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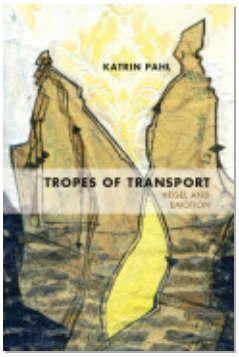
4. Juggle



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Juggle

> This conflict between the form of a proposition per se and the unity of the concept which destroys that form is similar to what occurs in the rhythm between meter and accent. Rhythm results from the juggle and unification of both. In that way, in the philosophical proposition, the identity of subject and predicate does not abolish their difference.
>
> —*Phenomenology,* § 61

For Hegel, rhythm affects logic. What is more, logical necessity is constituted by the rhythm of the concept's movement: "It is in this nature of what is to be its concept in its being that *logical necessity* in general consists. This alone is the rational and the rhythm of the organic whole . . . —that is, it is this alone which is the *speculative*" (§ 56, trans. modified). Yet, the rhythm of the concept is far from steady and predictable. It is a constant juggle. There is no preexisting concept of the rhythm of the concept; rather, its rhythm emerges contemporaneously with its fumbling steps of self-comprehension. Each phenomenological scenario compels the concept to (re-)create its rhythm in communication with its context. Because the "rhythm of the organic whole" thus changes constantