation. Things are not really related

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<sup>1</sup>S. T. I. 7. 11; In V Meta. 11. n. 911-12.

<sup>2</sup>De Ver. 1. 5. 16.

<sup>3</sup>Bradley's dilemma is more fully described in the Conclusion, below, pp. 330-31.

to our knowing powers--they are merely understood as so related.<sup>1</sup>

McInerny goes on to point out<sup>2</sup> that all four relations--(1) alterum vel neutrum ens, (2) identitas, (3) relatio relationis, (4) scientia/scibile--are relations of reason, but none of them are logical relations. All logical relations are relations of reason, according to Aquinas, but not all relations of reason are logical. And the above relations are non-logical relations of reason. What is the difference?

Neither type has a real foundation, but relations of reason have (at least) one real extreme, while logical relations do not. For instance, the knowable is real; genus is logical. The mind sets up the relation in both types, but it is a matter of degree. Relations of reason have some sort of direct reference to reality; logical relations have only an indirect reference.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 7. 11; De Ver. 21. 1.

<sup>2</sup>pp. 43-44.

<sup>3</sup>De Pot. 7. 11. ad. 3.

The upshot of all of this is that, though things which are understood to be related are not always related, the mind is never totally removed from reality in constructing relations. The predicables, the farthest removed type of relation, are not mere ideal fictions. What they stand for is no Cheshire cat's grin--it is real. Granted that they are logical entities, having no independent existence, they are nevertheless a result of/grounded upon the concrete world of particulars and the way it is structured.

Apart from the three types of relations drawn up by Aquinas, modern-day Thomists have divided the first type--real relations--into two general classes:<sup>1</sup> transcendental or essential and predicamental or accidental. Such a division, though not explicit in Aquinas, is nevertheless claimed to be implicit in him--a justified deduction of his explicit views.<sup>2</sup> As it qualifies our thesis, it must be dealt with.

Transcendental relations, by their very nature, apply to all finite beings. Rather than express some specific determination of being, as does a predicament,

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<sup>1</sup>The third kind--subsistent relations--will be dealt with below, pp. 148-58.

<sup>2</sup>Hart, pp. 88, 121, 233-34.

a transcendental relation must be of the same extension as its subject. Examples are: the relations between matter and form, essence and existence, substance and accident, potency and act. For each of these essentially correlative principles transcends all genera and predicaments and is co-extensive with any finite subject. Apart from being co-extensive and essentially correlative, a transcendental relation is not something distinct from its extremes (e.g., matter and form), but simply is their matter and form in so far as they are existentially ordered to one another. As Aquinas puts it: "Potency is nothing other than an ordering to act."<sup>1</sup> Or again: "Matter acquires 'esse' actually in so far as it acquires form."<sup>2</sup> Real, transcendental relations then enter into the very being of a thing as necessary and essential constituents of its nature.

Does the introduction of this type of relation upset our thesis that Aquinas, while declaring all finite relations to be accidental, developed a philosophy which required some essential relations? I think not. For though Aquinas

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<sup>1</sup>In II De An. 11; see also C. G. II. 80.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. I. 75. 6; see also C. G. II. 55.

opened up the door to the possibility of essential relations--which constitute the very being of a thing-- he did not open it wide enough, to let them function in his philosophy or to recognize that they, in fact, did.

First of all, he only hinted at them and hence cannot be held directly responsible for their introduction. Secondly, he confined their denotation to the intrinsic principles of finite being, and did not allow them full play in the causal/quantitative/qualitative orders. Thus, though it does qualify our thesis, it does not contradict it. Aquinas, in effect, accepted the accidentality of all finite relations. It is left to the category of subsistent relations to rock the Aristotelian boat.

Predicamental relations, for which Aquinas is fully responsible, are not by contrast, contained in the essence of the subject; rather they are super-added to it. They can be separated from the subject without changing it. (essentially). Aquinas states: "In creatures, the relation of paternity adds a new to be that is accidental and not the same as the to be of the subject."<sup>1</sup> Another example:

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<sup>1</sup>In I Sent. 21. 1. 2.

in the relation of equality or similarity, one can take away one of the terms and the relation ceases, but no change takes place in the other term.

Before we move on to see if/why relations are real, one more point may be noted. Like Aristotle, Aquinas distinguished between relatives secundum dici and esse.<sup>1</sup> But it must be remembered that this distinction does not correspond to the one drawn between the real and logical realms secundum rem and secundum rationem. Some

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<sup>1</sup>S. T. I. 13. 7. ad. 1; De Pot. 7. 9. ad. 11; In I Sent. 30. 1. 3. ad. 4; 33. 1. 1. ad. 1; In II Sent. 1. 1. 5. ad. 8; In III Sent. 8. 1. 5. ad. 2; Quodlib. 9. 4. ad. 3; De Ver. 4. 5; 21. 6. The interpretation of this distinction varies. Kane, for example, pp. 14-15, thinks that esse signifies the extremes themselves which are simply ad aliud, not inesse necessarily; that, hence, a relation secundum esse is one which has a relative act of existing. I, however (and Kossel, Esse, 100-101, supports this interpretation), on the strength of the words themselves (said, has) and of the Aristotelian tradition, take dici to mean whatever can be said/explained/understood relatively (as a head, though a substance, may be viewed as part of a body), and esse to be whatever is properly in the category of relative (as master-slave). For support of this interpretation, see the following passages in Aquinas: In I Sent. 30. 1. 2; S. T. I. 13. 7. ad. 1; De Ver. 4. 5; 21. 6. Dici can also refer to the logical/grammatical aspects of relation, esse to the ontological. I am assuming in the above interpretation something argued for elsewhere: the ontological basis of the doctrine of the categories. Kossel, Esse, 101, also notes that Aquinas makes it clear that here esse does not mean the act of existing, nor the verbal copula, but signifies a third special sense: ratio.

relatives secundum esse are relations of reason, Aquinas notes<sup>1</sup> (e.g., left and right), while some relations secundum dici are real relations (e.g. knowledge is a quality of the mind, but it is really related to the thing known).

One further point may be made concerning relatives secundum esse. Like Aristotle, Aquinas posited a strict reciprocity (in time, being and cognition) between the relatives. One term cannot be abstracted from its correlative, as the latter constitutes its nature.<sup>2</sup> One qualification was added by Thomas, however: this reciprocity applies only to relatives in act.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In I Sent. 30. 1. 1. ad. 1; In III Sent. 8. 1. 5. ad. 2; Quodlib. IX. 4. ad. 3.

<sup>2</sup>De Pot. 1. 1. ad. 10; 7. 10. ad. 3; In V Meta. 11. n. 912; S. T. I. 40. 2. ad. 4.

<sup>3</sup>In I Sent. 9. ad. 1; 12. 1. 1. ad. 1; De Pot. 7. 8. ad. 1; In X Meta. 8. n. 2087-94; S. T. I. 13. 7. ad. 6; I 42. 3. ad. 2. Another characteristic of relative terms secundum esse, according to Aquinas, is an opposition of terms (e.g., what is affirmed of a father can be denied of a son). (In I Sent. 5. 1. 1. ad. 1; 26. 2. 2; In IV Sent. 8. 1. 2. sol. 1. ad. 1; De Pot. 2. 1. ad. 13; In I Meta. 12. n. 922; S. T. I. 33. 4. ad. 3.) This kind of opposition may be distinguished from other types of opposition, as the opposition of contraries, of habit/privation, of affirmation/negation. In the latter, opposition lies in affirmation/negation within the same

Now let us examine the claim made throughout--either by implication or directly--that there are some real relations.

Like Aristotle, Aquinas held that the categories are not only ways of talking about real being in logic, but are ways of being in metaphysics. In direct refutation of the opinion that relations are merely logical, Aquinas writes:

According to this view it would follow that relation has no objective reality, but exists only in the mind, even as the notion of genus and species and of 'second substances'. But this is impossible: because nothing is assigned to a predicament unless it has objective reality; . . . if relation has not

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subject--not in reference to a correlative. Furthermore, one contrary removes the other in the same subject, while relative opposition supposes and posits its relative opposite. Finally, in other types of opposition, one term is perfect, the other imperfect. But in relative opposition, no inequality is implied. (De Pot. 7. 8. ad. 4; 8. 1. ad. 13; Kossel, Esse, 103.) Some species of relation may imply inequality, such as master-slave, but this derives from the ratio of that species, not from the ratio of relation. (De Pot. 2. 4.).

objective reality, it would not be placed among the predicaments.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the fact that the proper concept of relation is indifferent to any existential status, its inclusion in the predicaments necessitates the extramental reality of relations, as a predicament is, by definition, a supreme genus of reality. What justifies such an inclusion?

From a formal standpoint, relations are univocal (reference to another), but from an existential standpoint, they are analogous--what Aquinas calls "analogia secundum esse et non secundum intentionem"<sup>2</sup>--encompassing real accidents, ens rationis, principles of being and subsistent relations.<sup>3</sup> The reality of transcendental relations

<sup>1</sup>"Secundum ergo hanc positionem sequeretur relatio non sit in rebus extra animam, sed in solo intellectu, sicut intentio generis et speciei, et secundarum substantiarum. Hoc autem esse non potest. In nullo enim praedicamento ponitur aliquid nisi res extra animam existens. . . . Si autem relatio non esset in rebus extra animam, non poneretur ad aliquid unum genus praedicamentum." (De Pot. 7. 9; see also In V Meta. 9. n. 889; In VI Meta. 4. n. 1241; Scheu, pp. 87-88.).

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 19. 5. 2. ad. 1.

<sup>3</sup>Subsistent relations (God as Triune) have not been examined so far. They are being saved deliberately.

hinges upon the reality of the principles of being.

The reality of subsistent relations depends upon a specific interpretation and acceptance of a particular Revelation. Logical relations are inescapable--if one believes in the possibility of some meaningful positive knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

But what of the assertion that there are real, that is, predicamental relations? Aquinas argues for the proposition by arguing against his main contemporary opponent of the reality of relations--Gilbert de la Porrée, Bishop of Poitiers.<sup>2</sup>

Gilbert, and the theological school stemming from him, held this thesis: relations are never intrinsically a part of the subject of which they are predicated, but somehow they stand outside of it (assistentes, exterius affixae). Gilbert makes a sharp division of the categories; substance, quantity and quality are in the thing of which they are predicated. They really make it be or be something (esse or esse aliud); they thus have

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<sup>1</sup>Kane, p. 16. As we shall argue in the Conclusion, nothing is knowable out of relation; to think at all is to relate.

<sup>2</sup>For an exposition of Gilbert, see Kossel, Esse, 24-28.

the true character of being (vera ratio essendi). But Gilbert maintains that the other seven categories are not predicated in this way either of God or of any other thing. If we say, for example, that a man is in the forum, we do not denote a character of being in the man himself, according to the Bishop; that is, we signify no inherent form as we do when we say that he is white or tall. These seven categories, while presupposing the being and certain properties of the subject, are, according to Gilbert, "made by a comparison with something outside it and merely describe its surrounding."<sup>1</sup>

Relation, for Gilbert, is merely an external connection.<sup>2</sup> It cannot be inherent. By taking away a servant, you remove the master, as well as his power of subjection or coercion. Nothing inherent--like his weight--remains, for such a power demands a subject. Likewise, left and right depend upon a frame of reference--nothing is intrinsically 'left'. Relative predication, then, merely

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<sup>1</sup>This quotation from Gilbert is given by Kossel, Esse, 26. f. 21.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. I. 28. 2.

marks external and superficial ties. No relation really changes the subject in any significant way.

Relations, then, become simply a property of knowledge. The verb 'to be' which connects one term to another has no existential significance. Reality is composed of distinct and separate entities. Relations, even causal relations, are mental constructs like genus and species.

Aquinas would agree that relation can be removed without a change in the subject--and this would seem to indicate that relation cannot be an accident, since a subject is changed by the removal of an accident. The solution to the dilemma lies in the by now familiar distinction between relatio ut relatio and relatio ut accidens.

Nothing prevents [relation] from ceasing to exist without any change in its subject, because it is not essentially complete through its existence in its subject ('sua ratio non perficitur prout est in ipso subjecto') but through transition into something else: and if this be removed the essence ('ratio') of this accident is removed as regards the action, but remains as regards its cause: even so, if the matter be removed, the heating is removed, although the cause of heating remain.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 7. 9. ad. 7. With this, Hegel will, in part, agree. But he will argue that the removal of some relations (versus capacities) can effect a drastic change. See below, pp. 242ff., 338ff.

If the capacity for such a relation were removed, this would entail a change.

According to Aquinas, real relations are first intentions, and must be founded on things and be the immediate likeness of something in things.<sup>1</sup> If George Sr. is really the father of George Jr., then the 'father of George Jr.' should signify something as real in George Sr. as 'man' or 'white' or 'four feet tall' if these are truly predicated of him.<sup>2</sup>

Aquinas, in reply, accuses Gilbert and his school of disregarding the distinction between esse and ratio and of viewing relation only in terms of its ratio, its way of being thought.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, he develops two arguments.<sup>4</sup> The first is an appeal to authority--if

<sup>1</sup>"Quia in creaturis per paternitatem additur novum esse quod est esse accidentale, et non idem, quod est esse subjecto." (In I Sent. 21. 1. 2; see also C. G. I. 4. 14.).

<sup>2</sup>De Pot. 7. 9; In I Sent. 2. 1. 3.

<sup>3</sup>In I Sent. 8. 4. 3; 26. 2. 1; S. T. I. 28, 2.

<sup>4</sup>Relation is real because it is a real category ("Nothing is assigned to a predicament unless it exists outside the mind." "In nullo enim praedicamento ponitur aliquid nisi res extra animam existens." [De Pot. 7. 9; see also In I Sent. 26. 2. 1; De Ente. c. 7. n; Quodlib. IX. 2. 4; C. G. I. 4. 14; In V Meta. 9. n. 889]), and it is real

relation were not extramental, Aristotle would not have included it among the predicaments. But the second points to a metaphysical underpinning--the good and the perfection of things consist not only in things considered absolutely, but in their order to one another. Hence relation must be real, for the order and, in turn, perfection of the world must be real (at least possible perfection). Or, to state it more convincingly, if the world be ordered, relation must in some instances be real.

To add support to Aquinas' claim, one can appeal to the manifestations/implications of a relation to point up its reality. One could say, for instance, that when a man becomes a father he changes; he acquires certain rights, duties, powers, obligations, and he has these new relations because of a prior relation of paternity. And since these rights et al. are not merely mental manifestations, there is a real difference between Sigfried as a father and Sigfried not as a father. And even if the sceptic questions or denies the reality of such obligations, et al., one could still argue that paternity certainly

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because there must be a real order (De Pot. 7. 9; In XVII Meta. n. 1004; Quodlib. I. 2. 2.).

involves the production of something which certainly seems to be really related to its co-author. But Hume, with his critique of causal relations, would, I fear, have the last say in this argument.

Another tricky claim is the one made by Aquinas that the mind discovers and does not create the ordering of cause to effect in a truly ordered hierarchical universe; the mind is under a genuine compulsion of reality. Of course, the main question is: how ever do you tell?<sup>1</sup> How can you draw the line between mentally invented (even as a conveniently constructed mode of penetration into reality) and really discovered relations? It is for this reason that Suarez confines the reality of relations to the reality of the foundation.

The final argument might be to consider a world stripped of real relations. Metaphysics would become logic; Polanyi would be turned into a positivist; the universe would defy the understanding.<sup>2</sup> Ominous. And

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<sup>1</sup>Hegel will give the answer: by praxis-participation.

<sup>2</sup>Kane, p. 34, proffers a list of things which demand real relations: real adaption, interaction, interdependence, arrangement, coordination and subordination, to name a few. See, also, the Conclusion where the

though this still does not guarantee the reality of relations, surely their reality is as desirable, if not as conclusive, as any probable truth can be.

Ens minimum, scilicet relatio.<sup>1</sup>

Aquinas seems to have had a rather low opinion of relation. Apart from claiming it to be "the lowest being" ("ens minimum"), he termed it "the most feeble"<sup>2</sup> and "the most imperfect of all things."<sup>3</sup> This ontological claim about relation, which Aquinas shared with Aristotle, demands an explanation.

But an explanation of why relation has the most tenuous being of all the categories is not immediately forthcoming. The commentators lead one in circles. It is weak, they say, because it is a predicament, and predicaments are not separate entities--merely accidents. But they never seem to get around to the question: why is it a predicament? It is the most attenuated of the

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question of the reality of relations is taken up again (Below, pp. 319-21).

<sup>1</sup>In I Sent. 26. 2. 2. ad. 2.

<sup>2</sup>In III Phys. 1. n. 280. 6.

<sup>3</sup>C. G. IV. 14.

predicaments, they continue, because it needs a fundamentum. But this is another petitio, for the reason that relation needed a basis, we were told, was precisely because it was not a substance. Finally, they resort to its nature; its sole function, they remind us, is to refer to another. This, they assure us, makes it very feeble. But they do not make it at all clear how or why.

Aquinas is seemingly more direct in his justification. In commenting on the passage in the Metaphysics of Aristotle where relations' mode of being is declared to be so imperfect, Aquinas says: "The reason is that, while substance is something which exists of itself, and quantity and quality are things which exist in something else, relations are things which not only exist in something else, but also have being in reference to something else."<sup>1</sup> And in the same place he says that relations are feeble because "they inhere in substance by means of the other categories."<sup>2</sup> The final justification

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<sup>1</sup>In XII Meta. 4. n. 2457.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

which Aquinas gives comes from Aristotle as well:<sup>1</sup>  
 movement is accidental to relation and hence a relation  
 can perish simply by a change external to it.<sup>2</sup>

But these reasons indicate and rest on a  
 presupposition made by Aquinas. Namely: "Every real  
 thing is either a substance or an accident."<sup>3</sup> Substance,  
 to Aquinas,<sup>4</sup> is the concrete unit in nature to which the  
 act of existing properly belongs. It is the principle  
 category--the cause and subject of all accidents.<sup>5</sup> The  
 closer an accident is to substance, the stronger its esse.  
 Like Aristotle before him, substance turns out to be the  
 criterion of goodness, strength, independence and reality.

The predicamental accidents are thus structured in

<sup>1</sup>Aristotle Physics 225<sup>b</sup> 10; Metaphysics 1068<sup>a</sup> 11.

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 9. exp. text; In III Sent. 2. 2. 2. sol. 3; In IV Sent. 1. 1. 4. sol. 2; C. G. III. 62; De Pot. 7. 8. ad. 5; In XI Meta. 12. n. 2385; In V Phys. 3.

<sup>3</sup>"Omnis enim res vel est substantia vel accidens."  
 (De Pot. 8. 2.).

<sup>4</sup>Aquinas defines substance as "something having an essence to which belongs existence in itself and not to another." (In II Sent. 3. 1. 5.) As in Descartes, 'substance' for Aquinas is only properly predicated of God.

<sup>5</sup>Aquinas' prejudice has found its way into our language, for "weak" can mean unsubstantial. Thus, by definition, the relational way of being is feeble.

terms of their immediate causes. And relation is deemed "ens debilissimum" because it not only depends upon the esse of its subject, but also on the esse of the accident which causes it.<sup>1</sup>

So, even while the reality of relation is constantly affirmed, relation is said (versus shown) to be not a substance, but a parasite, not a being, but a "being of a being."<sup>2</sup> Hence Aquinas' insistence on the necessity of a foundation for support.<sup>3</sup>

But what is a relative entity? Where does it abide?

The reality of a relation seems to consist in its reference to something else. But this is vague. To what does the "its" refer?

Aquinas tells us<sup>4</sup> that relation is a medium between two extremes, and, as such, it is one medium--like the road from Athens to Thebes, and back, to use his example. But viewed in terms of that which makes it real (substance),

<sup>1</sup>C. G. IV. 14.

<sup>2</sup>De Pot. 3. 3. ad. 2; S. T. I. 45. 3. ad. 2; In XII Meta. 4. n. 2457.

<sup>3</sup>In I Phys. 3. 1; In IV Meta. 12. n. 2457; De Pot. 2. 5.; C. G. I. 4. 14; In I Sent. 26. 2. 1. ad. 3.

<sup>4</sup>In I Sent. 27. 1. 1. ad. 2; S. T. I. 28. 4. ad. 5.

relation is not a medium--it is an accident.<sup>1</sup>

But does substance command relation's reality? What is this tendency of one subject to be open to another? Is it a physical entity, like a chain? In other words, can we substantialize relation and consider it per modum substantiae? Can we make it an absolute medium? If not (and indeed not, for Aquinas, as this would destroy its ratio whereby it is only a reference, a towardness<sup>2</sup>), then the mind must constitute (contribute something to, at least) the relation as a medium and then relation becomes an ens rationis.

But relations, Aquinas assures us, have a real esse. And their reality, he tells us,<sup>3</sup> is due to something inhering in the subject which is ad aliud, in a thing's (so that is the "its"! ) tendency to be open to other things. So, is not Aquinas actually the precursor of

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 7. 8; 8. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Aquinas says (indirectly) that the reason we tend to substantialize relation is that the imagination tends to distort; only the intellect is reliable in judging or reporting reality. (S. T. II. 58. 4.).

<sup>3</sup>In I Sent. 26. 2. 1; 33. 1. 1; S. T. 28. 2.

Suarez' position--not only are relations real if their foundations are real, but because they are?

Kane maintains that the reality of relation for Aquinas is not confined to the reality of its foundation.

For that, he continues:

Would be to say that relation is never real as relation. But relations are themselves real, just as order is real. Certainly there are relations which are totally the product of our own thought, but there are others of which the terms and the foundations are anterior to our thought, and consequently are extra-mental.<sup>1</sup>

This might be true, but I could find no clear passage in Aquinas directly verifying this. And the force of Kane's statement is deflected considerably by the fact that, au milieu, instead of telling us why relations are real regardless of their foundations, he just re-affirms the fact that there are real relations. We know that. What we want to find out is why and how real. Is their reality exhausted by the reality of their foundations? Or is the foundation simply a necessary and not a sufficient condition, the latter coming from the relation itself?

It seems as if Kane is wrong, for Aquinas says

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<sup>1</sup>p. 34.

directly: "A relation is real because it has a real basis in the related thing."<sup>1</sup> And again: "That it is something real is due to the fact that it is in a subject, which is either identical with it as God, or is its cause as in creatures."<sup>2</sup> So the only real thing about a relation is its foundation. Aquinas is indeed a substance man.

In the end, then, Aquinas is not unlike Gilbert. For any inherency relation has is not on its own merits. Remove the basis of the relation and relation becomes merely an external connection. Like Aristotle before him, only in different terms, Thomas thus removes relation as a viable force from his world.

But while for Aquinas the philosopher of finite being substance is the central category, for Aquinas the philosopher of religion relation is the central category. For (as we shall see next) he goes on to tell us that the

<sup>1</sup>"Quamvis relationi ex hoc ad alterum dicitur, non debeatur quod sit res quaedam, est tamen res aliqua secundum quod habet fundamentum in eo quod refertur." (In I Sent. 26. 2. 2. ad. 3; see also 26. 1. 2; De Pot. 8. 2.).

<sup>2</sup>"Quod sit aliquid secundum rem habet ex illa parte qua inest, vel ut idem secundum rem, ut in divinis, vel ut habens causam in subjecto, sicut in creaturis." (De Pot. 2. 5.).

Substance is in fact nothing but relations, that God is this "most imperfect of all things."

Aquinas avoids contradicting himself here because the weakness of relation is a characteristic only of accidental relations, not of subsistent relations. Though, as we have seen, relations are univocal from the standpoint of their ratio, they are existentially analogical.

But Aquinas contradicts himself elsewhere. For the more we look, the more we see that relation and not substance is the category of categories in Aquinas' philosophy of finite being. And here, as we shall see, the importance of relation grows in an inverse ratio to its weaknesses.<sup>1</sup>

At the start of this paper, we foretold of Aquinas' resemblance to Aristotle in his analysis of relation, and warned of his meticulousness, as well as his circumlocution. But, as Hegel notes in the Preface to the Phenomenology, a correct result is just as useless as the statement--at night all cows are black--until/unless it has been worked out.

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<sup>1</sup>Murin, 149.

Now that we have satisfied our Hegelian predilections, we understand what we merely knew before: "La doctrine [de la relation] de l'Aquinate, basée sur celle d'Aristote, n'a guère connu de changement."<sup>1</sup> But if Aquinas in his description/analysis of the anatomy of relation is a pure Aristotelian, the Thomistic application of relation represents a radical departure from Aristotle and a transcendental turn towards Hegel. Extremes meet in a Hegelian-fashion; conservative turns progressive. For, according to Hegel, all substance is relational and the Substance of Aquinas turns out to be just that. Let us examine this new kind of relation offered by Aquinas to explain God's nature.

Krempel concludes his work with these words:

Au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, vivait un penseur chrétien qui développa un système grandiose sur ce point crucial de toute doctrine philosophique: la relation. C'est saint Thomas d'Aquin (1225-1274) de l'ordre des frères prêcheurs. La relation le harcelait incessamment parce qu'il reconnaissait en elle l'instrument par excellence de la spéculation théologique.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 637.

Like most medievals, Aquinas first met the problem of relation in theology, in the explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity. And due to its theological stature--predicable of God--and its ramifications--for creation and the like--relation received a great deal of attention.

Aside from placing a strain on the comprehension of man, the Christian doctrine of God as Three Persons but one Substance, placed somewhat of a strain on Aristotelian logic upon which the medievals were nurtured. And so a more exacting explanation of relation was required. It is this new theory of relation, devised to both accommodate the Tri-une God and to explain God's relation to creation, which marks the difference (for our purposes) between Aquinas and Aristotle.

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity<sup>1</sup> postulates that God, as a self-subsisting intellect and will,<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For Aquinas' discussion of the Trinity, see S. T. I. 27-24; De Pot. 8-101 Compend. Theo. 36-50.

<sup>2</sup>To the objection that this is not a relation and that therefore God is not "nothing but" relations, see below, pp. 333-36.

knows<sup>1</sup> himself. This knowledge is (said to be) so perfect that the thought takes on life, generating another person known as the Son--the living, self-knowing God. The Father and the Son see one another (themselves) and doing so, love the other (himself). The Holy Spirit is precisely this love between the Father and Son, proceeding from them by way of spiration (a breathing forth). These two operations--intellectual and volitional--are (held to be) eternal, uncaused, infinite, and, though each person is distinct by way or origin identical with the divine essence.

The last point is the trickiest. There is real--not nominal--opposition,<sup>2</sup> real distinction and hence real relations<sup>3</sup> within the nature of God, but such distinctions are not absolute; they are relative. Though the Three

<sup>1</sup>One must overcome the tendency to use the past tense, as in most genetic explanations, for this operation is timeless or eternal (though paradoxically, the eternal operation becomes historical with the Incarnation).

<sup>2</sup>They cannot, for example, be predicated of one another. See In I Sent. 2. 1. 3. sed contra & ad. 4; 1. 5. c. & ad. 3; De Pot. 8. 1. ad. 7; 8. 2. ad. 4, 4, 15, 16, 19; C. G. IV. 24; S. T. I. 30. 1. ad. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Though these real relations are in the operative order only. See S. T. I. 50. 3 & 4; C. G. II. 93-95.

Persons are distinct<sup>1</sup> from one another, they are not really distinct from God's nature. Hart<sup>2</sup> offers this analogy: the divine nature:the Three Persons::a field of action:three centers of action.

The upshot: the divine nature is identical with and thus nothing but its relations.<sup>3</sup> To quote Aquinas;

While relation in created things exists as an accident in a subject, in God a really existing relation has the existence of the divine nature and is completely identical with it.<sup>4</sup>

And thus it is manifest that a real relation in God is in reality identical with nature and differs only in our minds' understanding, inasmuch as relation implies a reference to the correlative term, which is not implied by the term 'nature'. Therefore it is clear that in God relation and nature are existentially not two things but one and the same.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Since God is unquantified and immaterial, these distinctions are purely formal.

<sup>2</sup>p. 238.

<sup>3</sup>The identity between God and his nature is imperfectly expressed by the ordinary meaning of the word relation however, as God's nature for Aquinas is beyond human reason and intuition. Or, in other terms, what is identical with a mystery remains a mystery.

<sup>4</sup>"Qua relatio in rebus creatis habet esse accidentale in subjecto, relatio realiter existens in Deo habet esse essentiae divinae idem omnino ei existens." (S. T. I. 28. 2.).

<sup>5</sup>"Et sic manifestum est quod relatio realiter existens in Deo est idem essentiae secundum rem, et non differt nisi secundum intelligentiae rationem, prout in

Though the absolute and the relative differ logically in God, they do not really differ.<sup>1</sup> Relations are God.

This, in brief, is what Aquinas knew from the theological tradition especially the Athanasian creed. As it is declared to be a mystery, all one can do is describe it. But it has far-reaching implications. God is a complex of real relations it seems--a relative multiplicity but an absolute unity.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, God is a complex of subsistent relations, since nothing accidental may be predicated of God, as accidentality implies dependence and thus limitation.<sup>3</sup> Hence not only is relation freed from the imperfections it had as an accident--its attenuated reality and dependence--but the scope of relation has been radically broadened. For as each relation constitutes each Person of the Trinity, such relations must be constitutive and independent.

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relatione importatur respectus ad suum oppositum, qui non importatur in nomine essentiae. Patet ergo quod in Deo non est aliud esse relationis et esse essentiae, sed unum et idem." (Ibid.).

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 8. 1. ad. 6.

<sup>2</sup>This, as we shall see, will be the prototype of Hegel's concrete universal.

<sup>3</sup>C. G. I. 14.

But before we turn to the astonishing consequences of this new category of relations--subsistent relations--let us follow the doctrine through.

The first objection to this doctrine comes from the nominalists, such as Roscelin (1050-1122). As a nominalist, he was anti-relational, allowing his mental universe to be peopled only by isolated particulars with no resemblance to each other. He maintained that the Three Persons of the Trinity were three unrelated substances. But the critical question is: how do the nominalists ever/even arrive at the category of particularity? A lesson to be learned from Hegel is that such a category is a universal as well.<sup>1</sup>

Another powerful objection<sup>2</sup> to there being any real relations at all in God is this: are the relations in God really distinct (for one of the prerequisites of real relations is that they be distinct)? For it would seem (granting the principle that two entities which are identical with a third are identical with each other)

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<sup>1</sup>Below, p. 280.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. I. 28. 3. ad. 1.

that since each relation in God is identical with the divine essence, only the logical relation of self-identity could be predicated of Him.

Aquinas replies directly to this objection by way of a distinction. Two things are identical with a third if they are identical in fact and in ratio (re et ratione, sicut tunica et indumentum), but not if they differ in their ratio. Now, Aquinas continues, just as action and passion may both be identified with motion, so too paternity and filiation are identical with the divine nature. But it does not follow that therefore action and passion are the same.<sup>1</sup> And he goes on to show the rationes of paternity and filiation formally oppose one another, thus concluding that they are (not just 'might be') distinct.

And so, though the relations in God are distinct only through their rationes, they are nonetheless real. It is not merely the mind which distinguishes them. Furthermore, the ad aliquid criterion is met by the terms/phases in the eternal (circular not linear) progression. The total esse of the divine relation consists in being

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<sup>1</sup>Aquinas' example is drawn from Aristotle's treatment of motion in the Physics 202<sup>b</sup> 10-30.

ad with the sole difference that the esse ad is subsistent.<sup>1</sup> And thus there is 'within' God, despite an absolute identity, real relative distinctions<sup>2</sup>--what Helm terms<sup>3</sup> "relations of order in a self-identical divine procession."

Before we find out what type of relation Aquinas chose to house the Trinity, let us answer the question: why is relation, any relation, applicable to such a supra-/er-reality? The answer comes to this: relation, in itself, and according to its ratio propria, has no imperfections<sup>4</sup> (such as dependence). Furthermore, relation seems to be the only opposition (reality) which distinguishes its terms and yet allows an identity of opposites, both of which are suitable to the God of Aquinas.

Which mode of relations does Aquinas choose? Mode 1, the relation grounded upon quantity, is ruled out, because no quantity can be predicated of God, as He is revealed to be absolutely simple and indivisible. Mode 2

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<sup>1</sup>S. T. I. 28. 2; In I Sent. 33. 1; C. G. IV. 14; De Pot. 8. 2.

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 2. 1. 5. ad. 2; 25. 1. 4. c. & ad. 2; De Pot. 9. 4. & 5; S. T. 36. 2.

<sup>3</sup> p. 50.

<sup>4</sup>In I Sent. 8. 4. 3; De Pot. 7. 10. 4; C. G. 4. 14; S. T. I. 28. 2.

(actio/passio) is settled upon, because it is the type in which both relatives are equally real,<sup>1</sup> and are of the same order of reality.<sup>2</sup> Action passion then is the privileged type.

Aquinas posits that<sup>3</sup> there are four relations in God: scilicet paternitas (Father to Son), filiatio (Son to Father), spiratio (Father and Son vis à vis the Holy Spirit), and processio (Holy Ghost vis à vis the Father and Son). He asserts nevertheless that there are only three<sup>4</sup> real opposed relations and therefore only Three Persons. For the third and fourth kinds are in fact two sides of the same coin--one spoken of in terms of activity, the other in terms of passivity--and hence they are not opposed.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In I Sent. 27. 1. 1. 2.

<sup>2</sup>De Pot. 8. 1; S. T. I. 13. 7.

<sup>3</sup>S. T. I. 28. 4.

<sup>4</sup>To the Spinozist who would ask--is not the list exhaustless?--Aquinas could only reply: religious faith demands a triune nature.

<sup>5</sup>Aquinas says (S. T. I. 28. 4. ad. 5.) that this is not true of the relation between Father and Son and the relation between Son and Father, because the sense or direction of the relation is different. This would seem to be the case with the third and fourth kinds as well, but he does not elaborate.

The appropriate way to symbolize such a doctrine, according to Helm,<sup>1</sup> is  $R(R,R,R)$ . The schema of Aquinas' metaphysics  $R(a,b)$ , whereby two or more substances are related, is clearly inadequate. For the divine persons are not substances. Each place holder in the parenthesis must be a relation and so each  $R$  within the brackets stands for a distinct version of the same divine process--the relations of paternity, filiation and spiration.

This discrepancy in symbolization serves to underscore the conceptual revolution that has transpired. With such statements as: "Dicendum quod relationes quaedam sunt in divinus realiter"<sup>2</sup> Aquinas, the traditional Aristotelian, has become Hegel the radical. For under the influence of revelation, Aquinas, a straight substance philosopher throughout, has identified relation and substance, combining the absolute and the relative in the same metaphysical reality. Real relations constitute the divine substance: "Opportet ergo relationes secundum rem, esse diviniam substantiam."<sup>3</sup> Ens realissimum is (what is

<sup>1</sup>p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. I. 28. 1.

<sup>3</sup>De Pot. 8. 2.

in the finite realm) ens minimum.

Even though it is won on theological grounds, this is a critical step in the history of the concept of relation. For what Aquinas takes to be the most real is taken to be relational, not substantial. By making the divine nature relational, Aquinas makes relation the central nerve of reality. God must be known in terms of the relations that he stands in or, more accurately, is. The Absolute not only is, but must be defined in terms of relations.

To a would-be philosopher, tracing the history of an elusive idea, such a God is indeed hanc sublimem veritatem.

But such a theological re/transvaluation of relation is antithetical to Thomas' entire philosophy of nature and of man. For in the finite realm, as we have noted, Aquinas' philosophy is declared to be, like Aristotle's before him, a substance philosophy. As Helm capsulizes the antithesis: "Relation is assistant in creation but constituent in Creator."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>p. 50.

But relation, as with Aristotle, will turn out to be constituent in the created world. And thus the philosopher who has the perfect model to deal with the world fails to do so. It is left to Hegel to apply the subsistent relations of the Triune God (as well as the essential relations of the transcendentals) to the world. As Gilson remarks somewhere: "The assassination of Aquinas was an inside job."

"Creation signifies a relation between God and the creature."<sup>1</sup> Aquinas knew from Revelation that there are Three Persons in one God. He also knew that God is the creator upon whom creation/creatures entirely depend. And if Aquinas selected the second Aristotelian mode of relation--real reciprocal relations--to represent the first doctrine, he chose the third mode--mixed relations--to describe the relation of creation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>S. T. I. 45. 3. ad. 1.

<sup>2</sup>For the various meanings of creation in Aquinas, see James F. Anderson, "Creation As a Relation," New Scholasticism, XXIV (July, 1950), 266-67. Curiously, the first type of relation is not so applied and generally goes unnoticed by Aquinas. This serves to indicate his interest (person-person; person-God), for it is precisely the relations of mode 1--those relations based on quantity that are reducible to mathematical equations--that interest twentieth century philosophers the most.

The choice was deliberate, for Aquinas, despite the fact that relations make up the very essence of the Godhead, did not want to have God really related to creation. Thus he maintains that there is merely a conceptual relation between God and creation in the same way as between scibile and scientia. But creatures are really related to God just as scientia is necessarily attached to scibile. Creation bears a unilateral relation to God.

Now since God is altogether outside the order of creatures, since they are ordered to him but not he to them, it is clear that being related to God is a reality in creatures, but being related to creatures is not a reality in God; we say it about him because of the real relation in creations.<sup>1</sup>

Though the terms are different, the use of the third mode of relations is thoroughly Aristotelian. But Thomas departs from his forebearer when he begins to stress the essential dependence of creatures on God.<sup>2</sup> While God

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<sup>1</sup>"Cum igitur Deus sit extra totum ordinem creaturae, et omnes creaturae ordinentur ad ipsum, et non e converso, manifestum est quod creaturae realiter referuntur ad ipsum Deum; sed in Deo non est aliqua realis relatio ejus ad creaturas, sed secundum ratione, tantum, in quantum creaturae referuntur ad ipsum." (S. T. I. 13. 7.).

<sup>2</sup>De Pot. 3. 3; Quodlib. I. 2. 2; In I Sent. 1. 8. 4. 1. ad. 3.

as free cause is prior/sovereign/independent to/of the effects, creation is dependent on God for its very existence. And this dependence according to Thomas is not merely momentary. Aquinas, like Descartes, held that such dependence was ever-present, for the world was/is being conserved as well as created. Aquinas would have been flabbergasted by the principle of inertia of motion; he posited that God's sustaining action was continually necessary.

Positively considered the twist in creatures to nothingness is but their dependence on the causal principle of their being.<sup>1</sup>

Every creature's being is always emanating from God as long as they exist; . . . the world would not stand for a single instant if God withdrew his support.<sup>2</sup>

But if this is correct, something is amiss. For in Aquinas' framework, how can anything finite become essentially anything--let alone totally existentially dependent--by means of an accident? Aquinas had vigorously maintained that no accident can make an intrinsic

<sup>1</sup>In II Sent. 19. 1. 1. ad. 7.

<sup>2</sup>C. G. III. 65; see also S. T. I. 104. 1; Quodlib. IV. 4; De Pot. 5. 4. ad. 10.

difference to any subject by its removal. But here some relations are taken to be indispensable. Aquinas explicitly says that a creature is essentially relative, entirely dependent: - "Creatura refertur ad Deum secundum suam substantiam, sicut secundum causam relationis."<sup>1</sup> And again: "Yet there is in creatures a real relation to God, because they are subordinate to, and in their very nature, dependent on him."<sup>2</sup> Without a relation to God, a thing could not be, since God is each thing's cause and all acts of being exist only by His.<sup>3</sup>

This does not seem to perturb the Sicilian Ox. To Aquinas the fact that creatures depend upon God for the totality of their being does not, as one might think, require that the relation of creation in them be anything more than an accident.<sup>4</sup> "Illa relatio [sc. creatio]

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 7. 9. 4. (Italics mine.).

<sup>2</sup>"Sed in creaturis est realis relatio ad Deum, quia creaturae continentur sub ordine divine et in earum natura est quod dependeant a Deo." (S. T. I. 28. 1. ad. 3.).

<sup>3</sup>"Deus est esse omnium, non essentielle, sed causale." (In I Sent. 8. 1. 2; see also Gilson, The Christian Philosophy of Aquinas, p. 101.).

<sup>4</sup>Kane, p. 24.

accidens est."<sup>1</sup> But relation is held to be a specific kind of accident.

First of all, Aquinas points out that relations, including the relation of creation (dependentia ad), are con-created, as God only creates/d subsisting substances, i.e., things which depend.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Aquinas explicitly says that relation is only spoken of as inhering, not as being,<sup>3</sup> and as such it is an accident. But since this is not superadded to the being of any substance but makes the subject be, it is no ordinary predicamental relation. It is said to be an accident--in virtue of its inherence--but analogically, Aquinas tells us.

But so far, though Aquinas has granted that the relation of creation is unlike any other accident (and this I do not doubt), he has merely stated that it is an

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 3. 3. ad. 3.

<sup>2</sup>S. T. I. 45, 3.

<sup>3</sup>"Relatio praedicta [sc. creationis] non est quoddam creatum, sed concreatum, sicut nec est ens proprie loquendo, sed inhaerens. Et simile est de omnibus accidentibus." (De Pot. 3. 3. ad. 2.).

accident because it strikes the inherence note. Let us examine his attempt to show it.<sup>1</sup>

In the strict sense, according to Aquinas, created beings are subsistent beings, for creation is not part of their definition. Man, for example, is a creature per accidens and not per se, for his creaturehood tells us nothing of what he is en soi; it merely points to the fact that he was made by another. The relation of creation, Aquinas continues, is something in a substance, and is really distinct from the substance. Men are substantial beings who bear certain relations. To quote: "Creation is in reality nothing other than a certain relation to God with a newness of existing."<sup>2</sup> "Creation in the creature is only a certain relation to the Creator as the principle of its being."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See De Pot. 7. 9. ad. 4; Kane, pp. 24-25

<sup>2</sup>"Creatio nihil est aliud realiter quam relatio quaedam ad Deum cum novitate essendi." (De Pot. 3. 3; see also S. T. I. 45. 2. ad. 2; I. 45. 3.).

<sup>3</sup>"Unde relinquitur quod creatio in creatura non sit nisi relatio quaedam ad creatorem." (S. T. I. 45. 3.) (Italics mine.).

I disagree. It seems as if Aquinas' defense is simply verbal. On the one hand he tells us that every finite thing is of necessity related to God, and then he goes on to add--but being created is not part of man's essence. Is this not contradictory?

Now it is true that for Thomas while it is God's essence to be, as his existence and essence are co-extensive, it is not man's essence to be created. The creation of man is conditional. If man exists, then he is necessarily created, according to Aquinas. So creation is not strictly speaking an essential necessity, but an existential necessity. But nevertheless man is still properly related, to use Aristotle's terminology for it, for reference to another is a necessary condition of existence.

Aquinas also maintains that the relation of creation inheres in but is not identical with man's substance. But I am not saying that this particular relation is the essence of man; and I want to establish is that it is, as Aquinas himself indicates at one point, in some sense necessary to man.

Now it might be the case that being created indicates nothing about man specifically, for everything we can see/smell/touch et al. is just that. With this I agree. But this is still not to deny that it is necessary to man--if he be at all--to be dependent.

Finally such a relation does tell us a good deal about man (though, albeit, the rest of creation as well). As Cahill notes,<sup>1</sup> it indicates dependence, incompleteness, limitation, imperfection, and connection with others. If Lenin could infer a civilization from a glass of water, think what he could do with this!

So we come back to our original point: certain relations are seen to be indispensable. As anticipated, Aquinas' former Aristotelian grasp on substance is beginning to weaken.

One more point regarding the relation between the absolute and the relative needs to be considered--that is, how creation, viewed actively (i.e., from God's point of view), affects God.

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<sup>1</sup>pp. 1, 9, 124.

With the statement that relational predicates may be applied to God, a problem arises. It appears that one of God's properties--God as Creator--is acquired via something external, or is determined by way of a relation to creation (actual or possible). This means that either his independence is jeopardized or his simplicity is impaired. For either God is essentially dependent upon a creation to be God at all, or there is a distinction between God's essence and his properties.

Aquinas' position<sup>1</sup> is that God is both simple (simplex) and independent, as well as being, essentially, a creator. The relation of creation--which presupposes a term extrinsic yet necessary to him--can be predicated of God but does not exist in him. It is extrinsic to his being as such,<sup>2</sup> and does not make him on the account relative or dependent or complex. A relational term such as Creator does not show God's essence but simply

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<sup>1</sup>H. A. Wolfson, "St. Thomas on Divine Attributes," Etudes de Philosophie Médiéval: Mélanges offerts à Etienne Gilson (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1959), 673-700.

<sup>2</sup>"Relationes cum de Deo dici incipiunt propter mutationem in creatura factam, patet quod causa quare de Deo dicatur est ex parte creaturae, et per accidens de Deo dicuntur." (De Pot. 7. 8. 6.).

describes the actions of God according to his essence, or, in other terms, the effects of his essence. The dependence is one-sided, and it is only due to the limitation of our finite minds that we tend to think otherwise.

Aquinas reminds us of several points: God does not lose something when he acts;<sup>1</sup> he acts without the medium of an immediate/intermediate principle of operation (actio medio);<sup>2</sup> his activity presupposes no passivity (such as the passive potentiality to create before he went and did it);<sup>3</sup> he also presupposes nothing (e.g., matter) when he creates;<sup>4</sup> he does not act in time, but produces the world together with time;<sup>5</sup> finally, God does not act by a new action--it is only called new due to the novelty of the effect.<sup>6</sup> But to the direct question--Is not God necessarily a Creator and, as such, contingent upon something external?--Aquinas simply replies that God as

<sup>1</sup>De Pot. 3. 7; C. G. III. 69. 9; S. T. I. 115.

<sup>2</sup>In II Sent. 1. 1. 5. ad. 11; C. G. II. 35.

<sup>3</sup>De Pot. 1. 3; 3. 7. ad. 10; 3. 8; S. T. I. 25. 2; I. 42. 6; I. 44. 1. & 2; I. 45. 2; I. 65. 4.

<sup>4</sup>S. T. I. 46. 1. ad. 6-10.      <sup>5</sup>De Ver. 1. 4. 5.

<sup>6</sup>De Pot. 3. 17. ad. 12.

Cause just is completely independent of his effects.

So the above points may help us to conceptualize the kind of creation Aquinas has in mind, but basically the relation of God to his creation is, in Marcel's terms, not a problem but a mystery. This is Aquinas' response. Philosophically, quite aggravating.

We have already noted that relation paradoxically permeates the whole spectrum of Thomistic reality. We shall now attempt to show this.

For a start, no less than perfection requires relation. First the Thomistic universe is hierarchically structured--God is the apex, materia prima is the lowest rung. Now the perfection of anything, Aquinas states, can be judged in terms of what inheres in an object absolutely and is enclosed within it, but it also must be judged in terms of its order to other things.<sup>1</sup> The perfection of

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<sup>1</sup>"Now perfection of a thing is three-fold: first, according to the constitution of its own being; secondly, in respect of any accidents being added as necessary for its perfect operation; thirdly, perfection consists in the attaining to something else as the end." "Perfectio autem alicujus rei triplex est. (1) Quidem, secundum quod in suo esse constituitur. (2) Vero, prout ei aliqua accidentia superadduntur ad suam perfectam operatione, necessaria. (3) Vero perfectio alicujus est per hoc quod aliquid attingit sicut finem." (S. T. I. 6. 3.).

the universe<sup>1</sup> lies, then, in its order--of one part to another and of the whole to God<sup>2</sup>--and relation is that which determines (or brings about) the order.<sup>3</sup> Relations are the windows of Leibniz' monads.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the effect is always similar to the cause, according to Aquinas,<sup>5</sup> and so "all are similar to God, not by equality, but by a certain imitation and privation from which we draw the notion of image."<sup>6</sup> And, as like seeks out like, all things for Aquinas "are turned by desire"<sup>7</sup> to God as their proper cause and final end.

So, not only is relation (likeness is designated as

<sup>1</sup>For the Thomist Hart, "universe" means "an orderly turning towards one." (p. 12).

<sup>2</sup>Aquinas states that places in the scale of perfection are determined by the form and the degree of likeness to God (C. G. III. 97; IV. 11; III. 20.), and that ordo ad Deum is the primary order of things. ("Ordo enim aliquorum ad invicem est propter ordinem eorum ad finem." C. G. II. 24.) Aquinas' universe is as teleologically structured as Aristotle's.

<sup>3</sup>De Pot. 7. 10; 1. 2. ad. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Kossel, Esse, 99, mentioned this metaphor.

<sup>5</sup>In I Sent. 19. 1. 2; De Pot. 7. 10; S. T. I. 4. 3. But unless the effect receives the full form of the cause, Aquinas remarks, the cause is not similar to the effect.

<sup>6</sup>In Lib. de Div. Nom. IX. 3.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

a relation<sup>1</sup>) linked to man's teleologically oriented perfection (ordinatio ad unum), but it is on this basis that man is termed an imago Dei, an expressed likeness of his maker, which Aquinas blithely terms an essential aspect of man.<sup>2</sup> For the soul is an image of God in virtue of reason or intellect, the specific difference of man in the scale of being.<sup>3</sup> And as Gilson comments:

This quality of being the image of God is co-essential to man because it is one with the rationality of his nature. To be a mind is to be naturally capable of knowing and loving God. To be able to do this is one with the very nature of thinking. It is as natural for man to be the image of God as to be a rational animal, that is, as to be man.<sup>4</sup>

Thus relation becomes the key to man's inner being, and his happiness, as well as being the metaphysical glue of the universe.

But the list of essentials which depend upon relation is just beginning. Relation is central even for Aquinas'

<sup>1</sup>"Similitudo est relatio quaedam." (C. G. II. 11; see also De Ver. 4. 5.).

<sup>2</sup>In I Sent. 16. 1. 11. ad. 4. Aquinas also uses the Augustinian motif of the traces/vestiges of the Triune God in nature.

<sup>3</sup>De Ver. 22. 11. 1; 26. 3. 15.

<sup>4</sup>The Christian Philosophy of Aquinas, p. 345.

Aristotelian logic.<sup>1</sup> And we have already noticed that relation occupies a central position within the categorical scheme, as well as providing the ground for the last four extrinsic categories.<sup>2</sup>

The logic of analogy necessarily presupposes and utilizes relation, and analogy is vital to Aquinas' metaphysics (it provides the means of linking the various spheres of reality) and to the process of obtaining knowledge (particularly of God). Analogy is the vehicle chosen by Aquinas for describing the parts of the world as well as the relation between God and the world. And it has its *raison d'être* in relation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>That is, a predicate may be related to a subject essentially or extrinsically (the predicables).

<sup>2</sup>"The other genera are consequent upon relation rather than being able to cause relation. For 'Quando' consists in some sort of relation to time; 'Ubi' to place. But 'Positio' implies an order of parts, and 'Habitus', the relation of possessor to the thing possessed." (In V Meta. 17. n. 1005.) "There is no motion in 'situs' and 'habere' for the reason, it seems that there is none in 'ad aliquid'." (In XI Meta. 12. n. 2377.) Moreover, the reality of the extrinsic accidents consists in inherence in a subject, but as categories it is the distinctive relation they bear to a term--namely to their subject.

<sup>3</sup>Hampus Lyttkens, The Analogy between God and the World (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri AB, 1952); McInerny, The Logic of Analogy; Bochenski, A History of Formal Logic, pp. 177-79; Hart, pp. 33-48.

And to continue: To know is to relate (tacitly or explicitly, as Polanyi would put it).<sup>1</sup> Truth,<sup>2</sup> reality,<sup>3</sup> goodness<sup>4</sup> and beauty<sup>5</sup> entail relation. Even the Thomistic notion of freedom is defined in terms of relation.<sup>6</sup> The

<sup>1</sup>McInerny, p. 97, claims that when a man knows, he is related to four things--the thing understood, the intelligible species by which the intellect is actualized, the act of understanding, and the conception. See also De Pot. 8. 1; 9. 5. for the basis of his view. Furthermore, instead of being heterogeneous, the subject and the object are intelligible only in and by correlative reference. See Harald Höffding, Der Relationsbegriff (Leipzig: O. R. Reisland, 1922).

<sup>2</sup>For Aquinas, "veritas est adequatio rei et intellectus." "Adequatio" means approximation, conformability or correspondence.

<sup>3</sup>Reality, to Thomas, is not just the sum total of individual things, but an ordered whole.

<sup>4</sup>Goodness consists in a relation to an end--the good as the appetible. "But goodness, since it has the aspect of desirable, implies the idea of a final cause." "Bonum autem, cum habeat rationem appetibilis, importat habitudinem causae finalis." (S. T. I. 5. 2. ad. 1.) "Since goodness is that which all things desire, and since this has the aspect of an end, it is clear that goodness implies the aspect of an end." "Respondeo dicendum quod unumquodque dicitur bonum, in quantum est perfectum; sic enim est appetibile, ut supra dictum est. Perfectum autem dicitur, cui nihil deest secundum modum suae perfectionis." (S. T. I. 5. 5.).

<sup>5</sup>"Homes are not beautiful if they are empty. Things are beautiful by the indwelling of God." (In Psalmos XXXV. 5.).

<sup>6</sup>"Freedom is the firm attachment of a person to his ultimate end." (De Ver. 24. 3.).

five ways of demonstrating the existence of God hinge on God's causality (as a mover, a first uncaused cause, a necessary being, a highest term and an orderer), and thus depend on relation. All the first principles of Aquinas' metaphysics are relational terms, and even substance and accident are related by what Cahill calls<sup>1</sup> "intrinsic causality" (substance is the material cause of accidents and accidents are the formal cause of substance).

Whether it be a relation to an efficient, final or paradigmatic cause, the relation of all being to a first cause, the relation of the idea as the prototype to the thing as its image, the interrelations of the things on a given level of the hierarchy of being (horizontal series), or the relation of cause to effect or vice-versa (vertical series),<sup>2</sup> relation is crucial. And not only does Thomas' theology, metaphysics, epistemology and philosophy of nature depend upon relation. So do his moral philosophy and social philosophy.<sup>3</sup> As Donald Dunbar once remarked:

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<sup>1</sup>p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>Lyttkens, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup>For Aquinas, the relation between men and between men and God are the two-fold roots of ethics--the implication for social philosophy being the radical necessity of a community.

asking where is relation is like asking where is the universe.

The theory of relation is one of the essential pivots in the philosophical and theological synthesis of the Angelic doctor.<sup>1</sup> His doctrines of creation and conservation, divine government, Providence, the Trinity, the Incarnation, his definition of philosophy as a knowledge of being by its causes, or again as the insight into an order, made or contemplated, places the universe and all our knowledge of it in the context of relation. It is through relation that the universe receives its sacramentally orientated character, and that man can both bear the name imago Dei and be constantly existentially dependent on the Creator. Not only are relations found everywhere--without them the universe would remain forever opaque, mute and unintelligible. Because of relation, the world is given not as a random series of isolated beings and juxtaposed knowings, but as a harmoniously ordered plurality. 'Relation' is for Aquinas what 'cosmos' is for the Greeks--versus chaos. Finally, is it not to place

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<sup>1</sup>Murin, 148-49.

relation at the heart of things to claim that the divine nature is relational? If the term ad aliquid were removed from Aquinas' writings, his epistemology, cosmology, metaphysics and theology would fall apart. And given his presuppositions, it would be difficult to see how it could be reconstructed anew.

The word "relatio, relationis" (f., from the verb refero) can be translated, in accordance with its etymology, as a "carrying or bringing back." To a medieval mind, if the reality of relation be denied, then neither man nor nature can begin its ascent back to its Omega point. Without relation, the allegorical world would not exist, nor would the structure of the Divine Comedy, the hierarchical society of feudalism, nor the Ptolemaic cosmology. And the finale--without relation the God of Aquinas would not exist.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE TRIUMPH OF HEGEL

In the last chapter we saw how Aquinas developed a type of relation--subsistent relation--which represented the solution to the conflict between Aristotle's logic and his ontology. But Aquinas, it turned out, kept subsistent relations confined to the nature of God. Accidental relations were declared to be sufficient to explain the causal, quantitative and qualitative relations of the finite order. Aquinas' world, however, was seen, upon analysis, to defy this judgment. For some relations (apart from the transcendentals) constituted the nature of finite beings. So not only did Aquinas not solve the discrepancies in Aristotelian philosophy, he perpetuated them.

It is the purpose of this chapter not only to endorse the thesis that some relations are essential or constituent, but to show how a thing only has a nature, only has significance--only exists at all in fact--in terms of its relations. The burden of a major part of this dissertation rests, therefore, with Hegel. For it is incumbent upon him

to demonstrate how the model of the triune God is directly applicable to the logical, epistemological and ontological domains.

The full implications of the Hegelian view of relation (for example, the claim that relations are not only constituent but subsistent) will not, however, be explicated until the conclusion. Only after we have interpreted and analyzed a philosopher who explicitly makes relation the central concept of his philosophy shall we be in a position to offer our conclusion: an adequate account of the concept of relation.

Our interpretation, both of Hegel's philosophical position and of his methodology, is controversial. And though it is not the purpose of this dissertation to offer a definitive defense of such an interpretation, a rather lengthy sketch of it must be given. For it provides the conceptual framework, in terms of which, and on account of which, Hegel makes relation central. The beginning of this chapter is therefore devoted to exposing our particular rendition of Hegel, and to eliciting the inferences of such a view for the category of relation.

O Sun, my quick coquetting eye,  
 my red-haired hound,  
 sniff out all quarries that I love,  
 give them swift chase,  
 tell me all that you've seen on earth,  
 and that you've heard,  
 and I shall pass them through my  
 entrails' secret forge  
 till slowly, with profound caresses,  
 play and laughter,  
 stones, water, fire and earth shall  
 be transformed to spirit.<sup>1</sup>

Hegel is a second Odysseus. Describing his works as a "voyage of discovery,"<sup>2</sup> he embarks on a spiritual adventure which promises to encompass the world. Like Odysseus,

<sup>1</sup>Nikos Kazantzakis, The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel, trans. K. Friar (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1958), Prologue, ix.

<sup>2</sup>G. W. F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baillie (2d ed. rev.; London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1949), p. 16. Cited hereafter as Phen. Such a theme reverberates throughout the commentators. J. N. Findlay refers to the Phenomenology as the Odyssey of Hegel's spirit (Hegel: A Re-Examination [New York: Collier Books, 1962], p. 122. Cited hereafter as Re-Ex.); J. Loewenbourg terms the Phenomenology "a chronicle, Homeric in scale, of man's spiritual odyssey" (Hegel's Phenomenology: Dialogues on the Life of the Mind [La Salle, Ill.: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1965], xi. Cited hereafter as Dialogues); and W. Kaufmann makes a similar analogy (Hegel: A Reinterpretation [New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1966], p. 184. Cited hereafter as A Reinter.).

his is a universal biography, and such wanderings are/were necessary in order to return home. If Napoleon sought to conquer the world with his armies, Hegel sought to conquer it with his mind.<sup>1</sup> Which route was the more successful will, hopefully, be decided by what follows.

Just as there is a suspicion that somehow existentialism is a clandestine wedding of nordic melancholy with Parisian pornography,<sup>2</sup> so there is a presentiment that Hegel represents a pawky divorce of philosophy from experience, from matter and from individual existents.<sup>3</sup> According to a popularized contention, historical renderings as well as "scholarly" opinions, Hegel is the culmination of absolute monistic idealism, a philosopher who is allergic to any form of empiricism, who reduces the individual to a paragraph in a voluminous

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<sup>1</sup>Kaufmann, A Reinter., p. 115.

<sup>2</sup>K. Michalson (ed.), Christianity and the Existentialists (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Schelling, among other charges, named Hegel's idealism "absolute" in the sense that it posited being without existents ("Das Sein ohne das Seiende."). (K. F. Reinhardt, The Existentialist Revolt [New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1952], p. 230.).

system<sup>1</sup> and who utilizes a cloudy kind of logic which leads to a "bankruptcy of existence."<sup>2</sup>

His system is compared to a super vacuum cleaner, which allows any number of contradictory facts to be admitted and promptly digested, thus entailing what one critic calls a "reinforced dogmatism."<sup>3</sup> He is said to have, via his slick "treble collapses and smooth progressions,"<sup>4</sup> eliminated the tension between fact and value, facilely declaring that what is ought to be. According to a much-quoted statement, he is meant to

<sup>1</sup>This is the opinion of Sören Kierkegaard. For Kierkegaard, Hegel was the prototype of the systematisers; he is "like a man who builds an enormous castle and lives in a shack close by. . . ." (The Journals of Sören Kierkegaard, trans. A Dru [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938], p. 156). He cannot live in his systematic castle because he leaves no room for the concrete I. Kierkegaard said that reading Hegel was like reading out of a cookbook to a man who was hungry.

<sup>2</sup>Sören Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, trans. W. Lowrie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), p. 307.

<sup>3</sup>Karl R. Popper, Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), p. 327.

<sup>4</sup>Douglas Steere, "Kierkegaard in English," Journal of Religion, XXIV (October, 1944), 276.

have maintained that only the reasonable is the real and vice-versa, the outcome being panlogism.

Concerning relation directly, Hegel is accused not only of maintaining that all propositions have to be of the subject-predicate form (namely the form 'The Absolute is such and such'), and thus of lapsing into monism,<sup>1</sup> but of holding the doctrine that all relations are internal. Finally, Hegel is chastised for maintaining an epistemological monism--every proposition can be inferred from any other.<sup>2</sup>

Since each of these positions have implications for or directly concern the nature of relation, it is the first task of this essay to dispel--if not correct--such (mis)conceptions.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bertrand Russell, The Philosophy of Leibniz, Preface, pp. 12-15, 42-44; Our Knowledge of the External (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co., 1914) Chapter 2.

<sup>2</sup>Alfred Jules Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic (1st ed. rev.; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1947), p. 147.

<sup>3</sup>The inaccuracies concerning relation directly will, for the sake of clarity, be dealt with only at the end of the chapter, and the internal-external relations debate will not be analyzed until the conclusion.

Hegel's philosophical system, according to our view, is an attempt to render intelligible man's experience. And his account is, to use Findlay's word for it,<sup>1</sup> entirely "immanent"; he never goes beyond experience, incorporating transcendents as principles or features of his explanation. He never goes beyond experience; he only gives depth to it.

Unlike Aquinas, he denied the possibility of knowledge of supernatural entities; contra Descartes, he had no recourse to an immaterial realm and the creatures which inhabit it; versus Bradley, he had, despite his language, no super-relational Absolute. Hegel anticipated Husserl, for he was the first phenomenologist. He was interested in man's experience of the supra-physical, but like his successor Feuerbach,<sup>2</sup> his was an entirely naturalistic explanation.

Hence Hegel, who is continually taken to be the

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<sup>1</sup>p. 355.

<sup>2</sup>Hegel even uses Feuerbach's mirror metaphor, as we shall see.

paradigm of speculative philosophy, is, in our estimate, anti-metaphysical. His is one of the most anti-metaphysical of philosophical systems in fact,<sup>1</sup> at least in the Kantian sense of the word.

Of course, if one defines metaphysics as the discipline which attempts to respond to (not necessarily answer) the question: what are the final real things which constitute the world?<sup>2</sup>--then the claim could be made that Hegel was a metaphysician. For in the tradition of Aristotle, Hegel was concerned with the principle/source of the intelligibility of events/things in the natural world.

To use Lewis' distinction,<sup>3</sup> Hegel was not a speculative metaphysician (one who professes to give us information about what lies beyond experience), but a

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<sup>1</sup>Findlay, Re-Ex., p. 353.

<sup>2</sup>Manley Thompson, "Metaphysics," The Princeton Studies, Vol. IV: Philosophy: Humanistic Studies in America, ed. R. Schilatter (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 128.

<sup>3</sup>C. I. Lewis, Mind and the World Order (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956), pp. 7-35.

reflective/critical metaphysician (one who inquires into the nature of reality but whose answers are dictated by empirical findings). For Hegel, experience was the datum of philosophy; an explanation, in Meyerson's sense,<sup>1</sup> the goal; and Strawson's descriptive metaphysics (e.g., generalized conceptual analysis<sup>2</sup>) represented (at least in the Phenomenology) the means.

Hegel, then, like Husserl, returned to Sachen selbst, to experience as it gives itself. All that is not presented by experiences is assigned an index zero. Hegel also as we shall see<sup>3</sup> anticipated Husserl in another aspect, ie., in rejecting the Kantian bifurcation of the

<sup>1</sup>An explanation for Hegel and for Meyerson is to find the causes of things, not just to point out their conformity to law or their regularity. See E. Meyerson, Identity and Reality, trans. Kate Lowenberg (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1930).

<sup>2</sup>Descriptive metaphysics, according to Peter F. Strawson, is an analysis of the actual structure of our thought about the world. (Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1959.).

<sup>3</sup>Below, pp. 186-87, 205-209, 235-40, 261 f. 1, 275, 278-79, 283-84, 296-99, 312-13.

world into phenomenon and noumenon.<sup>1</sup>

One might well ask how Hegel's kind of metaphysics was possible, given the Kantian limitations of our mind. The answer simply is that Hegel liquidated the Kantian ding-an-sich.<sup>2</sup> He agreed with Fichte both that Kant, just by setting a boundary to our knowledge, went beyond it, and that the thing-in-itself was not free from the categories (such as unity, thinghood, cause) and hence not beyond the phenomenal world. Finally, as far as he could see, it served no purpose. Why not call the problem by its real name--subject-object? That there is a division between a thing's real nature (in Hegel's language "notion," that is things for consciousness) and a thing as it exists (things in themselves) is an unhappy truth, but it is not an insurmountable difficulty, due to reason's power to

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<sup>1</sup>Here we are interpretating Kant as holding a two-aspect theory--the world en soi being the world in its innermost essence, the phenomenal world being the world as it appears. An alternative interpretation is to view the ding-an-sich as a limit concept.

<sup>2</sup>Phen. pp. 80, 277; E.L., pars. 42-47, 131-32; H. Marcuse, Reason and Revolution (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 21-26; W. T. Stace, The Philosophy of Hegel (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1955), pp. 42-49.

shape reality. In fact, this is the entire task of philosophy.

And so against phenomenalism--the theory that knowledge is limited to phenomenon, Hegel pitted his phenomenology--the theory that true knowledge is the phenomenon. And thus the possibility of discussing the nature of the world was reopened. To Kant's warning: one can not go beyond experience (as a whole), Hegel replied: one need not.

So Hegel was not a metaphysician, in the traditional sense. But was he an empiricist? In order to answer this question, we shall have to consider whether Hegel was an idealist, a monist, an absolutist.

The last label is the one most easily shed. Hegel as a philosopher, worshipped no God, abdicated to no Absolute. In spite of his seemingly transcendental language, Hegel was an atheist--as is made clear in the final chapters of the Phenomenology. Revealed religion is a grand manifestation of man's attempt to render the world intelligible, but it is a distorted, in fact alienating account. For within a religious framework, man has not yet realized that he is God--that God's qualities are simply his own potential characteristics projected onto a divine ideal. Faith possesses the truth,

but not self-consciously, Hegel declares.<sup>1</sup> For the divine and the human, are, in Hegel's words, "not separate."<sup>2</sup> "God is dead . . . this harsh utterance is the expression of inmost self-knowledge."<sup>3</sup> In adoring God, man is looking into a mirror.<sup>4</sup> The Absolute Spirit is none other than a fulfilled self.

Usually Hegel is ranked with Parmenides, Spinoza and Bradley as sharing the view that reality is a single entity, not a collection of independently real things. Moreover, to overcome Descartes puzzle of how man and nature and God are related, Hegel supposedly saw the two of them as manifestations of a single spirit, God. The finite self, according to such a view, becomes in the Hegelian synthesis a mode/aspect/moment/appearance/vehicle of the Absolute Idea/Geist. Such statements are fallacious. Hegel, I shall maintain, is not a monistic idealist. Rather he is a pluralistic empiricist.

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<sup>1</sup>G. W. F. Hegel, Lectures on the History of Philosophy, trans. E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1884), III, 194.

<sup>2</sup>Phen., p. 775.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 782.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 758.

First of all, Hegel never claimed that there is only one being, let alone that that one reality was spiritual or mental. Hegel's universe is furnished by as many pieces as that of Pierce's, and it is not mind dependent. In the Philosophy of Nature<sup>1</sup> Hegel makes it clear that natural objects existed long before the advent of mind; in the Philosophy of Spirit Hegel explicitly states that there are external things. For Hegel to be is to be neither conceived nor perceived. The world is not an externalization of mind. And it is the case neither that there would be no objects if there were no conscious minds to think them nor that the mind constitutes the world's existence<sup>2</sup> through/by/in its mental activities. According to Hegel, the physical world is real and an object is not (ab initio) a product of its being known.

In one place, Hegel seems to directly contradict this interpretation. He says: "The truth is that Nature

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<sup>1</sup>Findlay, pp. 18, 273.

<sup>2</sup>Though the mind does not constitute the world's existence, it does, however, as we shall see, constitute its developed/completed reality.

is the creation of Spirit."<sup>1</sup> But I maintain that this statement cannot be taken at face value, for it has been mediated by almost the entire Logic. It does not indicate an idealistic posture. What it does mean is that Nature as a whole, as a universe would not be without mind, for it is only constituted as one by means of man's awareness. Furthermore, nature will soon be shown to be as necessary to mind as the reverse.

It is true that for Hegel objects of nature exemplify unconscious thought or "petrified intelligence,"<sup>2</sup> and hence that the nature of the world can be captured in teleological terms. But such a conception, paralleling/recalling/anticipating Anaxagoras' nous, the potentia of Aristotle, Chardin's "within" or Leibniz's primitive view that matter is a primitive form of mind, does not commit Hegel to an idealist position. To say that primitive forms of matter such as unicellular matter contain the potentiality to pass over the threshold of reflection and

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<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 377, par. 239.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 46, par. 24.

become self-reflective is not to say that matter is a construct of mind. Just as Anaxagoras' nous occupies space and time and is hence corporeal,<sup>1</sup> so is Hegel's Geist embodied--not as a captive à la Plato or Plotinus, but as a native. Just because Hegel concentrated on demonstrating how mind can shape matter rather than on how matter determines mind, does not mean that Hegel's materialism is any less materialistic than Marx's. For it is matter, after all, which thinks.

If Hegel was an idealist his was, to quote Marcuse, an "Idealism by default."<sup>2</sup> For he doubted, as we shall see,<sup>3</sup> if a man could overcome alienating conditions via labor--both manual and intellectual. He was pessimistic about transforming powers and redemptive processes of reason. And hence his vision of the world was begrudgingly relegated to the realm of the theoretical blueprint. Unlike Marx, he had no "historical necessity" as an engine. Of course one could call this idealism realism.

Hegel does admit that mind is in a sense the "truth"

<sup>1</sup>Burnet, p. 268.   <sup>2</sup>Marcuse, ix.

<sup>3</sup>Below, pp. 208-209, 272-75, 300-301, 303-304, 340-41.

of the world<sup>1</sup> for it represents its highest stage--highest because it is capable in principle of understanding the entire (evolutionary)<sup>2</sup> process, and as such it implicitly contains all previous stages. But Hegel is not saying, as Findlay implies,<sup>3</sup> that no previous activity can have any meaning/function but to serve as a condition for mind. Rather, each stage is independently meaningful. To make mind the most meaningful because of its comprehensive powers is not to deny the other levels meaning in their own right.

Furthermore, it is true that Hegel's pluralistic universe is not that of Hume's where all things are "loose and separate"; it is rather, to use James' expression, a "concatenated unity." But this is not to make a Parmenidean move. Multiplicity is not an illusion. Finally, it is true that Hegel's goal was to comprehend reality in a single system composed of inter-related aspects--and in this he shared the view of absolute

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<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 180, par. 96.

<sup>2</sup>The parentheses are used because Hegel was (unfortunately) pre-Darwin.

<sup>3</sup>pp. 18-19.

idealism--but this is not to say that he accomplished it. Hegel locates contingency, tames it and hopes to sublimate it. But in the end he does not eliminate it. He accepts it.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, for Hegel, the real is the concrete. And the subject is the epitome of all that is concrete and thus actual. All particularity does not vanish with Hegel, as Seth argues.<sup>2</sup> Rather the particular subject becomes the focus and norm of reality. Au contraire to the belief that Hegel leveled down individual existence, making the person a mere wave in the sea, Hegel raised the individual to the point where he thought he could accomplish "in his own particular work . . . a universal work,"<sup>3</sup> that he could encompass the world. Reality must be individualized for Hegel. Thus Kierkegaard's cherished motto--"Truth is subjectivity"<sup>4</sup>--which he mistakenly thought was the antithesis of the German philosopher, could be Hegel's. Reality for Hegel is only reality

<sup>1</sup>E. L., pars. 144-47; Logic, pp. 541-553.

<sup>2</sup>Passmore, p. 71. <sup>3</sup>Phen., p. 377.

<sup>4</sup>Concluding Unscientific Postscript, pp. 169, 278.

for a subject, as experienced by a participant. This is what leads Marcuse to conclude that in Hegel's view:

"There is, in the last analysis, no truth that does not essentially concern the living subject and that is not the subject's truth."<sup>1</sup>

So Hegel according to our interpretation is neither a monist nor an idealist. He is a pluralist. But is he an empiricist?

Just as Hegel was not a reductionist, so too is he not a deductivist. He did not want to--nor did he--deduce the rich diversity of experience from single principle, as R.H. Lotze maintained he did.<sup>2</sup> In the Preface to the Phenomenology, he declares himself to be opposed to purely speculative or intuitive thought as well as abstract a priori reasoning. And in fact he carried out his plan to be empirical. Throughout the Logik Hegel demonstrates the relation of his philosophy to experience; his Geschichte de Philosophie is a sober discussion grounded upon empirical evidence; finally the Phänomenologie is a comprehensive attempt to account for man's experience on

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<sup>1</sup>p. 113.    <sup>2</sup>Passmore, p. 47.

all levels of existence. So the conception of Hegel as a relentless a priorist, spinning out theoretical abstraction, leaves much to be desired, for it ignores the experiential core of his philosophy. Marcuse concurs: "Hegel's most abstract and metaphysical concepts are saturated with experience."<sup>1</sup>

Hegel never appealed to the clarity of natural reason (the lumen naturalis of Descartes) or self-evidence as the test of truth. He never sought to gain certain knowledge of the world by arguing via negation from the realm of the inconceivable to the realm of existence à la Anselm. He eschewed instinctive powers/innate ideas/inborn knowledge, as a sufficient account of man's epistemological processes. He never had recourse to an entity transcending experience as a principle of explanation. For him, experience represented the source of knowledge, the limitation of knowledge and the validator of knowledge. It constituted the origin, nature and meaning of ideas. It was the test of truth and the nature of reality. For Hegel, no knowledge (either at all/with content/with existential reference) was

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<sup>1</sup>Marcuse, vii.

possible independent of experience.

But what did Hegel mean by experience? By experience, Hegel meant not the data of the senses alone. Rather he meant all conscious content, that is intellectual experience as well as sensory. Knowledge by description is as acceptable as knowledge by acquaintance.

Gedankenexperiments are as valuable as sense-data.

Perhaps a curious sort of empiricism, given the twentieth century deluge of sense-data theorists,<sup>1</sup> straight or mellowed--Ayer, Russell, Price, Whiteley, Chisholm, Grice--and given Hegel's predilection to show how pure sense experience is void, but an empiricism just the same, I maintain. For Hegel would agree with Dewey: thought has no object outside experience and no being independent of experience.

But Hegel like his predecessor and teacher (Kant) represents an odd combination--or to use that word so often connected with Hegel's name 'synthesis'--of rationalism and empiricism. If his is a curious sort of empiricism, his is a peculiar brand of rationalism. Ayer's kind of rationalist--one who ascribes to the view that

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<sup>1</sup>Is not this the curious sort of empiricism?

"there exists a supra-sensible world which is the object of a purely intellectual intuition and is alone wholly real"<sup>1</sup>--Hegel is not. But Hegel did want to render the world intelligible, a goal which he shares with Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza. And he did think that thought, though necessarily grounded in experience, could be an independent source of knowing; by analyzing a concept and drawing out its implications, one could deductively penetrate experience. So that a process of thought and not purely sensory experience was what--not makes--but discovers and guarantees its truth.<sup>2</sup> Unlike Locke, Berkeley, Hume and Mill, reason was of pre-eminent significance to Hegel. An object's true nature can not be uncovered by the senses. It is discovered by the mind.

So Hegel is a curious mixture. He is neither a relationalist nor an empiricist in the traditional sense of the terms. For either is "untrue"--each claims to give a complete explanation of reality. In finis, Hegel defies classification, unless one wants to label him a rationalistic empiricist, or an empirical rationalist.

<sup>1</sup>p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>Whether this necessarily implies that the world is rational is a question that shall temporarily be held in abeyance. See the discussion of Hegel's dictum "the real is the rational" below, pp. 301-304.

Findlay once said--in fact concluded<sup>1</sup>--that one can make Hegel out to be whatever one wants, because he includes within his philosophy all conceptions of what philosophy should do/be; it is purely a matter of emphasis. I disagree. It is true that Hegel covers a tremendously wide spectrum of philosophical experiences--from Carneides to Carnap--and so one can color him almost anything. But to do so would be to distort him. For Hegel is committed to a methodology, at least, according to which the host of philosophical alternatives are aufheben.

What of this method to which Hegel is committed? Is it more dogmatic than even the Pope can be, because reinforced by its bottomless stomach, as Popper leads us to believe?

As it is the vehicle of his philosophy, the dialectical method is one of the leading motifs of Hegel's philosophy. And as its interpretation is also subject to dispute, it is the next area we shall give an account of.

Hegel's method in our view is neither inductive nor

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<sup>1</sup>pp. 351. 52.

hypothetical-deductive. His paradigm of philosophical methodology was not mathematics, à la Descartes and Spinoza. His pattern of reasoning was not the inductive procedures of the fact-gathering sciences. He avoided purely discursive/speculative/transcendental thought as much as he shunned empirical generalization/inductive inference/evidencing processes/colligating data. His method was that of dialectical experimentation.

The term dialectic is derived etymologically from the combination of two Greek words: dia and legein, which together mean 'discourse'. This methodology, formerly used by Socr̄ates, Plato and Kant--whom Hegel acknowledges as predecessors<sup>1</sup>--was "no novelty in Philosophy,"<sup>2</sup> but Hegel gave it a somewhat unique if not revolutionary application.

For Hegel, dialectic has a double meaning. It meant either a way of thinking in general or a special "moment" of thought.<sup>3</sup> In the preface to the first edition

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<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 149, par. 81.   <sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>J. N. Findlay, Lecture notes from a Hegel seminar, Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, 1961. Cited hereafter as Notes.

of the greater Logic, and in chapter vi of the lesser Logic, Hegel divides thinking into three phases. The first phase is that of the understanding (Verstand), whose forte is to select an item out from a given manifold or continuum, isolate it and sort out its specific differences, giving it a precise and independent nature. "Thought, as Understanding, sticks to fixity of characters and their distinctness from one another: every such limited abstract it treats as having a subsistence and being of its own."<sup>1</sup>

The second phase is that of dialectical reason. If the understanding negated the simple/continous/indefinite/fluid/dependent, dialectical reason undermines the insulated and determinate notions of the understanding. Hegel warns us that this breaking down activity could become "mere negation"<sup>2</sup> or "mere Sophistry"<sup>3</sup>--the continual and obnoxious demand for the antithesis, or simply the empty stance of making an arbitrary--however convenient--aspect the whole. "From this sort of party-pleading, Dialectic

<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 143, par. 80.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 147, par. 81.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 148, par. 81.

is wholly different: its purpose is to study things in their own being and movement and thus to demonstrate the finitude of the partial categories of the understanding."<sup>1</sup>

And Hegel continues:

By Dialectic is meant the indwelling tendency outwards by which the onesidedness and limitation of the predicates of understanding is seen in its true light, and shown to be the negation of them. For anything to be finite is just to suppress itself and put itself aside. Thus understood, the Dialectical principle constitutes the life and soul of scientific progress, the dynamic which alone gives immanent connexion and necessity to the body of science; and, in a word, is seen to constitute the real and true, as opposed to the external, exaltation above the finite.<sup>2</sup>

The understanding, however, is "indispensable,"<sup>3</sup> lest we succumb to shoddy thinking, or fall prey to the vague, indefinite, hazy. In fact, it is praised as being "the most astonishing and greatest of all powers, or rather the absolute power."<sup>4</sup> for it is the first instance of "the portentous power of the negative."<sup>5</sup> But though it represents the beginning of the philosophy--in fact

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 148-49, par. 81.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 147, par. 81.      <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 146, par. 80.

<sup>4</sup>Phen., p. 93.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

something philosophy "never can get on without"<sup>1</sup>--and the foundation of the sciences and practical life, it can not be the ultimate style of philosophical thinking. Such isolating/ed reflections, its principles of identity and opposition, in short, its security, must be overcome. For the truth according to Hegel lies not in the unrelated.

But neither is dialectical reason the final development of the mind. It too is dethroned. Philosophizing culminates in positive reason.<sup>2</sup>

Positive reason reaffirms the isolationist tendencies of the understanding, while at the same time it recaptures the unifying powers of dialectical reason. The outcome: a new reconcilliation is won, a unification based on disharmonies and conflicts, a unity-in-difference. Positive reason, Hegel says, "apprehends the unity of terms . . . in their opposition."<sup>3</sup>

But to understand how such a reconciliation is possible, that is, to understand how reason could see

<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 146, par. 80.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 152, par. 81.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 152, par. 82.

underlying unity between things which, according to the understanding, are irreconcilably opposed and absolutely exclusive, presupposes that one comprehends the dialectical way of thinking in general. For such a tripartite division of mental progress is itself an instance of the second meaning of dialectic. To expose the *raison d'être* of the dialectical way of thinking and its movement is therefore our next task.

The dialectic is based on the principle that everything contains its own opposite, that every positive statement contains, concealed, a negative within itself, and that this negative is, on the other hand, just as much positive. Spinoza's principle--all determination is negation--is turned inside out and made to work double time. To assert that "I am me," for example, is to also mean that I am not all that is not-me. The not-me therefore constitutes me as much as the me for what I am not, what I exclude, makes me what I am. But at the same time to specify my limitations is to circumscribe my characteristics and so to determine who I am. Negation is just as much determination.

One consequence of this principle is a coincidentia

oppositorium, the meeting of extremes. And in fact Hegel maintained that "everything that surrounds us may be viewed as an instance" of this fact.<sup>1</sup> And he gives us a plethora of examples: "Summum jus summum injuria: which means to drive an abstract right to its extremity is to do a wrong."<sup>2</sup> Or extreme anarchy leads to extreme despotism;<sup>3</sup> "too much wit outwits itself,"<sup>4</sup> and so on. Any thing which is isolated or pushed to its extreme naturally collapses into its opposite.

This is how the understanding, then, according to the internal dictates of its own nature, yields to dialectical reason. For the contradiction is really the understanding's self-contradiction. "Every abstract proposition of understanding taken precisely as it is given, naturally veers round into its opposite."<sup>5</sup>

But dialectic also involves its own self-suppression. For if A is just as much not-A as A, then the true nature of A is not the cancellation of opposition, but the identity of opposites. Such is one of the dialectical

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 150, par. 81.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp.150-51, par. 81.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 151, par. 81.    <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 149, par. 81.

triads.

We now have some idea of the principles involved in dialectical progression, and have placed the dialectic as a stage within this framework. Next, we shall explicate and examine the basis of Hegel's claim that the dialectic is not merely subjective, accidental, arbitrary or in other words, that "it is not we who frame the notions."<sup>1</sup>

Hegel regarded the dialectic as "the only true method."<sup>2</sup> But contra the conception of the dialectic "as an external negative activity which does not pertain to the subject matter itself, having its ground in mere conceit as a subjective itch for unsettling and destroying what is fixed and substantial,"<sup>3</sup> Hegel viewed it as "a necessary function of reason."<sup>4</sup> But not only was the dialectic subjectively or conceptually necessary; it was, according to Hegel, objectively true. "This movement is the absolute method of knowing and at the same time is the immanent soul of the content itself."<sup>5</sup>

The epistemic thus collapses into the ontic, for the

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 293, par. 163.    <sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 56.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid.    <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

way of knowing is the way of being. Life's rhythm is a dialectical beat. How is this possible?

For Hegel, life is a continual process of holding out against antagonistic forces. To use Marcuse's example,<sup>1</sup> a stone is only a stone in so far as it actively resists and maintains itself against the batterings of waves, the erosion of salt, the pressure of vacationer's feet, and so on. Everything, from the mineral to the self-conscious, is actual only in/by/ through struggling with and overcoming such unpropitious elements. Something is, says Hegel, "in truth actual only insofar as it is the movement of positing itself."<sup>2</sup> To be at all is to be developing. And to be developing is to be clashing, to be in (some sort of) conflict. Even the most serene of avatars, in complete harmony with the cosmos, is at variance with Maya. In fact, according to this view, he is only as he is overcoming--not succumbing--to Maya. So nothing, even an avatar, is real--or could even exist--for Hegel which does not sustain itself in existence in the midst

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<sup>1</sup>p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Preface, p. 28.

of antagonistic relations as a self-developing unity. It is in this sense that the dialectic is the principle of identity mediated through difference.

As a result, the dialectic is not a tool to get at reality, or for uncovering reality; that is the way reality is. Things both are their opposites and only are themselves by repelling their opposites. Contradictions, both in the sense of external opposition and internal conflict, are real.

Hegel proffers a neat summary, exposing his view of the world, his explanation of change, his version of the development of the mind, and (though we shall not focus on it presently) his partiality to the category of relation:

Instead of speaking of the maxim of Excluded Middle (which is the maxim of abstract understanding) we should rather say: Everything is opposite. Neither in heaven nor in earth, neither in the world of mind nor of nature, is there anywhere such an abstract 'Either-or' as the understanding maintains. Whatever exists is concrete, with difference and opposition in itself. The finitude of things will then lie in the want and correspondence between their immediate being, and what they essentially are. Thus, in inorganic nature, the acid is implicitly at the same time the base: in other words, its only being consists in its relation to its other. Hence also the acid is not something that persists quietly in the contrast: it is always in effort

to realize what is potentially is. Contradiction is the very moving principle of the world: and it is ridiculous to say that contradiction is unthinkable. The only thing correct in that statement is that contradiction is not the end of the matter, but cancels itself. But contradiction, when cancelled, does not leave abstract identity; for that is itself only one side of the contrariety. The proximate result of opposition (when realized as contradiction) is the Ground, which contains identity as well as difference superseded and deposited to elements in the completer notion.<sup>1</sup>

So contradictions are real--from a certain conceptual level. But given positive reason's perspective, the seemingly mutually exclusive aspects are seen to require one another and to both be essential for a rational, that is a complete understanding.<sup>2</sup> As Findlay says: "Reason does not remove opposition, but alters it and removes its sting."<sup>3</sup> The dialectic does not explain away contradiction; rather it resolves/transcends/sublimates the difference into an identity containing both harmony and opposition.

But finally, one never gets beyond the dialectic. For (conceptually) each resolved contradiction becomes

<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 223, par. 119.

<sup>2</sup>Findlay, Notes, pp. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

a new thesis; and (ontologically) things are necessarily self-contradictory. A is only A is it is also not-A and not A. Negation is never transcended, for negativity is an essential constituent of things.

So Hegel's method is--at least is claimed to be--ontologically sound. It is not one that is externally imposed upon the world by the mind, the end result of which is comparable to "a skeleton with little pieces of paper stuck all over it, or like rows of closed labeled jars in a spicer's stall," to use Hegel's own sardonic examples in the Preface.<sup>1</sup> For Hegel, the dialectic is no mere substitution or cancellation. The dialectic is internal.

The dialectic often involves the triad--thesis, antithesis, synthesis--the thesis representing the stability of the understanding, the antithesis the vicissitudes of dialectic and the synthesis the restored/won equilibrium of reason.<sup>2</sup> But such a conception of Hegelian dialectic is limited. First of all, the two

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<sup>1</sup>Preface, p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Findlay, Notes, p. 5.

terms--thesis, antithesis--originate with Kant and Fichte,<sup>1</sup> not with Hegel, as is popularly believed. Moreover, the three terms are only once mentioned together by Hegel--disparagingly.<sup>2</sup> Also, many of the triads, as Kaufmann observes,<sup>3</sup> are not reducible to the thesis-antithesis-synthesis pattern. Finally, though the dialectic does develop according to a pattern of triplicity, Hegel did not think that dialectical development could be "regimented into a sequence of triads,"<sup>4</sup> as Findlay would have us believe. It is true that a few of the dialectical transitions are obscure or far-fetched, but to accuse Hegel of "fraud and charlatanism,"<sup>5</sup> as Findlay does on this account, is a bit extreme. In no passage (that I have ever read/been referred to) did Hegel claim that the triad was sacred,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Hegel mentions them in his Lectures on the History of Philosophy, towards the end of his critique of Kant. See Preface, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup>A Reinter., pp. 153-62.      <sup>4</sup>Re-Ex., p. 357.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 358.

the diad/triad/pentrad/no-trad profane. In fact, in the Preface to and text of the Phenomenology, and again in the Logic,<sup>1</sup> he criticizes those who insist on reducing life to a formal schema like triplicity, saying that to do so is like removing the flesh and blood from the bones. Once again, Hegel is made to represent the very views he derides.

Moreover, the dialectic is often construed to be the quintessence of the a priori-deductive method, producing by mere reflection and developed by drawing out the logically necessary implications. And as we have said, seen (and shall see), not only does the dialectic continually refer to experience, it is grounded upon experience. It is the dialectic of experience, expressing the discontinuity of life, the antithetical tendencies in reality itself. Contradiction exists in the world, as well as in man's endeavor to comprehend the world.

Also, the so-called bedfellows--dialectic and necessity--actually (according to Hegel) live in

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<sup>1</sup>Preface, pp. 74-78; Phen., pp. 107-108; Logic, p. 229.

different regions. Findlay continually criticizes Hegel's dialectic for "its pretense of absolute rigor."<sup>1</sup> "Hegel's main mistake . . . lies in his assumption that it [the dialectic] has a kind of deductive necessity, different from, but akin to, that of a mathematical system, whereby we shall find ourselves forced along a single line of reasoning, culminating in 'the Idea', and then leading back to our point of origin."<sup>2</sup> He goes on to point out that the dialectic "both permits and demands . . . [an] arbitrary and empirical element,"<sup>3</sup> because the subject matter is man's experience, but that this is "not plainly stated by Hegel: it only appears in his practice."<sup>4</sup>

But Hegel does state precisely this. In the Preface to the second edition of the greater Logic, he bluntly admits that the requirement of strictness for dialectical movement is impossible. He says that although, à la mathematical reasoning, "such an exposition [the Science of Logic] would demand that at no stage of the development should any thought-determination or reflection occur

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<sup>1</sup>Notes, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Re-Ex., p. 78.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

which does not immediately emerge at this stage and that has not entered this stage from the one preceding it, . . ."<sup>1</sup> such a desideratum is visionary and impracticable. "However, such an abstract perfection of exposition must, I admit, in general be dispensed with. . . ."<sup>2</sup> And Hegel proceeds to point out why. By what criterion, he demands, does one pick out the contingent elements of "pictorial thought or unregulated thinking?"<sup>3</sup> For, "the effort to ward them off is itself tainted with this contingency. . . ."<sup>4</sup>

So Hegel unambiguously abandons "the stiffer gait of scientific pomp"<sup>5</sup> and seeks to mediate between the necessity of mathematical reasoning and the randomness of conversational arguments--what Hegel calls "the looser gait of conversational arguments."<sup>6</sup> Hegel's dialectic moves, then, from incomplete to less inhibiting forms of thought; there is no strict dialectical necessity. Hegel's conclusions, thus, are not logically coercive, just persuasively compelling.

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 40.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Preface, p. 74.    <sup>6</sup>Ibid.

One need not read Hegel's critics for criticism of Hegel, just Hegel.

Before we give a final characterization of the dialectic, let us clear away two more misconceptions.

Findlay concludes his Re-Examination by saying: "If the painful analysis of this book have established anything, it is that there is no definite method called the dialectic. . . ." <sup>1</sup> Though the above analysis might be painful, it does attempt to indicate that there is a singular Hegelian way of approaching and dealing with any subject matter, and not after the fashion of a vacuum cleaner, as Popper makes out. In fact, it is just the opposite. Dialectic does not absorb everything; rather it rejects everything. As Marcuse notes <sup>2</sup> the central category of the dialectic is negation <sup>3</sup> and he terms the dialectical mode of thought "the power of negative

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<sup>1</sup>Re-Ex., p. 358.    <sup>2</sup>vii.

<sup>3</sup>Hegel, in the greater Logic, p. 837, also maintains that what is essential to the dialectic is the negative moment. We shall reinterpret this position below, pp. 312-13.

thinking."<sup>1</sup> Its function is to criticize, to refuse, to break down, to undermine, and thus to reveal the internal inadequacies of anything.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, the obvious question to raise is the dialectic rejects everything according to what criterion? Surely one is necessary and is not this externally dictated? No, is the answer. For the criterion emerges out of the subject matter itself. The material proffers its own standards to be judged in terms of or it makes certain claims about itself. Its collapse is due--must be due to be authentic--to internal friction. As Hegel says: "The refutation must not come from outside, that is, it must not proceed from assumptions lying outside the system in question and inconsistent with it. . . ." <sup>3</sup> Such external refutations are facile and superficial.

Finally, two more points should be noted. The

<sup>1</sup>Marcuse, viii. Hegel, too, calls this power "portentous." (Phen., p. 93).

<sup>2</sup>Is not Popper's own beloved method of conjecture and refutation just the bastard son of Hegel's method (with Socratic dialogue as mother)?

<sup>3</sup>Logic, p. 580.

central dialectical category is not, as Loewenburg remarks,<sup>1</sup> a negative state in the sense of an impasse, but a negative way. Also, given its ontic basis, dialectical negation does not simply mean 'not the case that', but also specific ways of being 'not the case that'.

The dialectic then is a dynamic, synoptic, iconoclastic attitude. It is an attitude which is both a method of exposition and a method of discovery,<sup>2</sup> for it reflects the way things are. It lets the subject matter reveal its own incompleteness/insufficiencies/wants-- though in the Heideggerian sense of 'let'. It represents the continual unrest of a mind which wishes to "educate itself" ("der sich bildende Geist").<sup>3</sup> As such, it involves constant self-transcendence.

As Findlay remarks,<sup>4</sup> dialectic is "the higher order

<sup>1</sup>J. Loewenburg, "The Comedy of Immediacy in Hegel's Phenomenology," Mind, XLIV (1935), 44; "The Exoteric Approach to Hegel's Philosophy," Mind, XLIII (1934), 435.

<sup>2</sup>This remark is specifically directed against Kaufmann's opinion, Reinter., p. 162.

<sup>3</sup>Phen., p. 74.

<sup>4</sup>Notes, p. 4.

comment." Each new phase is the truth of the preceding phase, as the blossom is the 'truth' or actuality of the bud, to use Hegel's example in the Preface. As such it involves "concentration without elimination."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, all the preceding stages are necessary, each one being the necessary condition of the next. Finally, it is a way of knowing which transcends the traditional bifurcation of truth and error; any stage as final is erroneous, each stage as partial is true.

Hegel drew upon the German language's peculiar ability for combining ambivalent even antithetical meanings in one word to capture the dialectical process. According to his terminology (explicitly analyzed at the end of his first chapter in the Logic<sup>2</sup>), each former stage is aufheben--that is, he says, abolished, preserved, uplifted. Each phase is overthrown, but none is ever annihilated, disappearing without a trace. Each is dethroned, so to speak, by the new heir, and via the process illuminated and hence transfigured.

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<sup>1</sup>T.S. Eliot, Burnt Norton (London: Faber & Faber, 1941), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, pp. 106-108.

Such is our final characterization of the dialectical process. But what are some of its implications?

One radical feature of the Hegelian methodology which Marcuse calls our attention to is that the dialectic, contrary to the positivism of a Hume, an Ayer or a Russell, has little respect for the given, the established state of affairs, the 'Facts' as Time magazine so fondly refers to them. For the thrust of the dialectic is to mediate the immediately given, to counter the status quo, to overturn the law of the Medes and Persians. The dialectic moves by negating the apparent (which is sometimes the common-place). To turn fact into fable, to nullify the indisputable, to render the authoritative unauthentic, to make the impeachable precarious--such are the revolutionary implications of the dialectic.

Another outcome of Hegel's method is that it guarantees that philosophy is never closed/completed. As Hegel put it, a system of philosophy is no "motionless statue, but alive, and swells like a mighty river, which increases in size the further it advances

from its course."<sup>1</sup> A true system is organic. The task of philosophy is developmental; it is "to grasp the knowledge which is already existing to make it our own, and in doing so, develop it still further and to raise it to a higher level."<sup>2</sup> Hegel did not claim, as he is so often represented, to present a final system or to achieve a final synthesis. Not only was perpetual revision necessary for him, he himself had to be overcome.

Every individual is a child of his time; so philosophy too in its own time apprehended in thoughts. It is just as absurd to fancy that a philosophy can transcend its own contemporary world as it is to fancy that an individual can overlap his age.<sup>3</sup>

Hence Hegel postulates a system which stands in radical openness to the future, in no way completed with Hegel, a "child of his time."

Become who you are--such Nietzschean implications are also contained within the dialectic. For dialectical change is based on two assumptions: that things are not (ever) what they could be, and that negativity is a prelude

<sup>1</sup>Lectures on the History of Philosophy, I, 3.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Philosophy of Right, trans. T.M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), p. 11.

to actuality or, in other terms, privation the mother of invention. According to the dialectic, then, I am not what I could be, as there is a discrepancy between any given me and my essence. I can become myself--that is overcome my present self--only by going through (versus passively undergoing) a process of self-diremption. To paraphrase Nietzsche, only one capable of being an enemy can be a true friend. Only the alienated can be re-unified--Übermensch.

Another result of the dialectic is that it is impossible to serve truth up in an objective, cut and dried way. Hegel castigates that "dogmatism" which insists "that truth consists in a sentence which represents a fixed result."<sup>1</sup> According to Hegel truth is not a finished product, which can be handed over the counter, quite impersonally and effortlessly. As he put it: "Truth is not a minted coin that can be handed over and pocketed ready-made."<sup>2</sup> Not only is truth fluid and dynamic, but for Hegel, as for Plato, knowledge is a strenuous activity, based on affinity and requiring a

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<sup>1</sup>Preface, p. 106.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 58.

periagoge. There is no "royal road to science" which may be comfortably taken in one's dressing gown.<sup>1</sup>

One cannot, as Kierkegaard put it, like the schoolboy, cheat by copying out the answers. Just as one cannot become a self unless one has been other-than-self, so too one cannot arrive at any result unless one has worked the problem through. Hegel's truth is a living truth; his logic the logic of life. As Kaufmann puts it,<sup>2</sup> "Every outlook . . . is to be studied not merely as an academic possibility but as an existential reality." The living--praxis--is what counts. This is where Kierkegaard, Pierce and Hegel agree.

Not only is Hegel's methodology anti-postivistic, open-ended, existential and pragmatic--it is experimental. Loewenburg goes so far (in terms of the Hegel literature) as to say that the two terms 'experimental' and 'dialectical' are "virtually interchangeable."<sup>3</sup> Indeed, as we have noted, Hegel thought of himself first and foremost as an empiricist, not as a priorist, deducing everything from those first inviolable principles, but

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 106.    <sup>2</sup>Reinter., p. 115.

<sup>3</sup>Mind, XLIII, 440.

proceeding via a series of Gedankenexperimente, sanctioned by experience.

In the Phenomenology, for example, Hegel carried on a continuous thread of reflective experiments, designed to show the incongruity and internal incompleteness of the recurrent types of human experience. His attitude towards any type is both one of sympathy and detachment--what Loewenburg terms acquaintance ab intra and contemplation ab extra.<sup>1</sup> And his account ranges between "historic reproduction" and "comic observation,"<sup>2</sup> and I would add, mocking, even disdainful, impersonation. The first experiment that Hegel conducts is an analysis of sense-certainty and (appealing to no outside principles) the very claims of its adherents are found to display internal discrepancies, the comedy being that in the very process of the experiment, sense-certainty is found to be at odds with itself and we discover that it has turned into its opposite. Loewenburg borrows Shakespeare's title to describe the Phenomenology--a "comedy of errors."<sup>3</sup>

But despite our last fifteen pages, the dialectic

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., 439.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., 443.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., 442-43.

is best, like spiral staircases, left to the show category, not to the say. For this we shall have to wait.

Having cleared away some<sup>1</sup> of the alternative conceptions of Hegel (or misconceptions, as they are contrary to the evidence above and below)--that he is an absolutistic monistic idealist whose method is non-empirical and dogmatic, whose system is closed and whose philosophy culminates in the supra-individual--we now have a conceptual framework in terms of which, and a critical platform from which, we can deal with Hegel, the philosopher of relations. Before moving on to examine his relations--both acknowledged and implicit--to Aristotle and Aquinas, let us note the consequences of the above vis à vis relation.

As Hegel is not an absolutist, then everything must be relative for him, there being nothing which can or does transcend the relational network. As he is not an idealist, then the reality of relations does not imply their ideality. As he is not a monist, he must not deny

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<sup>1</sup>Other charges, such as Hegel's facile equations of the real and the rational, ideals and reality, and his 'panlogism', will be dealt with en route.

the reality of relations à la Parmenides, or declare with Spinoza that the only real relation is that of part-whole. Finally, contra the empiricist thesis that relations are the work of the mind imposed upon disparate and/or isolated sense-data, Hegel must opt (in part) for the Jamesean view that experience is given as related. Reality for Hegel is not (as we shall see) isolated sensations. But radical empiricism must be incomplete as well, according to Hegel, for relations are not just data; they represent a stimulus. To make the given relations precise is as important as to recognize their primitiveness. Moreover, not all relations are given in immediate experience; some relations need to be mediated by mental activity. Uncovering/discovering relations then becomes as important as perceiving them.<sup>1</sup> For Hegel (as we shall see), the more profound the thoughts, the more plentiful the relations.

What are the consequences of Hegel's methodology for relation? Many, both epistemological and ontological.

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<sup>1</sup>Such thoughts were stimulated by Höffding's Der Relationsbegriff.

The dialectic announces an important epistemological/methodological principle: in order to understand anything, one has to know its genesis and its goal--that is, one has to comprehend a thing in terms of its genetic and teleological relations. To know a thing is to know a thing's history. That is, to know a thing is to know its relations. For according to Hegel's dialectic, the history of any thing is the history of its development, that is, its process of self-preservation in the midst of contradictory relations (both internal and external), and the complimentary process of self-realization by the overcoming of its past relations.

Hegel himself announced the ontological consequences of the dialectic when he said that the "acid's only being consists in its relation to its other."<sup>1</sup> A thing is related to what it excludes, and if such a relation is ignored, a thing will explode into its opposite. Moreover, the way a thing becomes itself is to absorb/maintain itself against its other.

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<sup>1</sup>Above, p. 207.

In other words, a thing becomes itself--in fact is at all--only through/by means of its relations. Relation, thus, is crucial, both as an epistemological concept and as an ontological reality. A thing's very being is only adequately defined, understood--only is--in terms of and because of its relations.

Such consequences will be the focus of attention in our treatment of the Logic and Phenomenology. But first, let us establish Hegel's relations to Aristotle and Aquinas.

Hegel is an Aristotelian. Not only did Hegel consider Aristotle to be more difficult than Plato,<sup>1</sup> he is, according to Hegel, "of all the ancients the most deserving of study."<sup>2</sup> Mure tells us<sup>3</sup> that 3 times as much space is devoted to Aristotle in the History of Philosophy as to any later thinker.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lectures on the History of Philosophy, II, 136.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>G. R. G. Mure, An Introduction to Hegel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p. 52.

<sup>4</sup>This, however, is the case with Plato as well, which dillutes the claim somewhat.

The commentators concur. Kaufmann<sup>1</sup> quotes with approval a statement of Bachmann, a student of Hegel, who called him a "German Aristotelian." Stace, on the last page of his book,<sup>2</sup> admits that Hegel's conclusion is that of Aristotle's. Mure prefaces his Introduction to Hegel with six chapters devoted exclusively to Aristotle.

What the commentators say and what Hegel himself implies is true. First of all, Hegel accepted the Aristotelian conception of the 'real' as the opposite of sham, as that "which actually does possess the nature which it claims or which is claimed on behalf of it," as Mure puts it.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, for Aristotle what is real must be individual. Hegel agrees. Neither are Platonists. Also for both, change is real and thus must be explained. And both offer an explanation of change in terms of potentiality and actuality. Finally, according to either, life is dynamic, a process of self-maintenance and self-constitution, an active struggle

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<sup>1</sup>Reinter., p. 114.   <sup>2</sup>p. 517.   <sup>3</sup>Mure, p. 3.

with the environment which stimulates self-realization.<sup>1</sup>

Marcuse offers this neat capsule:

Hegel's philosophy is in a large sense a reinterpretation of Aristotle's ontology, rescued from the distortion of metaphysical dogma and linked to the pervasive demand of modern rationalism that the world be transformed into a medium for the freely developing subject, that the world become, in short, the reality of reason. Hegel was the first to rediscover the extremely dynamic character of the Aristotelian metaphysic, which treats all being as process and movement-- a dynamic that had got lost in the formalistic tradition of Aristotle.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, both Aristotle and Hegel sanctified the activity of thought, the life of nous, as Aristotle put it, and paid tribute to its unifying powers. The summit of both worlds--of Aristotle's scala natura and of Hegel's universe--is an absolute self-consciousness whose activity is truly free in the sense of self-conditioning and whose knowing process involves no estranged object, no material of realization external to itself, that is, in which the knower and known are one.

But the differences between Aristotle and Hegel are crucial. Though precisely the same sentence be predicated of both worlds, the referatum of the words

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>p. 42.

is different. Hegel's absolute self-consciousness is not the Unmoved Mover. It is an incarnate individual. Moreover, the way Hegel's knower knows itself is radically different from the way of Aristotle's Divine. While the latter simply contemplates his isolated self, the former must conceptually conquer the world.

Finally, and most crucially, Hegel re-analyzed the concept of relation, and not only effected its complete liberation from its confined status as a categorical accident to which Aristotle had tied /allied it, but gave it full play in the logical, epistemological and ontological domains. He hence, as we shall see, re-vitalized, in fact, revolutionized the concept of relation, and as a result, re-vitalized and revolutionized philosophy itself.

One specific consequence of such a re-/trans-valuation of relation is that Hegel gave a clear and direct reading to Aristotle's ambivalent world. That is, he pointed out the internal conflict between his logic and his ontology. For Aristotle's logic endorses the thesis of static, isolated essences and accidental relations, while his ontology embraces the view that

though substance is primary, it is in process and hence constituted by its relations. Hegel overturned Aristotle's world of fixed and decompartmentalized essences and (as this was Aquinas' reading of Aristotle) Aquinas' brand of Aristotelianism. For he showed (indirectly) how Aristotle's world is, and by implication how Aquinas' world should have been, a world riddled with relations.

So we have come full circle. Hegel is not an Aristotelian. Or at least, Hegel is what Aristotle ought to have been.<sup>1</sup>

To begin anew: Hegel, mediated by Christian theology, is the antithesis of Aristotle.<sup>2</sup>

About such a thesis the commentators either squeek a little or are silent. Findlay makes the remark that "Hegel alone among Thinkers has borrowed the whole cast

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<sup>1</sup>I am sure Randall, with his 'what Aristotle ought to have meant' interpretation of the Unmoved Mover (an immanent versus a transcendent divine ), would, at this point, applaud (Randall, pp. 142-44).

<sup>2</sup>Or, Hegel is the real Aristotle!

of his thought from Christianity,"<sup>1</sup> but he fails to specify how or why. And Kaufmann makes a passing reference, based on a text of Hegel, to the Holy Spirit as "sublimated otherhood,"<sup>2</sup> but he skirts the implications.

A slightly elongated version of my thesis is this: that the conceptual model for Hegel's transformation of relation lay with the Trinity and hence with Aquinas as the Aristotelian representative of such a theological doctrine. In other words, Aquinas typifies the medium within which and without which Hegel, to use Kuhn's terminology, effected the transition to a new paradigm. If one is a McLuhanite, imagine the implications.

Hegel spends but one page on Aquinas in his History of Philosophy, and most of that is devoted to biographical trivia. As for Aquinas' philosophy, Hegel mouths a few cliches, and closes by refering the reader to a secondary source. Obviously, Hegel had not read Aquinas, let alone been intellectually involved with him. Moreover, where Hegel 'gets into' the Trinity is in his

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<sup>1</sup>Re-Ex., p. 359.    <sup>2</sup>Preface, p. 57.

discussion of Boehme.<sup>1</sup> So in view of this, how could anyone sensibly maintain that Aquinas was the catalyst?

The answer: one need not. For my thesis is not historical but rather philosophical. That is, I am not claiming that Hegel was actually stimulated to develop his new theory of relation specifically by Aquinas, but by the trinitarian theology of which Aquinas is the Aristotelian exemplification. I do claim, moreover, that there is an internal dialectic, philosophically speaking, between Aristotle and his two heirs, Aquinas and Hegel. For through the use of the trinitarian model, Hegel solved the tensions internal to the philosophies of Aristotle and Aquinas. And Hegel did so by a dialectical synthesis of Aristotle and Aquinas: by the combination of the process philosophy of Aristotle with the trinitarian motif of Aquinas.

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<sup>1</sup>Lectures on the History of Philosophy, III, 188-216. What impresses Hegel most about Boehme is his thorough-going application of the trinitarian analogy. Both his cosmology and his theory of man are saturated by three-fold imagery. To quote Hegel: "Boehme's chief, and one may even say, his only thought--the thought that permeates all his works--is that of perceiving the Trinity in everything, and recognizing everything as its revelation and manifestation, so that it is the universal principle in which and through which everything exists." (p. 196).

The next question to answer is how did Christian theology, specifically trinitarian theology, provide the revolutions' /ary means?

First, trinitarian relations are triadic and circular (that is, spiral) in structure,<sup>1</sup> as Hegel's relational patterns/dialectical progressions tend to be.<sup>2</sup> Next, Hegel's analysis of self and its epistemological relations explicitly adopt the trinitarian motif of self-knowledge, whereby one becomes an object for oneself through a procession out of one's self (the Son), and then recognizes one's self as/in this seeming shape of otherness through a return to one's self (the Holy Spirit). Such a trinitarian activity (procession out of self and return to self, or, as Findlay expresses it,<sup>3</sup> "coming to oneself in one's other") is declared by Hegel to "constitute the life of spirit."<sup>4</sup> As Findlay puts it: "The whole Trinity therefore lives enshirned in the Cartesian cogito."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Phen., pp. 766-76.

<sup>2</sup>For the relation between the dialectic and a circle according to Hegel, see Logic, p. 842.

<sup>3</sup>Re-Ex., p. 164.    <sup>4</sup>Phen., p. 765.    <sup>5</sup>Re-Ex., p. 140.

Moreover, the Trinity's kind of unity is not empty and bare, but is mediated by difference through and because of its participation in otherhood. It is thus the ideal--or most real--kind of unity according to Hegel, and is such precisely because of its relational structure/character. In fact, Aquinas had already noted that identity to be a real relation has to be mediated by difference; simple identity for Aquinas was but a logical relation.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, and most critically, trinitarian relations constitute not just the trivial aspects of the subject as with Aristotle, but its very nature.<sup>2</sup> Likewise, the entire being of Hegel's 'cogito' is made up of/by such trinitarian activities: relat/ing/ions.

All of which prompts our assay to delve into the actual works of Hegel. We have chosen to deal in detail with only two of Hegel's works: the Phenomenology of Mind and the Science of Logic (though the lesser Logic will be referred to as a supplement to the latter).

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<sup>1</sup>Above, pp. 109-110, 125.

<sup>2</sup>See the Logic, p. 215, where Hegel speaks of the Trinity as "pure relations."

For it is in these two works that Hegel's conception of the category of relation and its role in his philosophy as a whole emerges.

To read Hegel's logic is something of a surprise. For it is not about the "structure, interconnection and truth of sentences of formal logic,"<sup>1</sup> to use Bochenski's description. It is not, that is to say, logic. In fact, Hegel is not considered to be a logician by many. Charlemagne, Cicero and Condorcet are contained within William and Martha Kneale's story of the Development of Logic, but there is not a single reference to, even about Hegel. Quite a puzzle for one who wrote over a thousand pages and called them all 'logic'.

But the riddle may be solved by reading Hegel's own preface to his work. Here he admits to having a queer view of logic. Not only does his logic have ontological implications or an ontological basis like the logic of Aristotle, Quine or Aquinas, it "coincides

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<sup>1</sup>A History of Formal Logic, p. 3.

with metaphysics."<sup>1</sup> "The science of logic . . . constitutes metaphysics proper."<sup>2</sup>

Such a linkage is possible because for Hegel, as for Aristotle before him, thought does not distort or rape the world, as it does for Kant; on the contrary, it is "accredited able to express the essential reality of things."<sup>3</sup> So rather than turning metaphysics into logic, as did Kant,<sup>4</sup> Hegel turned logic into metaphysics.

Hegel also shunned the traditional bifurcation between the logical form and content of propositions. He self-declaredly<sup>5</sup> introduced content into his logical treatment, and, as a result, hoped to heal the Kantian hiatus between validity and truth. Hegel's logic is thus no abstract treatise on the formal relationships between

<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 45, par. 23.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 27. In fact, logic is said to be philosophy par excellence because it is the most self-conscious activity and the most 'divine' activity--thought thinking its own thought. See Logic, p. 81; E. L., p. 39, par. 20.

<sup>3</sup>E. L., p. 45, par. 23.

<sup>4</sup>Logic, p. 51 (at least the standard interpretation of Kant).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 37-38.

meanings--"a ballet of bloodless categories," as Bradley so rudely and so wrongly put it. It is an empirically rich study of the real relationships between man and his world.

Logic may be described as a study of the way people have thought about the world. Some logicians emphasize the way; others the thought, others the world. Hegel however is the first to stress the people. For according to Hegel, to anticipate a bit, each category is a partial definition of a fulfilled person, and the way such a person makes the world his. Hegel's history of logic is a history of people. His metaphysics is a metaphysics of fulfillment. He is the supreme personalist, Brightman, Bowne and Bertocci notwithstanding. For he brought people into everything. In fact, as we shall see, he said people could be everything.

If Hegel is an Aristotelian, it is not due to the Stagirite's logic. He is contemptuous of Aristotelian logic. Though he admits that it was of some service, it is in his view merely a natural episode in the history of

"finite thought,"<sup>1</sup> and he stresses that it never formed the real nerve of Aristotle's thought.

Aristotle was the first to observe and describe the different forms, or, as they are called, figures of syllogism, in their subjective meaning: and he performed his work so exactly and surely, that no essential addition has ever been required. But while sensible of the value of what he has thus done, we must not forget that the forms of the syllogism of understanding, and of finite thought altogether, are what Aristotle has made use of in his properly philosophical investigations.<sup>2</sup>

As a product of the understanding, Aristotle's logic can only proffer fixed thought forms. Moreover, in such a "natural logic,"<sup>3</sup> thought is merely a passive tabula rasa or recorder; it is given no part in determining the content itself.

But if Hegel's logic is not the traditional logic of Aristotle, neither is it the transcendental logic of Kant. For the "critical Philosophy," Hegel continues,<sup>4</sup> though maintaining that we are able to determine the relation of our thoughts to the objects, is no improvement. Thoughts become a medium between ourselves and the

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<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 40, par. 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 318, par. 184; p. 322, par. 187.

<sup>3</sup>Logic, p. 35.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 36, 595.

world,<sup>1</sup> and, objects Hegel, "this medium instead of connecting us with the objects rather cuts us off from them."<sup>2</sup> It is true that for Kant, as Mure points out,<sup>3</sup> a category is not a mere predicate of a de facto object-world; it is also, qua a form of judgment, a function of the mind. It thus characterizes a spontaneously active intelligence as well as the world as a whole. But such an improvement on Aristotle was accomplished at a cost: for it characterizes the phenomenal world only.

Hegel objects:

If . . . they [the categories] are inadequate for the thing-in-itself, still less must the understanding to which they are supposed to belong put up with them and rest content with them. If they cannot be determinations of the thing-in-itself, still less can they be determinations of the understanding to which one ought at least to concede the dignity of a thing-in-itself.<sup>4</sup>

As Hegel had disembarrassed philosophy of the spectral noumenal beyond, his categories could not be likewise circumscribed--merely valid (however necessary) rules for possible experience. Not only are our minds capable of revealing the real world for Hegel, they are capable of

<sup>1</sup>As do sense-data for the empiricist.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 36; see also Phen., Introduction.

<sup>3</sup>p. 86. <sup>4</sup>Logic. p. 47.

making it actual, of transforming an unreasonable world. The principles of thought can be made objective.

But the principles of thought also are, according to Hegel, the principles of the world. For the logic not only predicts/outlines possible ways, it deals with the way the world is. For the dialectical process is operative not only in the logic. The world is dialectical. Logic thus mirrors/reproduces the actual processes of reality.

Hegel's logic deals with the traditional forms of being, the categories drawn up by Aristotle. What is novel is Hegel's treatment of them. Aristotle is criticized for failing to connect them. Hegel, on the contrary, promises a "dialectical consideration of the categories."<sup>1</sup> So, what the logic offers, is a thorough-going critical review of the traditional categories (being, substance, quantity, quality, relation, et al.), whereby one category is revealed to be another, each one being a one sided abstraction without the other. Thus, as Kaufmann remarks,<sup>2</sup> "analysis of categories replaces speculative metaphysics."

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.    <sup>2</sup>Reinter., p. 185.

As the central category of the dialectic is negation and as "the dialectical process receives its motive power from the pressure to overcome the negativity," to quote Marcuse,<sup>1</sup> such a dialectical consideration of the categories will involve both negation and a negation of that negation. The ensuing dynamism results in an onslaught on the complacent security of common sense, and an irruption of the fixed and static categories of the understanding and the Lebenswelt which accompanies them. And the truth which emerges from such an analysis will be that all modes of being realize themselves only in relation to rationality, that is, only through an understanding subject. This is why Hegel's logic culminates in people.

Before we plunge, one qualification: as our concern is the Hegelian conception of relation, we need not follow Hegel through all his dialectical turns. Sometimes we shall only note the upshot of each point vis à vis relation.

Hegel's Logic begins with the most classic ontological question: What is Being? Hegel's reply, however, is startlingly unique: Being is Nothing. Thus begins the

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<sup>1</sup>p. 66.

negation.

Let us re-enact the first dialectical experiment. Being is a category that applies to all particular beings, and can therefore apply to none-as-such. In order to so transcend each, it must thus be stripped of all determinate features, both idiosyncratic qualities and class characteristics. In fact, it cannot be pure enough, for if it had but one feature, it will be immediately circumscribed and thus exclude some range/domain of being. But what distinguishes such an utterly empty, ethereal entity? What, in fact, distinguishes it from nothing? Such a pure indeterminate being is no-thing, that is, "essentially nothing."<sup>1</sup>

The first lesson of the Logic is crucial. It not only means that every being, that is, every determinate

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<sup>1</sup>Logic. p. 103.

being, is a relation, or more precisely,<sup>1</sup> a mixture of being and nothing,<sup>2</sup> of plenitude and privation<sup>3</sup>--in short, a becoming (Werden).<sup>4</sup> It not only means that every past logic is necessarily faulty because it disregarded this negative and contradictory state of reality,<sup>5</sup> seduced by the stable faculty of understanding. Most importantly, it means that to be at all is to be

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<sup>1</sup>Hegel points out that as being and nothing are contentless voids, they cannot--yet--be related. He concludes: "It is therefore inadmissible to employ more developed forms of mediation here and to hold being and nothing in any kind of relationship--the transition in question is not yet a relation." (Ibid.) Though at the present stage of the Logic, determinate being is not a relation, it is in finis/in retrospect--that is, it turns out to be a relation. The analysis of this paragraph is thus in part anticipatory.

<sup>2</sup>Marcuse, p. 130.

<sup>3</sup>To be at all is to be in motion. Without desires and needs--that is, lacks--one could not be at all. The world is necessarily shot through with negativity.

<sup>4</sup>Becoming is both a ceasing to be (nothing) and a coming to be (being), an "immanent synthesis" (Logic, p. 96)--immanent because both being and nothing "are only in becoming" (Ibid., p. 93), and because becoming is the very movement of being into nothing, or, of nothing into being (Ibid., p. 92).

<sup>5</sup>Marcuse, p. 130.

related.

Let us fill in the middle term of such a flat statement. We have learned that to be at all means to be determinate. But, says Hegel:

A determinate, a finite being is one that is in relation to another; it is a content standing in a necessary relation to another content. . . .<sup>1</sup>

In other words, to be an A, there has to be a B (at least), a C and so on. Being determinate necessarily involves another. Substantially relationless things (such as Aristotelian substances) are vacuous.

Moreover, Hegel continues:

It is not a matter of indifference to it [the A] whether a certain other content with which it is in relation is, or is not; for it is only through such relation that it essentially is what it is.<sup>2</sup>

Such other-ness (B-ness) is built right into the very structure of A. In other words, the limit is not external; "it rather goes through and through the whole of such existence."<sup>3</sup> Or again, "Each has in its own self the other of itself."<sup>4</sup>

Relations make a thing be what is it. Relations are

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 86.   <sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>E. L., p. 173, par. 92.   <sup>4</sup>Logic, p. 141.

essential. And this first lesson, never learned by either Aristotle or Aquinas, reverberates throughout the Logic.

To be determinate (Dasein) is to have a quality. And quality is defined by Hegel characteristically (pointing up the ontological underpinnings of the dialectic) as "the means whereby this something in its relations with other somethings maintains itself in its own peculiar way, counteracting the alien influences posited in it and making its own determinations effective in the other. . . ." <sup>1</sup> So a thing is what it is by asserting itself against what Findlay calls "the denying otherness of the environment," <sup>2</sup> and by its resulting interactions with its environment. Without these negative and positive relations to its otherhood, a thing would not exist-- a fact neither Aristotle nor Aquinas recognized.

Thus, the two relationships to self which Hegel notes <sup>3</sup> --being-for-other (Seyn für Anderes) and being-in-self (Ansich-seyn) (that is, a thing in relation to--as negating--others, and a thing's inherent character,

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 114.    <sup>2</sup>Re-Ex., p. 160.    <sup>3</sup>Logic, pp. 112-15.

regardless of others)--though distinguishable, are necessarily intertwined. "Their truth is their relation." as Hegel puts it;<sup>1</sup> a critical statement particularly in light of the two preceding philosophers.

It is by what is most intimately a thing's own that it can be discriminated from others, but it is only by being set off against/from others that it can have such intimate qualities.<sup>2</sup> Being-in-itself also means implicit, according to Hegel.<sup>3</sup> To be related (to an other) means then to be drawn out, to be rendered intelligible, to be actualized.

So, "through the limit something is what it is, and in the limit it has its quality."<sup>4</sup> That is, the nature of a thing is brought out by opposing realities. But this leads to a difficulty, which Marcuse spells out.<sup>5</sup> Granted that opposing realities constitute the very being of things, does not the very effort to uncover a thing's identity "plunge the mind into an infinite sea of relations?"<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 119.    <sup>2</sup>Findlay, Re-Ex., p. 160.

<sup>3</sup>Logic, p. 121.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid., 126.

<sup>5</sup>p. 68.    <sup>6</sup>Ibid.

Marcuse comments: "This infinite sea of relations, which seems to portend the failure of any attempt to capture a thing's character, becomes for Hegel, quite to the contrary, the first step in true knowledge of the thing."<sup>1</sup> The way depends upon a distinction between two kinds of infinity: spurious and true.<sup>2</sup>

Bad infinity is the infinity of the understanding, that is, a never-ending link of "added connections" as Hegel puts it.<sup>3</sup> The understanding tries to pass beyond the finite by negating the finite and such an attempt is ceaseless because it is continually defined in terms of its rejection--caught forever by what it forever tries to elude. To negate is to determine.<sup>4</sup>

To suppose that by stepping out and away into that infinity we release ourselves from the finite, is in truth but to seek the release which comes by flight. But the man who flees is not yet free: in fleeing<sup>5</sup> he is still conditioned by that from which he flees.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, pp. 137-56; E. L., pars. 92-95.

<sup>3</sup>This quotation from the Jenerser Logik of Hegel is given by Marcuse, p. 68.

<sup>4</sup>Logic, p. 161. <sup>5</sup>E. L., p. 175, par. 94.

The infinity of reason, on the contrary, is a positive infinity. It affirms the finite and as finite becomes infinite. Hegel's point: (no pun intended) one must be something to be everything.

The man who will do something great must learn, as Goethe says, to limit himself. The man who, on the contrary, would do everything, really would do nothing and fails.<sup>1</sup>

A limit, then, is necessary for genuine infinity. The true infinite is not just unlimited. It is self-limited. It is in no way determined by an other. For the other has been absorbed within itself. It is self-determined. According to Hegel, who was denied the stimulus and benefit of Cantor's analysis and clarification of mathematical infinity, true infinity can only be realized in a free self-conscious subject.

Every particular stage of the existence of a thing is a negation of its (most real) existence. Yet, if in the process, the thing does not dissolve, but has the power both "to be itself in its otherness,"<sup>2</sup> and to make

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 145, par. 80.

<sup>2</sup>This quotation from the Jenenser Logik of Hegel is given by Marcuse, p. 69.

that negativity a part of its own unity,<sup>1</sup> then such an object has been transformed into a subject--a truly infinite subject because it is in control of its own relations. Such a subject is, as we shall see, the final category and thus the truth of the Logic, and we are lead to it because of the inadequacies of all other categories.

Such a final category has repercussions for the Hegelian concept of relation. Versus the incessant externally strung out relations of the understanding, Hegel posits a new kind of relation: internal relations (though they were not known to him by that name).<sup>2</sup> It is necessary, according to Hegel's conception of the development of a subject, to maintain oneself/itself against opposing realities, and hence to exclude others. But now we find that a higher stage of such a developmental process consists both in absorbing the other into oneself, and/or becoming the other.

The relations necessary both to a subject's very existence and his/its realization are thus internalized.

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<sup>1</sup>Marcuse, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup>Below, p. 341.

One is still mediated by an other, but now that other is oneself. All alien objects external to the self are drawn within. The self becomes, as Hegel puts it, "infinitely self-related."<sup>1</sup>

Out of such a discussion of infinity, a new category emerges: being-for-self (Fürsichseyn). As a result of the process of internalization/interiorization, which Hegel refers to as the "negation of negation"<sup>2</sup> whereby the other (negation) is negated as other, both an isolated existence (being-in-self) and an existence in terms of (external) others (being-for-others) are sublated. For being-for-self is "the absolute union of the relation to other and self-relation."<sup>3</sup> It is that which "has within itself the externality, the relation to other."<sup>4</sup>

Being has reached a new dialectical stage: being-for-itself, where a thing (in fact, Hegel specifies, only a self-conscious thing) can be its own object, and hence be perpetually coming-out-of-itself, "a self-sublating

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<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 166.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 177.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 163.      <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 169.

relation-to-self."<sup>1</sup> A new conclusion: every new phase of the dialectic is defined in terms of and hinges on (a new kind of) relation--in this case, this emergent being-for-itself.

This section of the Logic contains a lesson to those who would make Hegel an Absolutist. For just as the infinite is finite and has to be finite--for otherwise it would be bound by what it excluded, that is it would be limited by the finite--so is the true absolute none other than the concrete. I, as a self-conscious, self-determining subject, thus becomes the paradigm for Hegel's concrete universal. For such a finite being is ever self-transcending; such a concrete entity can absorb the other (the absolute, the infinite) into itself, and through the process become the other (through a developmental re-definition of that other). For Hegel believed in the power of thought: the way to be god is to understand him.

Hegel moves on to examine the categories of the one and the many, attraction and repulsion. The first thing

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 188.

to note is that Hegel's discussion of attraction and repulsion is likewise a discussion of identity and difference. The former are but "physical metaphors" for the latter, says Stace.<sup>1</sup> So whatever the conclusions reached, they apply to both pairs.

Hegel declares attraction and repulsion to be "inseparable."<sup>2</sup>

The relation of attraction to repulsion is such that the former has the latter for presupposition. Repulsion provides the material for attraction. If there were no ones there would be nothing to attract.<sup>3</sup>

Remove repulsion as a force and the result: monism to the extreme, for repulsion is the principle of the many, of discreteness. But not merely is repulsion presupposed by attraction; attraction is a necessary condition of repulsion.

Howcome? For a start, attraction prevents repulsion from turning into mere indifference. But also, repulsion is declared to be a relation, and as such, based on attraction. Hegel maintains that different things are related, for, as he puts it, "they are only in so far as

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<sup>1</sup>p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

they reciprocally negate one another. . . ."1 And so, "repulsion is their common relation."2 That is, to be different from an other requires that an other be--and hence to be chained to that other.

Repulsion is, although negative, still essentially relation; the mutual repulsion and flight is not a liberation from what is repelled and fled from, the one as excluding still remains related to what it excludes. But this moment of relation is attraction. . . .3

Repulsion needs "the inter-relatedness of the many"4 to negate in order to be. In short, each--identity and difference, attraction and repulsion--is only through the mediation of the other.

Hegel goes on to make the final point:

Since each of the two opposed sides contains its other within itself and neither can be thought of without the other, it follows that neither of these determinations, taken alone, has truth; this belongs only to their unity. This is the true dialectical consideration of them and also the true result.5

What comes out here is that, in Findlay's words:

There is no place in Hegelianism for any of the hard-and-fast independence maintained in certain forms of pluralistic realism. To be separate or independent

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 171.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.    <sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 197.

is, in the Hegelian view of things, merely a pose, a stress, which depends on the background it tries to treat as irrelevant.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, if the limit case--the negation of a thing--is necessarily bound up with the thing, consider how Hegel's universe must depend upon relation.

Further reading of the Logic only confirms this. Hegel is not shy about exposing inseparable unions. The Logic is littered with them. To name but a few: sum and unity, discrete and continuous magnitude, extensive and intensive quanta. Each, à la our model of attraction and repulsion, is shown to be determined by the relation to its other, and is declared to be "equally essentially the other."<sup>2</sup> Such a necessary involvement effects the birth of a new term,<sup>3</sup> which turns out to be the truth of both.

Within this discussion of the category of quantity, Hegel addresses himself to mathematics (more specifically

<sup>1</sup>Re-Ex., p. 168.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 221. Some examples of this thesis are: the greater the number of vibrations (extension), the more intense the note (intension); the more massive a weight, the more pressure exerted; the more highly intense a character, the more influence it will have (Ibid., p. 223).

<sup>3</sup>E. g., sum and unity constitute number (Ibid., p. 208).

to the Pythagoreans, that is, those who propose that numbers capture the nature of things) and the weaknesses of such a position.<sup>1</sup> What is of interest here is the why and how Hegel denigrates<sup>2</sup> such a position: it is rejected because of its inadequate conception of relation.

According to Hegel, mathematical relations are empty and abstract because external (that is, externally juxtaposed and isolated), and thus cannot genuinely grasp any subject matter. Numbers are mutually external and indifferent to one another; they are "devoid of any inner connectedness," as Hegel expresses it.<sup>3</sup> They do not have "a concrete subject matter possessing inner intrinsic relationships. . . ."<sup>4</sup> They are merely mechanical aggregates and are not organically connected.<sup>5</sup> Mathematics can only hence exploit and manipulate formal, inert connections.

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 212-17.

<sup>2</sup>Hegel's critique of mathematics is severe only if such a mathematical framework is considered to be sufficient.

<sup>3</sup>Logic, p. 205.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 518.

The movement of the mathematical demonstration does not belong to that which is the object, but is an activity that remains external to the matter. Thus the nature of the right-angled triangle does not take itself apart after the manner of the construction that is required for the demonstration of the proposition that expresses the relations; the whole production of the result is a way and means of knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

And again, "The first one [proposition] does not move itself on to the next, nor does a necessary connection come about in this way through the nature of the matter. . . ." <sup>2</sup> The only real connection between mathematical propositions is in the knowing mathematician. Relation must have a critical role to singlehandedly effect such a dismissal. Finally, the truth of quantity is declared to be relation. Hegel shows how the function of quantitative concepts is not to precisely assess quantities,<sup>3</sup> nor to progress to quantitative infinities,<sup>4</sup> but, as Findlay puts it, "to illuminate things by the ways

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<sup>1</sup>Preface, p. 62.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>3</sup>Such an activity is said to be unprofitable because such determination is indifferent unless related to another quanta (Logic, p. 314).

<sup>4</sup>For such an expansion turns out to be mere reptition (Ibid., p. 228).

in which their various quantitative aspects stand to one another. . . ." <sup>1</sup> In other words, the value of two quanta is only in their relation. <sup>2</sup> Size is accidental; whether it be 1:2 or 100:200, the ratio/measure/proportion is what counts.

Another way of making such a declaration is to assert that quantity severed from quality is pointless. What good is pure homogeneous quantity? But not only is it unfruitful to disregard the relation between quantity and quality: one cannot disregard it. The two categories are inextricably intertwined. For not only do quantities need to be qualified, but qualities are based on and determined by quantities. For instance, speed is based on a ratio between distance and time, or sense qualities are determined by patterns and rates of vibrations.

So qualities can be quantified (though not completely <sup>3</sup>). Hegel goes on to speak of the eventual but still sudden conversion of, for example a full head of

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<sup>1</sup>Re-Ex., p. 175.    <sup>2</sup>E. L., par. 105.

<sup>3</sup>Findlay notes (Re-Ex., p. 177) that Hegel holds a complete quantification to be successful only where the phenomena has the mutual externality necessary for such a treatment, that is, not inorganic nature.

hair into baldness by the pulling of a hair from the head, or of water into ice by reaching 32° centigrade, or of democracy into tyranny by increasing the population.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, Hegel admits<sup>2</sup> that there will be a range within which variation of quantity will not produce a corresponding quality variation, but seemingly insignificant qualities add up, warns Hegel. And the long monotonous qualitatively identical stretch is suddenly broken; a new qualitative whole is constituted. Hegel refers to such a qualitative transition as passing a "node,"<sup>3</sup> and uses the euphuism "nodal line" (like a knotted line, says Findlay<sup>4</sup>) to stress the leap involved, and to underscore his differences with both the maxim "natura non facit saltum"<sup>5</sup> and the appeal to gradualness.

So just as quantity without quality is meaningless, so is there a quantitative limit to every quality, or, as Hegel puts it, "a new quality is itself only a quantitative relation."<sup>6</sup> Qualitative quantities and

<sup>1</sup>Logic, pp. 332, 335.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 367-71.      <sup>4</sup>Re-Ex., p. 16.

<sup>5</sup>Logic, p. 370.      <sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 373.

and quantified qualities: both are necessary for any complete understanding of the categories of quantity and quality. Of course, this might come as a surprise only to those who hold that quality and quantity are not related. But to surprise--and improve on--Aristotle is quite a feat.

The categories of quantity and quality fall within book 1 of the Logic, which Hegel calls the Doctrine of Being. But the discovery that their truth is their relation impels us to break with and transcend the view point of such a doctrine. For this first phase represents the immediate or the surface view of things,<sup>1</sup> which sees the world as a collection of different things. Such a mentality is explicitly a-relational, maintaining that all the categories stand alone, independent of/unmediated by one another. But the purpose of the dialectic is to explicate the truth merely stated here: that all the categories involve and depend on each other.<sup>2</sup>

With this new sphere, that of Essence, the categories

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<sup>1</sup>E. L., par. 86.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 232; E. L., p. 235, par. 126; Stace, p. 177.

go in pairs,<sup>7</sup> each explicitly referring to the other. In such a sphere, concepts have meaning only in relation to one another. Nor are its categories merely descriptive, as with Being. They are explanatory. Such a frame of mind sees reality as double layered--the appearances of Being and a deeper, inner dimension, essential reality. As a result, all the changes reality undergoes are viewed as the changes of "one and the same substrate,"<sup>1</sup> and as such, are reduced to states. "The alteration is only a change of state, and the subject of the transition is posited as remaining the same in the process."<sup>2</sup>

Relation is not yet internalized, but at least it is conceptually operative. Just so, the category of a changing yet unified subject has been introduced, even if such a subject is not yet able to be free.

The first lesson of the stage of Essence<sup>3</sup> is: of essence, nothing determinate can be said. Like Berkeley,

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<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 373.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 394-99.

he shows how the Lockean underlying substrate,<sup>1</sup> being a blank-faceless-one-knows-not-what, is a sham. But he goes on to give it a new twist: that the unessential is just as essential as the essence, and that essences are just as superficial as significant.

Essence only is essence by virtue of its relation to appearance, for essence has to have something to be essence of. Likewise, appearance does not make any sense unless it is the essence appearing; and essence does not make any sense unless it appears. A la Sartre, Hegel asserts: "A Man is what he does."<sup>2</sup> Rather than appearance being "a rind or curtain behind which Essence lies hidden,"<sup>3</sup> we find, says Hegel, that "the moments of illusory being are . . . the moments of essence itself,"<sup>4</sup> and substance "the totality of accidents."<sup>5</sup> One is the meaning of the other. To sever the essential/inner/substantive from appearance/the outer/

<sup>1</sup>The same arguments apply to the Kantian ding-an-sich (e.g., it is the real illusion only because it is not related to the so-called illusory, phenomenal world.

<sup>2</sup>E. L., par. 140.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 208, par. 172.

<sup>4</sup>Logic, p. 397.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 556.

the accidental is to turn it into the latter and vice-versa. If any notion is cut off from its contrary, it becomes indistinguishable from it. The upshot of essence: relation.

Hegel is not denying that there are essences, in the sense of some kind of enduring nature which makes a thing individual and concrete. He is not a Cratylus. He is not a conventionalist. He is just re-defining what makes a thing individual and concrete: its relations. And in this sense he is going beyond the essence-accident bifurcation, and, as relations were traditionally held to be accidents, beyond the essence-accident classification. In other words, he is liberating Aristotle's ontology from his logic.

The problem or aim of philosophy is often represented as the ascertainment of the essence of things: a phrase which only means that things instead of being left in their immediacy, must be shown to be mediated by, or based upon, something else.<sup>1</sup>

Mediation--that is, the relations between a thing and its environment and, in turn, itself--replaces the accidental-essential polarity/classification by becoming the deeper version or true meaning of both. And this invasion of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 208, par. 112.

domain, formerly inhabited exclusively by substance, by accidents, in particular relation, leads to a complete erosion of the essence-accident distinction.

This is how the Aristotelian problem of locating species/genus/specific difference is transformed into uncovering the relations of any given thing.

Hegel tells us that this first lesson introduces the theme for the entire second movement (the Doctrine of Essence), and he names such a theme "Reflection." "The point of view given by the Essence is in general the standpoint of 'Reflection.'"<sup>1</sup> And again, "Essence is reflection."<sup>2</sup>

The crux of such a standpoint is that a being becomes itself through the negativity of itself. The term is chosen, Hegel says,<sup>3</sup> because it makes reference to that natural phenomenon whereby light doubles up on itself, as something immediate is thrown back upon itself via a mediator, such as the surface of a mirror. It also, Findlay points out,<sup>4</sup> plays upon connotations of the mental act of reflecting by which objects are no longer what they

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 208, par. 112.      <sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 399.

<sup>3</sup>E. L., p. 208, par. 112.      <sup>4</sup>Re-Ex., p. 185.

appear to be through the mediation of non-obvious connections. It sees objects as points of convergence of many rays, some of which are linear, some of which are convoluted. The reflective mode of conception is therefore the relational mode.

Existence is the indefinite multitude of existents as reflected-into-themselves, which at the same time equally throw light upon one another,--which, in short, are co-relative, and form a world of reciprocal dependence and of infinite interconnection.<sup>1</sup>

And again:

In this motely play of the world, if we may so call the sum of existents, there is nowhere a firm footing to be found: everything bears an aspect of relativity, conditioning something else. The reflective understanding makes it its business to elicit and trace these connections running out in every direction. . . .<sup>2</sup>

It is within this context that Hegel discusses the principles of identity, difference and contradiction.

The law of identity, according to Hegel, is a one-sided abstraction. That 'a is a' is par soi, an empty tautology. Real identity can only be won--"a restoration of itself from another,"<sup>3</sup> an identity amid/in spite of

<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 230, par. 123.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>3</sup>Logic, p. 411.

differences. Likewise mere difference is indifference. To use Findlay's example,<sup>1</sup> to think of everything as made up of mutually exclusive simple units is not to effect any real division at all. Everything then becomes subject to an identical description--a world of different things with no difference between them.

Moreover, not only is the law of contradiction jejune--it is delusive. Intelligent reflection consists in "grasping and asserting contradiction."<sup>2</sup> And re-asserting his dialectical view of the world, Hegel declares that "everything is inherently contradictory. . . ." <sup>3</sup>

Contradiction is the root of all movement and vitality; it is only in so far as something has a contradiction within it that it moves, has an urge and activity.<sup>4</sup>

Something is therefore alive only in so far as it contains contradiction within it, and moreover is this power to hold and endure the contradiction within it.<sup>5</sup>

If life is an active struggle with the environment, then the environment cannot be sheerly external to the

<sup>1</sup>Notes, p. 2.    <sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 441.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 439.    <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 439.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 440.

organism, but must be an externality, as Mure puts it,<sup>1</sup> within it because for it. It is even impossible to separate something from its background, for this serves as its foil--two things which are alike must involve a background of unlike things. In short: it is impossible for anything to be unaffected by its relations. Hegel is the father of Gestalt theorie.

So, over and over again, in the Doctrine of Essence, we are shown how anything is at all and is itself only in/by virtue of its relations. The truth of illusory and essential being is reworked in a myriad of different contexts: with identity and difference, the positive and the negative, a thing and its properties, the ground and the grounded, matter and form, a thing and its opposite, appearance and law, the whole and its parts, force and its expression, inner and outer. The nature of an independent, self-sufficient thing is a delusion.<sup>2</sup>

The Doctrine of Essence culminates in the category of relation. One would think, considering our present bias vis à vis the categories and towards Hegel, that with this the Logic would come to a close. But it does not. The

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<sup>1</sup>p. 24.    <sup>2</sup>E. L., par. 130.

"Absolute Relation," as Hegel calls this final state, is but the end of volume 1, book 2. Volume 2 and book 3, titled the Subjective Logic or the Doctrine of the Notion, awaits us.

One might think that this represents the undoing of our thesis. For this must mean that the category of relation is overcome. But as we shall see, it is not all relations which are overcome--just external relations. In the sphere of Essence, concepts have meaning only in relation to one another. The truth of this is not to do away with relation, but to internalize it.

The transition to the Notion is effected by thinking through the implications of the truth of essence (that independence is mere semblance) in terms of one's self. In other words, the transition is effected by becoming self-conscious.

This dialectical turn to self-consciousness is not a necessary transition, in the sense that there is nothing which inescapably makes one become self-conscious. But as Hegel himself stated,<sup>1</sup> there need not be. It is sufficient that the self as self-aware, is a fuller, richer, more

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<sup>1</sup>Above, pp. 211-13.

complete category which can comprehend all the previous categories.

The reason that it is possible to compress all the previous categories into one is due to the special power of this category such that everything is subject to it. The power is a process of interiorization called comprehension. It is no accident, as Kaufmann points out<sup>1</sup> that Begriff (notion/concept) is closely related to begreifen (to comprehend or, literally, to grasp). The comprehension of an object consists in nothing else than that the ego makes it its own, pervades it and brings it into its own form. . . ."2 A human subject can overcome the externality of any object (though not the object itself) by understanding it and, as a result, by participating in its nature. Thought is the true universalizing agent.

Moreover, only thought (and only a certain type of thought at that) can grasp the true nature (notion) of things. For only reason is able to grasp the history of a thing--the process of its actualization. In nature, such a process is, as Marcuse notes,<sup>3</sup> blind and contingent

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<sup>1</sup>Preface, p. 9.    <sup>2</sup> Logic, p. 585.    <sup>3</sup>p. 65.

and understanding is fond of compartmentalizing the moments. Reason thus reveals the world.

We have reached the category of the true infinite introduced in the very beginning of our discussion of the Logic. As Hegel warns: in the beginning is the end. For with the advent of a self-conscious subject, the realization is born that all the related pairs of the Essence are nothing but self-relations,<sup>1</sup> that the other is really one's self. Hegel appeals to the Trinity as a model for such a discussion: for the Son and the Holy Ghost are the Father.<sup>2</sup>

The other is no longer a beyond; the non-ego no longer an infinite obstacle. The self is the sole existent capable of removing the boundaries initially imposed upon itself, and of finding itself in the beyond. The self is the only form of life capable of "free love,"<sup>3</sup> as Hegel calls it--of melting the barriers between things and of bearing itself towards its other as towards its own self.

Let us review the Logic. In the first phase, things are viewed as being in no way affected by the being of

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 580; E. L., p. 282, par. 157.

<sup>2</sup>E. L., p. 289, par. 161. <sup>3</sup>Logic, p. 603.

others. This is the realm of which Aristotle and Aquinas are--theoretically though not in practice--the representatives, the realm of purely external relations; relations as accidental form no true part of an object's being, but are affixed to it, mechanically as it were. And the universe turns out to be merely an aggregate of objects.<sup>1</sup> Hegel's example of such a point of view<sup>2</sup> is the atomists' world-view, for the inner nature of the atom is in no way affected by its relations.

This point of view--merely a "shallow and superficial mode of apprehension," to quote Hegel<sup>3</sup>--breaks down. For one thing, it is impossible to keep an airtight separation between the inner nature of an object and its external relations. For, Hegel argues, if it is true that a thing's relations cannot affect the inner nature, then the relations begin to determine the inner for precisely this reason. The inner has to be indifferent and passive. And thus, the outer begins to mold the inner. The upshot: objects cannot be self-subsistent, self-enclosed totalities. This is how atomism as a theory collapses, how Aristotle's/Aquinas'

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<sup>1</sup>Stace, p. 267.      <sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 268.

<sup>3</sup>E. L., p. 337, par. 195.

theoretical conjectures misfire, or to put it in other terms, how Hegel undermines the theory of external relations.

But the realization that the truth of things lies in their relations (Essence) has to be re-worked also. All externality must be overcome.<sup>1</sup> The final kind of relation is doubly internal. Not only does a things' relations constitute its inner nature, but all things are capable of being absorbed within one interior--a mind.

We are, in other words, facing the central message of Hegelianism: that 'otherness' in all its forms exists only to call forth the energies, and to intensify the self-awareness of Spirit. The Objective World, with all its glittering prizes and its multitudinous hazards, must be seen as no more than the row of ninepins that self-conscious Spirit must bowl over in order to be self-conscious Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

This is how important a fulfilled person is for Hegel.

The Logic ends with the Absolute Idea. The Absolute Idea is explicitly identified with the Aristotelian God in

<sup>1</sup>Though, as we shall see (below, p.273), it, in fact, can never be completely overcome.

<sup>2</sup>Re-Ex., p. 254. I contest two points in this quotation. First, the phrase "must be seen as no more than" carries deprecatory connotations which are unjustified; in fact, the opposite is more appropriate--"more without loss." Second, the phrase "exists only to call forth" seems to deny value to other forms of life in their own right. See above, p. 192, where this latter point is discussed.

the sense that it is pure thought which has no external object.<sup>1</sup> It is the content of the mind of a fulfilled person who can, via the power of thought, embrace everything within himself. The Absolute Idea is the categorical counterpart of a fulfilled person.

Early in the Logic, Hegel stipulates that the final category must be internally complete, as it cannot give way to a new stage. Moreover, the final category, Hegel tells us, contains all the previous categories. The truth of the Logic is the Idea or Notion. And the Notion ". . . is none other than I or pure self-consciousness. . . ."2

Before we move on to discuss the Phenomenology, let us note several outcomes of the Logic. According to Marcuse's definition,<sup>3</sup> a panlogist treats every form of being as a form of reason. The sole basis for such a charge vis à vis Hegel would be his optimism:<sup>4</sup> his belief that being could have (though not de facto) a rational structure, his belief that man is capable of mastering the world, there being nothing in principle recalcitrant to

<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 374, par. 236.

<sup>2</sup>Logic, p. 583.

<sup>3</sup>p. 24.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

either theoretical or practical reason. And this basis is undermined by the fact that Hegel actually doubted whether man could, in/by praxis, master the world, and he recognized both theoretical and practical contingency. To quote Hegel: "The really necessary is therefore any limited actuality which, on account of this limitation, is only a contingent. . . ." <sup>1</sup> Contingency is a (necessary!) <sup>2</sup> part of necessity for Hegel. It serves as its origin: contingencies are the antecedent conditions of necessities. And thus real necessity is mediated by contingency and as such is conditional; and the union of the two is called actuality. <sup>3</sup> Moreover, Marcuse points out <sup>4</sup> that Hegel is just as much the antithesis of a panlogist, for he takes the principles of thought from the processes of reality.

This second point strikes at a facile charge made at the beginning of this chapter: Hegel's equation of the ought

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 550.

<sup>2</sup>In this sense (only) contingency participates in necessity.

<sup>3</sup>Logic, p. 550; see also E. L., pars. 144-47. Moreover, in the Philosophy of Nature, Hegel states that the details of nature are governed by caprice and contingency (Stace, p. 308).

<sup>4</sup>p. 25.

and the is. For most commentators have maintained that Hegel deduces the processes of reality from the processes of thought.

Let us begin by quoting the famous passage of the Phenomenology in full, and then confront the charge. Hegel's remark is made in the course of a discussion on the observation of nature.

To the consciousness observing, the truth of the law is given in 'experience', in the way that sense existence is object for consciousness; the truth is not given in and for itself. If, however, the law does not have its truth in the notion, it is something contingent, not a necessity, in fact, not a law. But its being essentially in the form of a notion does not merely not contradict its being present for observation to deal with, but really gives it on that account necessary existence, and makes it an object for observation. . . . What is universally valid is also universally effective: what ought to be, as a matter of fact, is too; and what merely should be, and is not, has no real truth. The instinct of reason is entirely within its rights when it stands firm on this point, and refuses to be lead astray by entia intellectus which merely ought to be, and, qua ought, should be allowed to have truth even though they are to be met nowhere in experience; and declines to be turned aside by the hypothetical suggestions and all the other impalpable unrealities designed in the interest of an everlasting 'ought to be' which never is.<sup>1</sup>

With this statement: "What ought to be, as a matter of fact, is too," Hegel announces not a principle of a priori

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<sup>1</sup>Phen., p. 289.

deductive thinking, but a principle of empirical verification. In fact, it specifically castigates a priori thought. It does not say that all ideals exist. Distinguishing between the merely 'ought to be' and the really 'ought to be', it advises one to go out and observe nature to discover what truly ought to be. The merely ought to be is the ought which is never experienced. For the real ought is the one that is. Stated in another form: if indeed a law is universal, it will be. Loewenburg comments: "Every descriptive law . . . is thus prescriptive; in stating how things do act, it dictates, so to speak, the conditions under which they should act."<sup>1</sup>

Hegel thus specifies his epistemological intentions and displays his commitments: to steer between Kant and Hume. For a priori thought, apart from turning us into sceptics, breeds a 'things-must-be-this-way-regardless-of-the-way-they-exist' attitude. Pure empiricism, on the other hand, leads to a tyranny of the present, and in committing us to the way things are, denies reason's right to shape reality.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dialogues, p. 126.    <sup>2</sup>Marcuse, p. 19.

Another implication of the Logic is the Hegelian interpretation of subject-predicate logic. According to Hegel's rendition of Aristotle, the subject and predicate are "complete, each in its own account, apart from the other: the subject as an object . . . would exist even if it did not possess this predicate,"<sup>1</sup> and vice-versa. Hegel, on the contrary, speaks of<sup>2</sup> the subject and the predicate being determined by this very relation. Moreover, Hegel does not, à la Aristotle or even Bradley<sup>3</sup> maintain that via logical propositions, one is attributing various characteristics to a stable subject. Not only does he admit to relational propositions (such as 'greater' and the like); he turns subject-predicate logic into statements of dynamic relations.<sup>4</sup> To use Marcuse's example,<sup>5</sup> to say

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 625.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Bradley absolutized Hegel, in my opinion. One instance of this is that he declared T. H. Green (a relativist, for whom the related is a necessary condition of the real) to be no Hegelian, even anti-Hegelian (Passmore, pp. 56-57). This serves to bring out Bradley's misinterpretation of Hegel as an absolutist.

<sup>4</sup>This upsets Russell's thesis, presented in A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz, somewhat--namely that Hegel was a monist/absolute idealist because he believed that all propositions are reducible to the subject-predicate form (or that if one admits to the irreducibility of relational propositions, one must thereby grant the externality of relations).

<sup>5</sup>p. 25.

'This man is a slave' is not just to predicate the property of slavery to A, this man, but to declare that A, as a man, that is as a free, independent, rational being, is a slave, that A has become its opposite. (It would make no sense to say that a being incapable of being free was a slave.) Marcuse concludes:

The subject is the very process of becoming the predicate and contradicting it. This process dissolves into a multitude of antagonistic relations the stable subject that traditional logic had assumed.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the Logic shows that, despite the Anglo-Saxon Spinozistic treatment of Hegel, the Hegelian Absolute, in the words of Findlay, "has no other seat of vehicle, no other location for its infinity or its absoluteness, beyond the experiences and decisions of particular conscious persons."<sup>2</sup> For Hegel, "whatever exists is concrete. . . ."<sup>3</sup> The actual<sup>4</sup> is what is active, operative, concrete--in short, thoroughly individual.

<sup>1</sup>pp. 25-26.   <sup>2</sup>Re-Ex., p. 212.

<sup>3</sup>E. L., p. 223, par. 119.

<sup>4</sup>See Hegel's treatment of actuality, Logic, pp. 541-53.

The Logic may be said . . . to carry out in the medium of pure thought what the Phenomenology [will carry out] . . . in the medium of individual experience. It may be said to show that the notion, the concept of self-conscious Spirit, has the same explanatory primacy in the realm of concepts and categories that the actual philosophical self-knowledge of Spirit has in the realm of personal experience.<sup>1</sup>

Whereas the Logic concerned itself with the dialectical development of concepts in the medium of thought, the Phenomenology by anticipation may be said to be the dialectical development of a person's human experience. All the parts of Hegel's system are related.

The subject matter of the Phenomenology is "mind as a truth-claiming subject."<sup>2</sup> And in the Phenomenology, Hegel is asking an important question for relation: whether our knowledge (by nature relational) distorts things. Is our knowledge a destructive instrument or a distorting medium only by/through which truth/the outside world reaches us? This critical question first asked by Kant, underlies the nature of the epistemological relation-- the relation between an object für sich (for itself) and

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<sup>1</sup>Findlay, Re-Ex., p. 150.

<sup>2</sup>Loewenburg, Dialogues, p. 6.

and that object für uns (for us), the relation of reality to appearance, of science to phenomenon/~~common~~ sense, of complete to partial knowledge.

Hegel states in the Logic<sup>1</sup> that within the Phenomenology he has traced "every form of the relation of consciousness to the object." Let us follow this string of epistemological relations.

The first chapter of the Phenomenology is an analysis of the immediate relation between a subject and object, and the lesson is this: that the immediate self (or the immediate object) is the most general, and as a result, the most empty; that a self (or a world) unmediated by the world (self) is like pure whiskey-- abstract.

The experiment runs like this.<sup>2</sup> The claim is made that certainty is to be found at the level of sense experience; that immediate knowledge, "mere apprehension," knowledge by acquaintance, appears to be "the richest kind of knowledge," "the truest," the "most authentic."<sup>3</sup> Hegel characteristically has good fun turning this claim inside out. He reproduces the position and then watches

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 48.    <sup>2</sup>Phen., pp. 149-60.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 149.

it dissolve internally due to its own presuppositions.

Such a position offers a paradigm of authentic knowledge: this-here-now. But it begins to marvel over its concreteness only to discover that the unique existence of each sensation is shared by all. This is all-things; here is anywhere; now is anytime. Each is as amorphous as the other. The representatives of such a position are forced back to the 'I' in search for an essential reality, to the "immediate fact of my seeing, hearing and so on."<sup>1</sup> "The Now is daytime, because I see it."<sup>2</sup> But the 'I', this particular individual with a complex nature, suffers the same fate. 'I' is audible only as a universal pronoun, a general label, a synonym for Everyman. Moreover, as language is inherently and obstinately universal, such a position must, in finis, retreat to silence.

The outcome: first that there is no such thing as a private self or sensation--an absolutely unrelated self or an isolated sense atom. Each/either turns out to be related to a class by its property of universality. The second outcome is that the self-contradiction of solipsism is the result of isolating the subject and object from

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 154

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

each other. To insulate the object from the subject (naive realism--all one has to do is open one's eyes and apprehend the world; the mind is a passive recorder) is to contradict yourself; to insulate the subject from the object (naive idealism--objects owe their certainty to my being there, sensing) is to be silent.<sup>1</sup> Rule out relations, and you rule out speech altogether.

To presume that the world is indifferent to mind or to presume that the mind is independent of the world--either alternative involves insoluble paradoxes. An object's actuality is contingent upon reason's mediation. And the mind receives its self-certainty from/through the world. Both subject and object have status only through the other. As with the Logic, the first experiment is one which proffers the clue to the entire work: that the real is the related.

The claims of sense-certainty give way to perception. Mere universality is taken to be an asset, and the truth of an object is perceived to lie in it as a thing composed of universal but different (combinations of such universal) properties. But still the object is paradoxical, for how

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<sup>1</sup>Loewenburg, Dialogues, pp. 25-40.

can the object be one if many, and many if one? That is, how can the qualities interpenetrate, yet remain to some degree atomic/distinct, that is, predicable of other things? Moreover, by what principle do the properties relate to one another? It seems that all such a model offers is "a relation of mere indifference,"<sup>1</sup> as Hegel puts it, or "simple togetherness,"<sup>2</sup>--addition. And according to such a scheme (external relations) the unity of a thing would disintegrate.

The next play of perception (moderate critical realism) is therefore to make all relations, that is, all qualities due to intercourse with other objects, secondary. But make relations unessential and you rule out all determinations, and thus an object's primary qualities. For Hegel maintains that things are "determinate only by relation to others."<sup>3</sup> Things are determinate "merely in so far as they are distinguished and related to others as their opposites."<sup>4</sup> To be determinate means existence-for-another. What a thing is--its essential nature--is determined by its relations.

<sup>1</sup>Phen., p. 165.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 164.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 165.

Perception is thus not true cognition. Not only has Hegel established that it is impossible to reconcile the unity-diversity, necessary to any object, on a sensuous plane, but he has dealt a death blow to any ontological application of the logic of Aristotle, that is, the static interpretation of his metaphysics, that is, to Aquinas. Relations cannot be accidental/external.

Another lesson of perception is that we are forced to acknowledge that the mind cannot be passive if it wants to understand the world. We must make a "return to self,"<sup>1</sup> that is we must relate the to-be-known to the knower. Reflection, not reception, is the truth of perception.

The Understanding, the next stage, actively constitutes the world in terms of certain unobservables. The occult quality chosen by Hegel as exemplary of such an attitude is force, which is posited to be the glue which makes diversified properties into single entities.

But after several dialectical turns, which we need not pursue, the thing-in-itself (the essential reality à la force behind the secondary qualities) is found out to be

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 169.

due only to the mental activity of the self--in fact a fiction of the self. And this startling confrontation with oneself behind the curtain of the phenomenal world shocks one into an awareness of one's own self, that is, self-consciousness.

With this, a higher kind of knowledge is reached, and a new phase of the Phenomenology opens.

With self-consciousness, then, we have passed into the native land of truth, into that kingdom where it is at home.<sup>1</sup>

Self-consciousness, says Hegel, is "essentially a return out of otherness."<sup>2</sup> Again: "Self-consciousness is . . . only by the sublation of the object. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Given a one-membered universe (one's self) self-consciousness would be an impossibility, according to Hegel. For then one could not turn back upon oneself and grasp oneself as a unit, as nothing could/would function as a limit; there would be nothing to distinguish oneself from. One must confront an other in order to confront oneself.

Relations to an-other are thus necessary for self-knowledge. And, as we shall see, self-knowledge is the most

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 219.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 225.

suitable entry into the world.

Here we get a hint of the power of knowledge: to understand can mean to abolish the distinction between subject and object.

Self-consciousness first takes the form of desire, according to Hegel. Instead of merely discovering that objects conform to our requirements (as with force), one begins to actively try and make them conform.<sup>1</sup> Abolishment (such as consumption) is the crude consequence of desire. Desire is quelled, but the ego soon discovers that it is dependent on the object for such a feeling of satisfaction. Though it negated the object, it cannot be rid of it. The object's independence is reclaimed. This brings self-consciousness to the realization that its true object must be capable of bringing about its own negation. Only then will it be 'free', that is, not determined by it. Hegel concludes: "Self-consciousness attains its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness."<sup>2</sup>

This new object is "just as much ego as object,"<sup>3</sup> and as such is just as much within self-consciousness as

<sup>1</sup>Findlay, Re-Ex., p. 94.    <sup>2</sup>Phen., p. 226.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

without. An ego has become a "we" as Hegel puts it.<sup>1</sup>  
 The relation necessary for self-knowledge is now a mirror,  
 and the mirror can be internalized.

We have moved from exclusively epistemological  
 relations into a new sphere--social relations. With this  
 Hegel remarks:

Consciousness leaves the parti-colored show of  
 senuous immediacy [sense-certainty and perception],  
 passes from the dark void of the transcendent and  
 remote super-senuous [understanding], and steps into  
 the spiritual daylight of the present.<sup>2</sup>

The upshot for relation: that self-realization is always  
mutual realization; if the society is alienated, so are  
 you.

Self-consciousness has before it another self-  
 consciousness; it has come outside itself. This  
 has a double significance. First, it has lost its  
 own self, since it finds itself as an other being;  
 secondly, it has thereby sublated that other, for  
 it does not regard the other as essentially real,  
 but sees its own self in the other.<sup>3</sup>

The first task self-consciousness sets for itself  
 is to destroy the other, for it wants to be certain of  
 itself--it wants to claim itself as all reality. As such  
 a scheme involves the death of another like oneself, it  
 also entails risking one's own life. But Hegel aphorizes:

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 229.

"it is solely by risking life that freedom is obtained."<sup>1</sup>  
For such a risk tries and proves the belief that mere existence is not the highest value. Furthermore, life is meaningful only in relation to an end (more meaningful, at least, subjectively).

But despite the value of such a task, self-consciousness' lesson vis à vis inanimate objects has to be relearned: that in destroying the other, it proceeds to destroy itself, for it needs the other to see and know itself. "Self-consciousness . . . is only by being acknowledged or 'recognized'."<sup>2</sup>

The ramifications of this lesson are as many as they are paradoxical: one has to lose oneself--become other than self and see oneself as that other--in order to find oneself; one has to sublimate this otherness by interiorizing it--that is, transcend oneself as an object--in order to become oneself; finally one via/with an other can one become all reality.

The first two ramifications we have touched on in other contexts; the third one represents the upshot of the

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 233.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 229.

first two and introduces a new proposal: that the finite individual is capable of being truly universal. We shall deal with this claim in future sections, for it is the Phenomenology's central challenge. For the present, let us underscore an implication of Hegel's lesson: that though the finite be the concrete universal, one can not have the individual without humanity. According to Hegel, the individual is ontologically prior, but the key to the individual is his social nature.<sup>1</sup>

To continue Hegel's story: the life of the other is spared--but exploited. The other becomes a slave. The master is now in control of a thing which is capable of reflecting his own self-consciousness and which he can, since the independence of the other is an impossibility, enjoy "without qualification."<sup>2</sup>

But the enforced turns out to be the liberator, for through labor the bondsman realizes his independence.

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<sup>1</sup>This point is re-worked in different contexts through out the Phenomenology (see, for example, pp. 377, 384, 387). On p. 387, Hegel speaks of an individual "which has cast off fellowship and communion with others" as being "simply reduced to naught"--to utter atomicity, complete solipsistic isolation.

<sup>2</sup>Phen., p. 236.

By working on the world, the slave moulds the world in his own image, and thus embodies/externalizes himself. And in/due to this confrontation with his own power, he re-discovers himself as "having and being a 'mind of his own'."<sup>1</sup>

Likewise, the lord turns out to be doubly dependent upon the serf: for the recognition of his power--for to be a master, one needs a slave--and more crucially, for his subsistence--for the lord cannot even tie his own shoelaces, let alone hunt for his stomach. The finale for relation: the slave, in order to overcome his enslavement, needs to be mediated by the objective world; the master, in order to exist needs to be mediated by another. Both instances are paradigms of real, internal relations.

The slave, despite the fact that his attitude can no longer be manipulated, is still physically chained. He thus becomes a stoic, according to Hegel. We may, for our purposes, bypass the analysis of stoicism and resulting scepticism. The only points to note are these. First that stoicism and thus a self indifferent to

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 239.

relations (to others/the outside world) is fruitless. Second that Hegel criticizes stoicism for being a mere conceptual freedom, not "living freedom itself."<sup>1</sup> His un-idealistic conclusion: "Thinking consciousness [is] . . . therefore [the] incomplete negation of otherness."<sup>2</sup>

We have discovered above that the self has to overcome otherness to be fulfilled, and the route indicated was a conceptual process of interiorization. It is now stated, and it will be re-affirmed, that thought alone is inadequate. The world (the other) must be made rational (that is, transformed into an image of one's self) through labor. Sartre's play, Dirty Hands, is a direct offshoot of Hegel.

Scepticism empties into Hegel's famous discussion of the Unhappy Consciousness, "the Alienated Soul which is the consciousness of self as a divided nature, a doubled and merely contradictory being."<sup>3</sup> The stoic

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 280.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 246; see also, Ibid., pp. 257-59, where Hegel criticizes both pure thought and pure emotion--the monastic and the mystic.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 251.

had drowned himself in the universal, letting nothing affect him as a particular being.<sup>1</sup> The sceptic had denied the universal and thus undermined his own particularity (he had to doubt himself as sceptic). The outcome: an internally split self who is unable to resolve the inner tensions between its empirical, finite, oscillating self which is protean with its activities and thoughts, and its ideal, infinite, immutable self which is cursed with an excelsior attitude.

Mediation is found not in desire or work (the beaver does these), but in the particularly human facet of man, rationality, which offers a tentative solution to the internal divisions, a vision of "finding particularity in a true form, a form that is universal"<sup>2</sup>--that is, "that consciousness is, in its particularity, inherently and essentially absolute, or is all reality."<sup>3</sup>

The Unhappy Consciousness is thus a prolegomena to personal identity. In order to become a self, one must suffer self-diremption. Through such an experience, I

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<sup>1</sup>Loewneburg, Dialogues, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>Phen., p. 259.    <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 267.

become conscious of myself as a rational individual, who can go beyond the contingent hic et nunc and who has the capacity to heal internal polarities.

The vision reason offers, the solution to the bifurcation, is this: "the certainty that consciousness is, in its particularity, inherently and essentially absolute, or is all reality."<sup>1</sup> But the mere assertion that reason is all reality is defectively naive. It is simply dogmatic assurance. For nothing (yet) makes the world mine.<sup>2</sup> Such idealism is, as Hegel says<sup>3</sup> and as Findlay echoes,<sup>4</sup> an inverted scepticism: one rejects all content indifferently, the other swallows it indifferently. The postulation that man can be the world needs demonstration; it represents not a fact but a task. So in saying that consciousness is all reality, Hegel is not making an assertion, but announcing a program. Reason's certainty has to be transformed into reason's truth. We shall not take the route Hegel follows to trace such a transformation, however

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.      <sup>2</sup>Findlay, Re-Ex., p. 102.

<sup>3</sup>Phen., p. 279.      <sup>4</sup>Re-Ex., p. 102.

inviting.<sup>1</sup> It will suffice to state, explicate and examine the claim that such a transformation is possible.

Reason is spirit when its certainty of being all reality has been raised to the level of truth.<sup>2</sup>

The final and most adequate form of human experience is spirit. With spirit, the Phenomenology comes to an end. The questions we shall raise are two: what is spirit, and is such a level possible to attain?

The standard interpretation of the last chapter of the Phenomenology is that Hegel abdicates to an Absolute, that his Absolute Spirit is a Divine Being, a God. Let it be made clear that Hegel explicitly denies this and states otherwise. He was well aware of the distinction between phenomenology and ontology, the belief in a God and the reality of a God.

Religion as a phenomenon is revered by Hegel for its vision of a Divine Being whose nature was complete,

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<sup>1</sup>It takes in the phrenologist (observation of the inorganic, the organic, the conscious), the hedonist (pursuit of pleasure), the romantic reformer (law of the heart), the moralist (cult of virtue), and the histories of art and religion.

<sup>2</sup>Phen., p. 457.

that is, truly universal, and whose activity consisted wholly of/in the trinitarian activity of procession out of self and return to self by sublimating the objectification. But though the vision be acceptable, the object of the vision is misplaced, according to Hegel. The discipline which comes closest to the truth (in its contribution of a conception of an absolute reality) is farthest away (man is most alienated from himself). For, says Hegel, this absolute reality is revealed to be an individual human being.<sup>1</sup> "The divine nature is the same as the human. . . ." <sup>2</sup> When fulfilled, man is god--the only god.

But how does a "particular self-existence . . . become universal self-consciousness?"<sup>3</sup> How do I become spirit, that is, truly universal, the world? How do I make my existence, my "facticity," equal to my essence, my potential?<sup>4</sup>

The answer most frequently given by commentators is that a finite self can be the world only by means of an

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 760.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 781.      <sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

idealistic perspective. According to such a perspective, reputedly held to be Hegel's, the world is self-consciousness, for reality is created by self-consciousness.

But, as we have already established, though he believed in the power of thought, Hegel is no idealist. To recall a point made in the introductory section of this chapter,<sup>1</sup> Hegel does say such things as: "Nature is the creation of spirit."<sup>2</sup> But creation is used here in a loose and metaphorical sense. What Hegel means in this context (and it is one that has been mediated by the entire Logic) is that nature, as a tool, or as a whole, is not without man. Nature as a universe could not be without mind for it is only constituted as one by means of man's awareness. A complete interpretation will have to await our discussion of our interpretation of Hegel's equation of the real and the rational. For our purposes here, it will suffice to note that at the end of the Phenomenology,<sup>3</sup> Hegel explicitly reminds us that the world is not created by mind--that it is

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<sup>1</sup>Above, pp. 189-90.

<sup>2</sup>E. L., p. 377, par. 239.    <sup>3</sup>Phen., p. 688.

ontologically independent, and again points out that an object can be born of self-consciousness "without ceasing to be a free and independent object in the proper sense."<sup>1</sup> Finally, Findlay notes<sup>2</sup> that Hegel in the section on force<sup>3</sup> defines a self to include whatever it may presuppose or require, and in this sense, nature is mind.

But though the world is not produced by consciousness, it becomes a world for consciousness, for each thing in it becomes itself through a process, and only man's mind can grasp the entire movement, that is, can view each aspect of the process in terms of the whole. The type of matter which thinks is the apex of Hegel's world.

So, for Hegel, the world is not self-consciousness; rather it is revealed by self-consciousness. Its true nature can only be discovered through the medium of man's mind. This is the crux of the difference between Hegel and idealism. And to translate this into the framework of our dissertation: the real (a thing becoming itself)

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 431.    <sup>2</sup>Re-Ex., p. 91.

<sup>3</sup>Phen., p. 187.

is the related (via a process which necessarily involves an other, even if that other be oneself). And since relations exist only for a thinking consciousness, the real, in this sense, is dependent upon mind.

Though the answer to how I become the world does not lie with an idealistic Hegel--in reduction-- it does, in part, lie with thought--in expansion. I can become the world by thinking it through, that is, as Hegel puts it, by sinking myself into each thing.<sup>1</sup> For the mind, via the activity of comprehension, overreaches itself, expanding itself to include its object. Man, for instance, "must digest his inorganic nature and take possession of it for himself."<sup>2</sup> And to do so, he needs the mediation of his body. That is, man must be natural in order to explain nature.

As a result of this process, the object does not remain, in Mure's words, "an external correlate but a constituent moment mediating what would otherwise remain the bare identity, the empty, tautologous judgment, 'I=I'."<sup>3</sup> Thus, comprehension is a two-way process. Via the

<sup>1</sup>E. L., pp. 49-50, par. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Preface, pp. 44-46.

<sup>3</sup>p. 55.

mediation of comprehension, I become the world, by finding myself in the texture of the world and by expanding myself to include all others; and via the process, I become a self/my self/a fulfilled person. For to recall a lesson already learned, I need to be alienated, to become other than self, to become myself. "Spirit gains its truth only by finding itself in absolute dismemberment."<sup>1</sup> And so, I become the world by becoming myself. They (the world and myself) are born together--co-naissance.

And the lesson for relation: the world needs to be related to mind to be actual, but the mind needs to be related to the world to be fulfilled.

Knowing is thus a process of expanded internalization. And, as Hegel points out in the Logic, the result of the Phenomenology is that mind:

Has determined itself to be the certainty which has become truth, the certainty which, on the other hand, no longer has the object over against it, but has internalized it, knows it as its own self--and, on the other hand, has given up the knowledge of itself as something confronting the object of which it is only the annihilation, has divested itself of this

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<sup>1</sup>Preface, p. 50.

subjectivity and is at one with its self-alienation.<sup>1</sup>

The subject does not stand in opposition to the world, but squarely in the world, as knower and founder in one, for the world has meaning only in the context of the subject.

The tendency of all man's endeavors is to understand the world, to appropriate and seduce it to himself: to this end the positive reality of the world must be as it were crushed and pounded, in other words, idealized.<sup>2</sup>

This is the true meaning of idealism--and idealism which recognizes the given by trying to change it--an idealism which is a process, for Hegel's concrete universal is not like Athena, springing full clad from the head of Zeus. And this dialectical idealism is the true meaning of materialism. The result: in man's self-consciousness, the universalizing agent, the relation-making medium, lies the only possible solution to the disparity between the notion and the reality, between subject and substance.

So the potential of the whole world culminates, for Hegel, in man's mind. And all the more so since objects of nature exemplify "petrified intelligence," as we have

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<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 69; see also Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>E. L., p. 88, par. 42.

observed.

But Hegel's program of self-realization by idealization (that is, by objectification/exteriorization and absorption/interiorization), required more than purely intellectual effort. It required practical self-realization--historical action, strife and labor. For "an individual cannot know what he is till he has made himself real by action,"<sup>1</sup> according to Hegel. Man makes himself through labor, and knows himself by contemplating his actions.

In fact, Marcuse notes,<sup>2</sup> the activity of labor is the concrete significance of mediation.

The activity of mediation is no other than the activity of labor. Through his labor, man overcomes the estrangement between the objective world and the subjective world; he transforms nature into an appropriate medium for his self-development.<sup>3</sup>

Through the process of labor, the world can become--at least in part<sup>4</sup>--"the reality of reason."<sup>5</sup> And, in turn, reason can become all reality.

<sup>1</sup>Phen., p. 422.    <sup>2</sup>p. 77.    <sup>3</sup>Marcuse, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup>Remember Hegel's pessimism; see above, pp. 208-209.

<sup>5</sup>Marcuse, p. 42.

This, in essence, is Hegel's response to his claim that reason's certainty can be transformed into reason's truth, his reply to the question raised above: how do I become spirit? The world may be mastered (if at all) only by great intellectual and practical effort. These two are dialectically related, for the world must be made rational to some degree before I can understand it, but understanding (comprehension) is a means to making the world rational. And, through such a dual process, I become truly universal--as Hegel puts it, a "universal in action."<sup>1</sup>

The above discussion may be taken as a commentary on and interpretation of the famous phrase of Hegel's: the real is the rational and the rational is the real. Let us digress for a moment to analyze such a statement.

The first thing to note is that the popular rendition of the statement is inaccurate--Hegel said that the actual, not the real, is the rational.<sup>2</sup> His motive is easily discernible. He was distinguishing between levels of reality. A thing is real if it simply exists, is ontologically a fact. But if a thing is 'really' real,

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<sup>1</sup>Phen., p. 438.    <sup>2</sup>E. L., par. 16.

if its real versus utopian potential has been actualized, then it is, to use Hegel's word for it, actual.

In the Logic, such a distinction is explicitly drawn. Things are real which are "no longer inner and subjective, but have passed into being-there-and-then," that is, into "outward and immediate existence."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, something is actual if it "behaves conformably to its essential characteristic or notion."<sup>2</sup> So when Hegel equates the rational and the real/actual, he is using 'real' in the latter sense. It is not that only mind is out there existing objectively, so that all we can touch/smell et al. is mind, but that only mind can grasp the "notion" or essence of a thing and either tell whether it is real or make it real. In other words, the level to which the word 'reality' is most properly applied is the rational. A-/irrational events/processes/ things are real enough--who can deny a Hitler?--they are (just!) not fully actualized.<sup>3</sup> And, in fact, Hegel

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 172, par. 91.    <sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Hegel specifically defines unactual in terms of a discrepancy between the notion and the reality (Ibid., p. 245, par. 135).

acknowledges the existence of a Hitler more plainly than a philosophical devotee of "matters of fact," for a positivist has no tools with which to eliminate/change/handle a Hitler.

So the dictum "the actual is the rational" is not a one-sided rationalization. It means neither that mind is the world, nor that mind creates the world, as, for example, Popper thinks it does.<sup>1</sup> Rather, it means that mind can transform the world and make it reasonable. What is true for (the philosophic) us must become objective, explicit,<sup>2</sup> via the mediation of labor, both intellectual and practical.

Though the dictum has its revolutionary aspect, demanding social action, it also has its conservative aspect. This aspect is neatly summed up by Hegel's phrase "the cunning of reason," which implies that the structure of reality is reasonable, despite its sometimes irrational husks, for reason uses the irrational to its own advantage. Thus the dictum may be taken, like the

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<sup>1</sup>Conjectures and Refutations, p. 326.

<sup>2</sup>See Baillie's footnote to the text of the Phen., p. 162.

is-ought alliance, to announce an empirical principle:<sup>1</sup> namely that what is reasonable is exhibited in what happens. Reason then becomes a tool, a means of uncovering the order implicit in experience.

So Hegel's revolutionary platform is mediated by an optimistic belief in reason and rational necessity. He had not learnt the lesson which Nietzsche termed "shrewd misunderstanding," or the cunning of unreason. And this is a severe shortcoming.

Finally, the dictum indicates that though thought lags behind life's events, life only becomes real as viewed within a post-factum framework. The owl of Minerva, remember, flies at night.

Thus ends our interlude. Let us return to the Phenomenology and its outcome. Man was described as being the true universal. "'I' is the vacuum or receptacle for anything and everything."<sup>2</sup> But Hegel goes on to qualify: man "is not mere universality and nothing

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<sup>1</sup>This point was brought to my attention by Dr. John Lavelly, in his comments on Findlay's Notes, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>E. L., p. 48, par. 24.

more, but the universality which includes in it everything."<sup>1</sup>

The Phenomenology concludes with the realization that any object man takes on is only his own self transcended, and the activity of comprehending it is essentially self-reconstitutive. The more we understand, the more we come to more fully possess our self.<sup>2</sup> And as such, and only as such is man free, for, "for freedom it is necessary that we should feel no presence of something else that is not ourselves."<sup>3</sup>

The Phenomenology culminates in the awareness, as did the Logic, that, in the end, philosophy is an exposition of the self and its internal relations. All relations of otherness are self-relations. Absolute knowledge is self-consciousness. Knowledge of the real is self-knowledge.

In contradistinction to Spinoza and Leibniz, Hegel said neither that all is one nor that each is all. He said both: all is capable of being grasped by one and

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<sup>1</sup>Ibid.    <sup>2</sup>Mure, p. 64.

<sup>3</sup>E. L., p. 49, par. 24.

each is potentially able to comprehend all.

We have moved from Aristotle's naive realism--a relation of identity between subject and object--through Aquinas' moderate realism--a relation of eventual identity--to Hegel's real realism (!)--a relation of identity-in-difference. The following statement of Aristotle's could just as well be Hegel's--but with a difference: the mediation of the trinitarian relations of self-diremption and self-reunion:

Actual knowledge is identical with its object.<sup>1</sup>

The Phenomenology also concludes with the realization that the subject and the object are constituted by their relations to each other, for the progressive constitution of objectivity is the progressive constitution of subjectivity, and vice-versa.

The thing is nothing in itself; it only has significance in relation, only through the ego and its reference to the ego.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>De Anima 430<sup>b</sup> 20.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 791-92. The fact that the real is always defined in terms of a participant, a subject, does not make it arbitrary. Monodaic solipsism has been overcome, for remember that my subjectivity for Hegel is contingent on the self-hood of others, that is, I am intrinsically social.

But, then again, the self is constituted by its subject-object relations.<sup>1</sup>

Self-consciousness is only something definite, it only has real existence, so far as it alienates itself from itself. By doing so, it puts itself in the position of something universal, and this its universality is its validity, establishes it, and is its actuality.<sup>2</sup>

The world without a subject is incompletely actualized. A subject without a world is an empty container. In Hegel's jargon: the subject becomes substance (nature, an object) by appropriation, and is, in turn, via the process, made a subject.

Whereas Descartes discovered certainty of self, Spinoza completeness of substance, Hegel tried to unite them. But not by losing the self in the universe à la Spinoza, but by declaring that only the universe can be in us.

The upshot: a man can become spirit if he internalizes the relations which constitute the world. And the spirit a man becomes is a complex of internalized outward relations. This is the true relation between subject and substance/object.

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<sup>1</sup>Phen., p. 600.    <sup>2</sup>Phen., p. 514.

We have made our points vis à vis relation as we progressed and I see no need to summarize them all here. What Hegel contributed to the concept of relation per se will be dealt with in the concluding chapter. Let us conclude with a quick resumé.

Whether it be relation as a logical category, relation as an epistemological process, relation as a metaphysical reality, relation is the crux/key/marrow of Hegel's philosophy.

Relation is, first of all, the category of categories. For no matter how critical the category, it "is nothing as it stands by itself."<sup>1</sup> It only is in its relations.

Next, Hegel's epistemology is based upon relation.

The true is the whole, all parts related.<sup>2</sup>

The true is the whole.<sup>3</sup>

Unless a proposition has been worked out via the inner dialectic of its very subject matter, it remains a

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 387. See also Ibid., p. 63, where Hegel criticizes Kant for not relating the categories, and Ibid., p. 48 where he says that if the categories are not related and seen to be an "organic unity," then they are "dead forms."

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 732.      <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 81.

drab, monochromatic formula, as empty as the statement that in the night all cows are black.<sup>1</sup> For Hegel, knowledge (Wissen) is only real when it acquires the form of a systematic science (Wissenschaft).<sup>2</sup> All basic propositions, even if true, are false insofar as they remain mere principles, isolated. To distort something is to bracket its relations.

What are the consequences of such a statement? Does it involve an epistemological monism whereby any true proposition may be deduced from any other, as Russell and Ayer maintain?<sup>3</sup> Or does it entail a form of scepticism--we can never know if anything is true for the whole is ever-elusive, never completed?<sup>4</sup> For if each involves all, each is infinitely complex.

<sup>1</sup>Preface, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup>When Hegel calls for philosophy to become a systematic science, he does not mean the term in the Anglo-Saxon sense of techne (objective fact gathering), but in the Anglo-German sense of episteme (a disciplined, systematic inquiry, in the Cartesian sense).

<sup>3</sup>Ayer, Language, Truth and Logic, p. 147; see also Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 466; Passmore, p. 311.

<sup>4</sup>This is a question first asked in the Parmenides of Plato.

To maintain that truth is organic is to maintain that nothing is true unless/until one has grasped the whole in its entirety, but Hegel did so in a special Pickwickian way. For truth, like anything else, he held to be relative. Any part can be true so long as it does not claim to be the whole. Hegel's theory of truth thus allows for an unlimited number of 'pockets' of truth which are--although not seen in terms of the whole and therefore incomplete--nevertheless 'true' (in a relative sense).

Given the above, should not one be (theoretically) able to argue from any single segment of Hegel's universe to the universe as a whole? No, is the answer. A jig-saw puzzle is a system of interconnecting parts--anything short of the whole is fragmentary--but this is not to say that from any one piece of the puzzle the whole can be constructed/inferred. As Stout points out,<sup>1</sup> any aspect raises questions which it cannot answer, and in doing so, reveals itself to be an aspect. Any segment thus leads beyond itself and involves a larger unit. But, as Stout says,<sup>2</sup> the answer to the questions that it raises cannot

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<sup>1</sup>Passmore, p. 311.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

be discovered by further contemplations of that single segment. We need to contact other aspects, and so on. Everything/anything can be the entrance point to the universe (and the self is the best entrance point), but according to Hegel, nothing is (de facto, or even otherwise, given his pessimism) or deductively involves the universe.

The true is thus the bacchanalian revel, where not a member is sober; and because every member no sooner becomes detached that it eo ipso collapses straightway, the revel is just as much a state of transparent unbroken calm.<sup>1</sup>

The sobriety of ultimate truth depends upon the toxic condition with which every member is infected; the final truth presupposes partial yet essential truths which are inchoate and transitional moments.<sup>2</sup> "Every moment is necessary."<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, as each member/moment contradicts another member, the scene, if looked at piecemeal, is utter confusion, a "giddy whirl."<sup>4</sup> But if one looks at each member/all members together, solidity, permanence, repose result. In terms of their relations, the giddy sober, the

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<sup>1</sup>Phen., p. 105.

<sup>2</sup>Loewenburg, Mind, XLIII, 431.

<sup>3</sup>Preface, p. 46. <sup>4</sup>Phen., p. 249.

transient solidify. "Their truth consists only in their relation to one another. . . ."1 Truth is organic. Finally, the very nature of truth, being dialectical, is relational. "Truth only comes to be itself through the negativity of immediacy. . . ."2

The primary category of the dialectic is not therefore negation, Marcuse and our former opinion notwithstanding, but relation. For to negate is to relate. Mediation is relation-making, Hegel declares.<sup>3</sup> The unmediated is the disconnected, the abstract, the unrelated. And not only is relation the dialectical agent--and thus the principle of movement and thus of progress--the dialectic is the systematizer of relations. Hegel gives us a neat summary; he speaks of the dialectic as being "the infinite<sup>4</sup> relation of mediation through negation of the external relations. . . ."5

But being and thought are intimately related for Hegel. Thus a logical truth is/can become incarnate. So

<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 438. <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 841. <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 445.

<sup>4</sup>This word is translated as "unending" by Johnston in his translation of the Logic.

<sup>5</sup>Logic, p. 177.

what is true of the categories is predicable of real entities. Moreover, the dialectic and its epistemological process imitate life's pulse. In other words, relation must be the life force.

In fact, this is the case. Hegel equates Kant's ding-an-sich with a thing by itself.<sup>1</sup> Kant's 'innermost essence' turns out to be superficial. According to Hegel, things are actual only by/in their connection with others.<sup>2</sup> The only being of things, Hegel declares, consists in their relation with others.<sup>3</sup> And thus, the very being of things is constituted by their relations. Destroy its relations and you destroy the thing.<sup>4</sup> Every substance is a configuration of relations.

Every part exists only in relation to the whole.

Every individual entity has meaning and significance only in its relation to the totality.<sup>5</sup>

A way to the east is also a way to the west. Positive

<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 231, par. 123.

<sup>2</sup>Preface, p. 50.    <sup>3</sup>E. L., p. 223, par. 119.

<sup>4</sup>Stace, p. 207.

<sup>5</sup>These two quotations of Hegel are given by Marcuse, p. 47.

and negative are . . . intrinsically conditioned by one another, and are only in relation to each other. Thus we say: I am a human being, and around me are air, water, animals, and all sort of things. Everything is thus put outside of every other. But the aim of philosophy is to banish indifference and to ascertain the necessity of things. But that means that the other is seen to stand over against its other. Thus, for example, inorganic nature is not to be considered merely something else than organic nature, but the necessary antithesis of it. Both are in essential relation to one another; and the one of the two is, only in so far as it excludes the other from it, and thus relates itself thereto. Nature in like manner is not without mind, nor mind without nature. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Everything that exists stands in correlation and this correlation is the veritable nature of every existence.<sup>2</sup>

Relation is to Hegel what substance is to Aristotle, what esse is to Aquinas.

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<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 222, par. 119.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 245, par. 135.

## CONCLUSION

It is strange . . . or rather impossible to make non-substance an element in, and prior to, substance; for all the categories are posterior to substance.<sup>1</sup>

According to Aristotle I, relation, although real, was inherently accidental, insignificant and dispensable. No relation could affect the essence of a thing in any way. The world was composed of absolute elements, called substances, existing in and for themselves.

According to Aristotle II, the world was a dynamic process, a harmonious whole, constituted by things which move and grow in terms of what they desire, their terminus ad quem, and operate and function due to their interactions with others. How could this be if relations were inconsequential?

Aquinas I did not note the inconsistency inherent in Aristotle's conception of the world. And by adopting the Aristotelian theory of relation, he opted for Aristotle I: the static world of isolated essences. That only perpetuated Aristotle's inconsistency. For Aquinas developed a world which also demanded (some) essential relations.

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<sup>1</sup>Metaphysics 1088<sup>b</sup> 2-4.

Aquinas II dissolved the Absolute Substance into a complex of relations. That could have shifted the center of gravity in philosophical explanation from the category of substance to that of relation. That could have represented the solution to the above inconsistencies. But though he had the proper tools, Aquinas II sank back into Aquinas I; he did not know how or even why to use them.

Hegel's world view was topsy-turvy; it was grounded on the accessory becoming the vital. But the curious thing is this: the philosopher who welcomed contradiction was the one to avoid it in the end.

Everything that exists stand in correlation and this correlation is the veritable nature of every existence.<sup>1</sup>

Hegel overturned the Aristotelian foundation of substance and declared that it was really dependent on what it was said to support. Universal interaction was declared to be a necessary condition for the very existence of substances. It is not that substances happen to exist in relations, as Aristotle maintained, but that substances exist in and by relations.

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<sup>1</sup>E. L., p. 245, par. 135.

Mediated by the Christian theology of Aquinas II, Hegel opted for Aristotle II: life was a dynamic process of beings who were constituted by their relations. Hegel-- the aufheben of Aristotle and Aquinas.

Thus our thesis.

Such a thesis represents an implicit philosophical commitment. For it entails a definite conception of relation and thus of ontology. By way of a conclusion, let us make both explicit.

There are three types of relations, corresponding to three levels of reality: relations between things, corresponding to the metaphysical status of relations; relations between terms/propositions, corresponding to their logical import; relations between objects of knowledge, corresponding to their cognitive validity.<sup>1</sup> And each level involves a cluster of questions.<sup>2</sup> Let us

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<sup>1</sup>MacKay, Studies in the Problems of Relations, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Some of these questions are taken directly from the questions raised by MacKay, Ibid., pp. 3-4 and P. K. Butchvarov, "Prolegomena to a Theory of Relations," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Virginia, 1955, pp. 8-9.

all ask of them, tackle some, and draw our conclusions.

The metaphysical level:

1. Can relation be a metaphysical category?
2. Can relations exist on the same level or in the same sense as the things they relate? That is, are they as real as the relata or less real? (And is there a difference between reality and existence?)
3. Do relations transcend the manifold in which the related elements exist or are the relations immanent in that manifold?
4. What is their status? Potential or actual existence?
5. Are they internal or external to their relata?
6. Is there even any valid distinction between relations and relata (either relata are themselves relations or relations are simply qualities of the substantial relata)?
7. Does a referent necessarily exist for a relation?
8. Are relations simple or complexes? If complexes, how and by what are they constituted?
9. Are they particulars or universals?

The logical level:

1. If we regard relation as being part of a rational system/universe of discourse, how are their terms logically involved in that discourse?
2. And on this basis, one may distinguish between different kinds of relations (such as, simple/monadic or complex/multiple; symmetrical or asymmetrical; transitive or nontransitive), and the different formal properties of relations (such as direction or sense; domain or field).

The epistemic level:

1. Is it/must it be an epistemological category?
2. To what source and phase of knowledge is the awareness of a relation to be referred?
3. Are relations prior and regulative with respect to the related objects of knowledge (Kant)?
4. Are they directly apprehended (James)?

5. Are they products of comparison (Locke,<sup>1</sup> Berkeley, Hume)?

6. Are they products of abstraction and discrimination (Bradley)?

7. Are they perceptual or conceptual? Inferred directly or among the immediate data of experience?

8. Is every object that is known, known only in relation to other objects? Or does knowledge of objects in relation to one another involve a principle of non-relative/non-relational absolute knowledge (à la Plato's forms or Anselm's Supreme Being)?

Of course, as MacKay points out,<sup>2</sup> the three areas overlap. That is, if we set out to describe the relations between things, we must eo ipso express them as relations of terms in discourse, and conversely, in considering their epistemic or logical status, we can hardly avoid raising the question of their ontological status.

The first question to deal with vis à vis relation is: are (some)<sup>3</sup> relations real?

<sup>1</sup>Although Locke is ambivalent. In one passage, he holds that there are systematic interconnections between all beings in the universe (An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, iv. 6. 11; see Helm, pp. 62-69, especially p. 67), while in another passage he clearly states that relation "is not contained in the existence of things, but [is] something extraneous and superimposed." (This quotation of Locke from the same work is given by Clifford Kossel, "Problems of Relation in Some Non-Scholastic Philosophies," Modern Schoolman, XXIII [January, 1946], 62.).

<sup>2</sup>Studies in the Problems of Relations, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>I concur with Aristotle and Aquinas that some relations are logical.

Bentham maintained that relations are the stuff dreams are made of--they are fictional; Hume that they are psychological; Kant that they are (more) epistemological; Hegel that relations are the stuff the world is made of--they are ontological. Let us draw out the implications of each position to determine its truth.

In his Theory of Fiction, Bentham says: "Relation is the most abstract of all abstractions," and again: "Once introduced upon the carpet, the fictitious entity called Relation swells into an extent such as to swallow up all others."<sup>1</sup> But to deny the reality of relations is to affirm dire consequences, as we pointed out in the chapter on Aquinas,<sup>2</sup> and to end up either in the camp of Parmenides, where reality is an ontological continuity or plenum,<sup>3</sup> or in the camp of Leibniz, where there are

<sup>1</sup>J. Bentham, Theory of Fiction (London: C. K. Ogden, 1932), p. 29; quoted by Oskar Kraus, "On Categories, Relations and Fictions," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XLII (1941-42), 101-102.

<sup>2</sup>Above, pp. 137-40.

<sup>3</sup>Though as Dr. Donald Dunbar pointed out, Parmenides would believe at least in reflexive relations (such as 'abiding in itself') and unchanging temporality, but these are just logical relations.

many things which cannot interact, and where every modification must be a substitution of one term/thing for another.<sup>1</sup> For the reality of relations insures that there must be one universe of inter-related parts, and thus repudiates the monism of a Parmenides, a Bradley, a Bosanquet, a Joachim, and the monadism of a Leibniz, a Democritus, a Hobbes. For a bare, distinctionless, undiversified unity is meaningless; it is, as Hegel taught, equivalent to nothing, a "blank identity."<sup>2</sup> And a "multi-verse"<sup>3</sup> in which terms/things are absolutely impervious to one another, in which, as Stebbing puts it, "atomistic entities jostle atomistic entities--if indeed 'jostle' be not too intimate a term,"<sup>4</sup> is absurd; what about the simple phenomenon of experimentation?

So relations are not fictional; but are they simply due to a psychological tendency as Hume put it? Are they based simply on comparison between ideas, not things, as

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<sup>1</sup>Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 466.

<sup>2</sup>Stebbing, Ibid., 476.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 479.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Locke would have it? Is all we can legitimately say just that they are a mental product, as Kant posited? To ask the question in another way: does the fact that we think in relations make us sceptics? Can we claim not only that our ideas are related, but that things are?

First, let us establish the thesis which Kant brought to our attention--that nothing is knowable out of relation; to think at all is to think in relations.<sup>1</sup> Surely to judge is to relate, for what else do we do when we judge, other than to place objects into conceptual relationships? If we think of a mongoose and a cheetah we are not judging, but if we think of the mongoose as playful and the cheetah as beautiful, then we are. But on this basis is not thought relational? For not only is judgment a necessary aspect or condition of thought, but concepts are aggregates of many judgments.

There are historically speaking two reactions to the claim that relation is a universal category of thought.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>I am not denying that thought might involve more; I am just asserting that thought involves relations at least.

<sup>2</sup>This implies an interesting feature of knowing--that we could never know something utterly different, that is, non-comparable to every/any thing. For a necessary condition of knowing is that we must be able to relate the new thing to other things in some way.

One is to view relation as an obstacle or an impediment to knowledge, in short, as a limitation (Kant, Hamilton).

The other is to see relation as the strength and guarantee/or of knowledge, that is, as a task and a method. (Hegel, Renouvier, Höffding).

If we can understand things only in terms of relations, and if we believe, as did Hume, that all things are "loose and separate,"<sup>1</sup> then relation becomes the shield between us and the way things are. Or if there might be a relationless noumena, as Kant supposed, the real (things as they are in themselves) is beyond all human effort to grasp it. Or if the real is positively declared to be supra-relational, as Bradley announced, then all/any thought is mere appearance. Whatever shape such a position assumes, it dooms us to a form of scepticism. But such a reaction is illegitimate. Hume's logical atomism and Bradley's monism have already been dismissed as viable alternatives--not only do both cost too much, but both deny the irreducibility of relational propositions.

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<sup>1</sup>David Hume, An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, Inc., 1955), Section 58.

And Kant's noumenal realm has been liquidated.<sup>1</sup>

So from the premise that thought is necessarily relational, rather than infer that thought is incomplete because stimited, the conclusion may be drawn that knowledge is incomplete because there are an indefinite number of relations. But the more relations one discovers, and the more precise the relations becomes, the wiser one is. Such a conclusion is advanced by Höffding.<sup>2</sup> Thinking for Höffding is relation-finding.<sup>3</sup> The category of relation thus becomes the point of contact between logic and ontology. Relations do not conceal, but reveal reality. The minds's nature is to relate things, and the way it relates things is congruent with the way the world is (related). Just as nature must be presumed to be uniform for there to be any scientific methodology, so relations must be presumed to be real<sup>4</sup> to have any positive epistemology.

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<sup>1</sup>Above, p. 185 f.3.    <sup>2</sup>Der Relationsbegriff, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 2, 24.

<sup>4</sup>And, as Alexander points out (Mind, XXI, 305, 308), sometimes the relations are more real than the terms; in a constitutional monarchy, the king may be an appendage to or function of the constitution, the characters in a play, the shadowy servants of the plot.

This is a happy consequence, for not only is relation the guarantee/or of validity (is not a syllogism rendered valid by the way one judgment/proposition relates to/affects another?) and thus of deduction in general;<sup>1</sup> it is the safeguard of truth and necessity.<sup>2</sup> Truth depends upon relation for any proposition can be true given the proper contextual relations; and truth may be defined in terms of relations.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, since, given Hume, a necessity without presuppositions is impossible, the only kind of necessity is the relationship between ground and consequence. Foundation-making consists, says Höffding,<sup>4</sup> in making our premises and presuppositions explicit. So not only are relations as real as their relata, they are decisively important.

But just as it is easier to establish that God exists

<sup>1</sup>L. S. Stebbing, A Modern Introduction to Logic (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1948), p. 174ff.

<sup>2</sup>Höffding, Der Relationsbegriff, pp. 13, 69.

<sup>3</sup>For example: "Truth is mind organizing itself by grasping the interrelationships of things." (J. A. Leighton, "Truth, Reality and Relation," The Philosophical Review, XXIII [1914], 23.).

<sup>4</sup>Der Relationsbegriff, p. 40.

than to determine what kind of God exists (God could, after all, be the universe, oneself, human love, grass), so too it is more difficult to specify the nature of relation than to demonstrate its reality.

The same categories that surrounded the medieval controversy on the ontological status of universals apply to the nature of relations. Are relations purely linguistic, as Roscelin had declared universals to be--mere names, words, sounds, flatus vocis, post rem? Or are relations in re, as Aristotle, Abelard, Anselm and Aquinas would have it--genuinely predicable of things due to certain qualities or properties? Or, finally, are relations ante rem--do they have an existence independent of things, as Plato affirmed?

The first alternative was dismissed when the reality of relations was affirmed. And the second alternative brings with it the perils of the logic of attribution: the vanishing of all relations whatsoever.<sup>1</sup> Could the third alternative--the reification of relations--be correct? Do relations exist independent of things/as things?

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<sup>1</sup>Above, pp. 51-55.

The trouble with this alternative is that it is based on the unjustified assumption that to be real means to be like a thing. I maintain, like McTaggart before me, that things are really related and that relations are real but that they do not exist as things.

How, then, do they exist? Part of the difficulty in talking about and trying to specify that nature of the existence of relations is that it cannot be so specified. Relations are ineffable.

This thesis is put forward by Loewenborg in an article entitled "Are Relations Effable?" He maintains that relation's existence is exhausted by the activity of relating, but that all discourse about relation involves the insulation and hence substantialization of relation, thus causing it to lose its essential nature. Relations have no meaning in isolation, as the focal point of investigation, for relations as such do not relate.

The office of relations is to relate, and in the performance of that office is to be found their only intelligible definition. . . .<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. Loewenborg, "Are Relations Effable?" Journal of Philosophy, XXVII (1930), 310.

As the theme of a discourse, they are robbed of their vehicular nature and substantivized, transformed into qualities and related terms. Relations are thus inseparable from the complex/contents in which they figure. Likewise the relata cannot be insulated without a certain amount of distortion.<sup>1</sup> Together they form a single tissue. In this conclusion, Loewenborg echoes Stebbing and Alexander, as we shall see. Hence, Loewenborg quips,<sup>2</sup> of relations we cannot mean what we say for we cannot say what we mean.

And, in fact, relation cannot be defined. It cannot be defined in terms of its relata, as their quality or property for instance, for then the logic of relations would be lost, swallowed by the logic of attribution. Moreover, the relata themselves must be defined in terms of relation, as Hegel points out. Finally, every non-reductive definition of relation presupposes it. Relation is smuggled in with the subject-predicate form at least.

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<sup>1</sup>Although as we shall see in our discussion of the internality/externality of relations, there are degrees of abstraction and distortion.

<sup>2</sup>Journal of Philosophy, XXVII, 314.

And the critical phrase of any definition merely repeats the concept. Consider the following: "By relation, we mean a characteristic that belongs to A considered with reference to some other object B."<sup>1</sup> This seemingly competent definition is inadequate, for the critical definitional phrase "considered with reference to" is simply a synonymous substitution of "relation."<sup>2</sup> Relation, like the color red (all colors, in fact) seems to defy definition. "Unless you know what a relation is, no one can explain it to you," Alexander comments.<sup>3</sup> One can not get behind/underneath it and specify its conditions. One cannot analyze it into any other constituent factors. Relation is a primitive.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Stebbing, A Modern Introduction to Logic, p. 166.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Alexander, Mind, XXI, 306.

<sup>4</sup>But not ultimately primitive, perhaps, for it is conceivable that prime matter is more basic, relation entering when that prime matter was structured. But prime matter is pure potentiality, and chaos only a limit concept. So, as we noted in the chapter on Aquinas, relation functions as the Greek cosmos.

Consequently, relation is not only a weasle word, as we cautioned in the Introduction, it is indefinable.<sup>1</sup> But this does not mean that it is ultimately unintelligible. It can, as Aquinas notes, be described. And it can, as Wittgenstein would point out, be used correctly.<sup>2</sup>

So despite the fact that its ineffable and primordial nature place a limitation on any discussion of relation, the latter is not ruled out altogether. Moreover, as we shall see, the distinction between a relation as known and as described will help solve a host of philosophical difficulties connected with relation.

The first thing such a distinction does is to undermine Bradley's claim that relations have a contradictory and hence self-stultifying nature. Bradley's thesis is this: the relation  $aRb$  implies not simply the existence of  $a$  and  $b$  and  $R$ , but  $R_1$  which

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<sup>1</sup>McTaggart concurs (The Nature of Existence, I, 79), and Driesch concludes (J. E. Salomma, The Category of Relation [Helsinki: Soumal. Kirjall. Seuran Kirjap. Oy., 1929], p. 139) that relation is "an indefinable 'Urbedeutung'."

<sup>2</sup>This raises the whole issue of what counts as a satisfactory reply to a "What is  $x$ ?" question--an issue we shall bracket.

connects a to R and  $R_2$  which connects b to R, yielding  $aR_1RR_2b$ , and so on, ad infinitum.<sup>1</sup>

But Bradley's infinite regress is based on a denial of the above distinction, for it presumes that one can insulate a from R and R from b and R from a and b. And it is this very presupposition which gives rise to the problem of relating R to a/b and the necessity of interposing a mediating agent  $R_1/R_2$ . The solution to Bradley's dilemma is this: relations are not related to their relata, just like space is not in space.<sup>2</sup> To quote DeWitt H. Parker:

Relations are modes of unification of elements, not further elements requiring unification.<sup>3</sup>

The next thing such a distinction does is to render the question--how does a relation relate?--meaningless. For it can only be answered if a relation does something

<sup>1</sup>R. Ainscough, "Relations and Universals," Mind, XXXVIII (1929), 138.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander, Mind, XXI, 311; Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 464-69; Winn, The Philosophical Review, L, 28-30.

<sup>3</sup>Experience and Substance, p. 215; quoted by I. Copi, "Objects, Properties and Relations in the Tractatus," Mind, LXVII (1958), 159. This, Copi claims, was originally Wittgenstein's point in the Tractatus. See the solution offered by Aquinas, above, p. 125.

else other than relate. A relation relates simply by coming into existence is the answer. Furthermore, the question only makes sense if we reify relation or hypostatize the name. But there are not two objects and a relation, only a particular situation or configuration of processes/things/events.

The question is like asking how does silence silence or how does a void bring about emptiness? The question presumes that the void has causally operative powers and is something,<sup>1</sup> whereas the void is nothing without the surrounding plenum; the void is due to the arrangement of things. But likewise the plenum might be useless without the void, like the hollow of a bowl or the windows of a house.<sup>2</sup> So too, there can be no relations without entities. Relations are syncategorematic, to use Occam's term for it; they have no meaning by themselves. But also, there can be no entities without relations. An absolute

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<sup>1</sup>The J. P. Sartre of Being and Nothingness makes such a presupposition explicit, and, moreover, agrees with it. For he argues that man has causally operative powers and yet is nothing (no-thing/pour-soi)--a worm eating away at the heart of being, to use his graphic language.

<sup>2</sup>This point is made by one of the poems of Lao-Tse.

being without relations is, as we have shown, inconceivable.<sup>1</sup> Like the essence-accident duo, one cannot have one without the other.

But the contention that relations imply entities or terms that are related can be challenged. Can we reduce the world to relations without remainder, as Einstein would, at one point, have reduced the world to fields? Can we adapt Wittgenstein's definition of an atomic fact<sup>2</sup> and maintain that things are nothing but relations? Can we apply James' relational theory of consciousness<sup>3</sup> and maintain that not only does everything have relations, but everything is relations. Is this a "vicious doctrine" as Bradley warns?

Before we reply, one qualification. Such a hypothesis is different from the third alternative above. It is not that relations are substantial; it's that there

<sup>1</sup>Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 459.

<sup>2</sup>L. Wittgenstein, in the Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (New York: Humanities Press, 1961), defines an atomic fact as a "configuration of objects" (2.01; 2.0272) and an elementary proposition as a concatenation of names (4.22).

<sup>3</sup>Namely, that consciousness is not a receptacle, nor even an entity, but a function.

is no substance.

Such a proposition has at least one adherent. Marx defined man as an ensemble of social relations. But Marx was not so much making a point about relations as stressing the importance of classes as an explanatory concept, and so he did not stop to analyze the implications of his statement. Let us do so.

If we say that  $x$  is a configuration of relations, can we/should we not then ask: what is the  $x$ ? Or has this question been answered: a configuration of relations? The answer may be counter-intuitive, but so are certain powerful (in terms of predictive powers) scientific hypotheses. The mind's natural tendencies, as Meyerson reminds us, are often unjustifiable or merely socially conditioned--even stifling.

Is it not the same question Berkeley dealt with when he claimed that a thing is a complex of qualities or sense-data? Surely one wants to ask Berkeley: but in what do these sense-data reside? Locke satisfies our sub-rational feelings, for he proffers a support for these sensible qualities, but Berkeley offers none. And in his defense, I am sure he would say (as some of his commentators have

said): but sense data are supported by other sense-data. Why isn't that sufficient?

And why isn't it? Why can't any/every thing be a particular cluster of relations, as a triangle is the complex summation or intersection of three lines [ $\text{///} = \Delta$ ], or a line, the aggregate of a number of points, or as Aquinas' God is a relational center?

Such a hypothesis, while feasible, is intellectually unsatisfying, I admit. But only at first. For upon investigation I find it equivalent to the thesis maintained by Hegel that a thing's very being depends upon and hence must be defined in terms of its relations. For the above theory results in a world peopled by things which, when analyzed, are constituted by their relations. But such a world is still inhabited by things, such as triangles and lines, nonetheless.

And so the thesis that things are nothing but relations turns out to be equivalent to the thesis that relations are nothing apart from things (where "things" is properly analyzed). And this is why the whole issue above is disgruntling--for the question 'but what is the x?' distinguishes the thing ('it'/'x') from its relations,

while implicitly maintaining that such a distinction is impossible.

The problem has thus been pushed a level further-- are things constituted by their relations? And with this question, the whole internal-external controversy appears.

The argument as to whether relations are internal or external is as long as it is complex. One could cut through the whole problem by declaring the problem to hinge on what one means by the terms external and internal. But Ewing has complicated this solution by giving a plethora of meanings, both possible and historical, each steeped in nuances, to both.<sup>1</sup>

Since it is not the purpose of our thesis to elaborate the history of such a conflict nor to establish the definite meaning of either term, let us not attempt an exegesis of Ewing's sub-classes. Rather, let us give an approximate meaning to the terms, as they are traditionally used, and in the light of this, see what Hegel's theory entails.

One small point first. There are three levels to

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<sup>1</sup>A. C. Ewing, Idealism: A Critical Survey (New York: The Humanities Press, 1934), Chapter 4.

which relations may be applied:<sup>1</sup> to everything (spatial and temporal relations), to a type (man: to be born of a woman [so far]), to an individual (to a particular woman). The conclusions reached here should apply to all three levels.

The doctrine of external relations is adequately summed up by W. T. Marvin.

In the proposition 'the term a is in the relation R to the term b', aR in no degree constitutes b, nor does Rb constitute a, nor does R constitute either a or b.<sup>2</sup>

That is, a thing may pass in and out of relations with other things without altering its independent nature. Relations are detachable, according to the doctrine of external relations, neither conditioning nor constituting any entity.

The doctrine of internal relations on the other hand, holds that if a thing's relations are altered, the thing is, in a nontrivial sense, no longer the same thing. Relations penetrate things, making a real<sup>3</sup> difference to

<sup>1</sup>Alexander, Mind, XXI, 313.

<sup>2</sup>This quotation is given by Passmore, p. 262.

<sup>3</sup>Of course, the argument may turn upon what 'real' means, for, at present, it is unclear.

a/any thing.<sup>1</sup>

Hegel definitely did not subscribe to the thesis, implicitly maintained by Aristotle, that all relations are external.

It is not a matter of indifference to it [a thing] whether a certain other content with which it is in relation is, or is not; for it is only through such a relation that it is essentially what it is.<sup>2</sup>

A thing, according to Hegel, has no meaning apart from its relations. For one cannot define a thing except in terms of its relations. What is salt, for example, stripped of its relations to our taste, to food, to sugar?<sup>3</sup> What is the epistemological subject/object without its relationship to the object/subject? Or, in the social domain, where/what is a master without his slave? What makes any thing this thing is its relations--to its history, to its environment, to its class, to its contradictory class, to a knowing mind, to itself.

<sup>1</sup>Real proper relations, essential relations, necessary relations are thus internal.

<sup>2</sup>Hegel, Logic, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>This, I believe, is an example given by Marcuse in Reason and Revolution.

And so, as we have shown in our previous chapters, some relations (at least) must be internal. To continue: the relation between a thing and time, like a bubble on a clay pipe,<sup>1</sup> surely is internal: the former cannot exist without the latter. The relation between a man and fatherhood or king-hood surely can be internal: a man's character may become brutalized by the possession of power, for instance.<sup>2</sup> The relation between a lion and its prey if game is short, the relation between a man and a horse if he (either one) becomes lame: both these relations may be critical. Descartes' wax is contingent upon its relations, and so is a philosopher's dream: is it not the hope of any philosopher that his system is "so nicely adjusted" as Stebbing puts it,<sup>3</sup> that the removal of any one part will considerably alter the whole?

So some relations are internal. But Hegel also

<sup>1</sup>This latter illustration was suggested by H. E. Bliss, "On Relations," The Philosophical Review, XXIV (1915), 45-50.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander, Mind, XXI, 315.

<sup>3</sup>Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 463.

stated that everything is related to, and as such involves, everything else. For he clearly states that the destruction of a speck of dust implicates the universe.

A determinate, a finite being is one that is in relation to another; it is a content standing in a necessary relation to another content, to the whole world. As regards the reciprocally determining context of the whole, metaphysics could make the--at bottom tautological--assertion that if a speck of dust were destroyed the whole universe would collapse.<sup>1</sup>

Is this not to maintain also that all relations are internal, that no relation, however trivial, can be contingent? And does not this view involve the consequence that ultimately all is one?

Granted Hegel's ideal that the universe is totally intelligible, then the universe becomes one network of necessary relationships. But a thoroughly rational world could only be the result of a tremendous human effort which Hegel doubted would ever be expended. So Hegel's ideal, that all relations might eventually be internalized, and his peculiar brand of monism, that the self could possibly become universal, was, self-admittedly, an ideal only. All relations are not internal de facto--a change

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<sup>1</sup>Logic, p. 86.

between things does not necessarily involve a change in things. The world, as it is, is partially interdependent --a change somewhere entails a change somewhere else, but not everywhere else.

Hence Hegel's judgment: the adherents of the view that all relations are internal are dreamers. Like Whitehead, he was a pluralist who sponsored both kinds of relations. All things to be must have some internal relations, but this is not to say that all relations are internal.

As the terms internal-external were not current in Hegel's day, he did not analyze them. But drawing upon his treatment of the essence-accident distinction, and mediated by the Hegelian approach in general, I think I can approximate what Hegel's judgment would have been: that all relations are both internal and external, and further, that all relations are neither internal nor external. Let me explain.

To begin, some clearly superficial relations may become essential:<sup>1</sup> Biafra's relation to the Pope or

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<sup>1</sup>Theodore De Laguna, "The Externality of Relations," The Philosophical Review, XX (1911), 615.

Captain Cook's relation to Botany Bay. Just as man's ability to blush (and his need to, to recall Twain) may become essential when M. I. T. develops a computer capable of logical discourse and intelligent advice, so too chance (in the Aristotelian sense) may alter the course of an individual's history. Furthermore, as Leighton points out, there are:

An indefinite variety of degrees of internality of relationships. A relation that from one standpoint is internal may from another standpoint be quite external.<sup>1</sup>

For example, a man is not the same man after becoming Prime Minister, but it might make no practical difference to him as a mandolin player. Moreover, as Bliss notes,<sup>2</sup> some relations might be intrinsic to a large complex (a human body/an institution) while extrinsic to an aspect of that complex (an electron within that body/an individual), or vice-versa. Finally, a relation may be "internal-external," as Whitehead put it<sup>3</sup>--one which brings about significant change while undergoing no change itself, like

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<sup>1</sup>The Philosophical Review, XXIII, 21.

<sup>2</sup>The Philosophical Review, XXIV, 42-44.

<sup>3</sup>Randall, p. 73, f. 9.

a catalyst, for example. A denial of any but a distinction of degree between the two regions is the upshot.<sup>1</sup>

Relations have different levels of significance, as well as having dual natures, degrees and a history. Relations may be both internal and external.

But relations are, at the same time, neither external nor internal. Hegel, I hypothesize, would have rejected the whole controversy, declaring that the classification, while functional, is inadequate.

Kagey expresses the point well.<sup>2</sup> Functionally, he says, the terms serve a need; they are "convenient integrations," an "ideological shorthand." But he thinks that their degree of usefulness is directly proportionate to their capacity for fraud, "once habit makes them pernicious master's." And, most of the time, they are, he thinks, "employed unreflectively simply as terms long grown too smooth by the attrition of constant use to stick even momentarily in the throat of the user."

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<sup>1</sup>B. Blanshard, The Nature of Thought (New York: Humanities Press, 1964), I, 452.

<sup>2</sup>The Philosophical Review, XLII, 288. (All of the following quotations in this paragraph are from this page.)

Kag y's objection could be overcome by careful definition. But Stebbing, via Alexander,<sup>1</sup> makes another. In an article entitled "Relation and Coherence," she maintains that the classification is not only misleading, it is biased.

Stebbing's main thesis is that the whole question as to the internality/externality of relations is "badly framed, . . . for once the question is asked in these terms, we are forced to answer it in terms which assume externality."<sup>2</sup> The point, Stebbing thinks, is that relations are continuous with their terms, not things which can be hooked on to terms.

We have not terms and their relations but we have terms in their relations;<sup>3</sup> the relation is continuous with its terms, and with them forces an integral whole, or complex or system, i.e., a continuous situation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Many of Stebbing's points are taken from Alexander's article "On Relations; and in Particular the Cognitive Relation." Curiously enough, Stebbing never mentions Alexander nor his article.

<sup>2</sup>Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 461.

<sup>3</sup>This is almost a direct quotation from Alexander, Mind, XXI, 310.

<sup>4</sup>Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 463.

Some things are clearly detachable from (some) relations. That Hegel's Phenomenology happens to be next to volume 1 of the Wizard of Oz on my bookshelf is superficial. But most of the time it is difficult, even impossible, to know where a particular relation ends and a thing begins.<sup>1</sup> Hence, even the standard symbolism for a relation--aRb--is misleading, for it indicates a clear line of demarcation between the relata and the relation, seeing them not as a concrete whole, but as a discontinuous aggregate.

And so, finally, the question as to whether all relations are internal or external is not only inadequate and biased. It is foolish.<sup>2</sup> To ask at what point does a relation become external is like asking at what point does blue become green. The very classification is doomed to considerable elasticity.

And this is how the entire internal/external problem

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander's example of this is the relation of maternity, which is not only the actual situation of the bearing of the child, but the whole complex of actions/passions between mother and child (Mind, XXI, 307).

<sup>2</sup>H. T. Costello, "Relations between Relations," Journal of Philosophy, XVI (1919), 569.

is, not solved, but dissolved.

An excellent example of an "interpenetrating" relation is the cognitive relation. For knowledge is as such intrinsically relational;<sup>1</sup> if the subject-object duality is overcome, knowledge is abolished. Despite the fact, pointed out by Plato, that knowledge involves affinity, empathy, and sometimes, in fact, the actual experience, perspective is also necessary. Knowledge is thus paradoxical.

Aristotle and his medieval heir, Aquinas, both maintained that the cognitive relation is non-reciprocal; only one of its terms, the subject, is modified by entering into such a relation. But Hegel disagreed. A thing is only actual/izable, he said, in relation to rationality. And his argument was: nothing is, de facto, nor will its natural history ever render it, fully actualized. But only the mind is capable of grasping the genesis and the telos of a thing, that is, of constituting it as a thing, of understanding its potentialities.

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<sup>1</sup>Alexander, Mind, XXI, 316ff.; Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 472-73.

Moreover, only man is capable of working upon the world in terms of those "notional" idea(1)s. To know a thing, to be together with it,<sup>1</sup> is thus to alter it--in varying degrees, but at the very least, to render it actualizable.<sup>2</sup> And indeed, who is to say that the removal of mind from the universe would not involve a change in the remainder of the universe?<sup>3</sup> Would not the annihilation of sensate matter cause a bit of a stir?

For the most part, classical physics concurred with Aristotle. It assumed<sup>4</sup> that natural events were unaffected by the observing subject/the investigating apparatus,<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup>This is what knowledge is for Alexander, Mind, XXI, 315-16.

<sup>2</sup>I think this bypasses--if not dissolves--the paradox: if knowledge modifies the object, how can the object be known?

<sup>3</sup>Stebbing, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, XVII, 475-76.

<sup>4</sup>Though for it to become an assumption took over a century. Galileo's belief that nature was a mathematical order and as such was completely describable without any reference to the subject clashed head on with the ruling philosophy of the Middle Ages, which saw man, the imago Dei and hence center of the universe, as the key interpreter of nature. (This is another source of internal conflict in Aquinas.)

<sup>5</sup>Or, if necessary, the interactions could be compensated for.

hence were describable without reference to observation. Man, as the observer and knower, was, for classical mechanics, an irrelevant spectator of nature's workings. And further, his elimination (and thus of probability<sup>1</sup>) was seen to be a necessary condition of the intelligibility of the world.

But with the birth of quantum mechanics, the subject reinvaded the scientific realm. For quantum mechanics seemed--in fact did, according to the usual or orthodox interpretation of the quantal formalism--to entail the discovery that an event could only be described and predicted in relation to a well-defined measuring device, or an instrumental arrangement, if not to an acknowledging consciousness. As Heisenberg succinctly put it:

The laws of nature which we formulate mathematically in quantum theory deal no longer with the particles themselves but [also] with our knowledge of the elementary particles.<sup>2</sup>

The question as to whether the subject is permanently

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<sup>1</sup>As man was the source of probability.

<sup>2</sup>This statement was made by Heisenberg in 1958 and is quoted by Eugene P. Wigner, Symmetries and Reflections (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), p. 172.

reinstalled in the micro-physical realm, as Heisenberg insists, or only on a temporary visa, as Einstein hopes, must await the verdict of future physicists. But in the meantime (at least) Hegel's rendition of the cognitive relation has respectable scientific backing.

We have thus arrived at some answers--definite suggestions at least--to some of the questions posed at the beginning of the conclusion.

Relations are both logical and real. If real, they are as real as their relata, and they share in the same degree of existentiality as their relata, for they constitute things.<sup>1</sup> Relations are immanent in the manifold of things, but not because they are qualities/properties of things, but because they form one tissue with things. Because of this, they are ineffable. They are also irreducible and so primitive. Relations are both internal and external; not only is it a matter of their (potentially) dual nature, it is a matter of level, of

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<sup>1</sup>If there is a distinction between reality and existence, it is in the Hegelian sense of mere unactualized existence and actualized reality (existence: the necessary condition of actualization; reality: degree of actualization).

history, of degree. But ultimately, they are neither internal nor external; the classification is inadequate, biased and foolish. Apart from being a metaphysical reality, relation is also a necessary epistemological category, for the mind can grasp reality. Relations are directly apprehendable, but they can also be indirectly inferred and so discovered. A final estimate of any object is contingent upon the total network of truth, but an object can be grasped independent of the whole.

And thus ends the beginning.

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VITA

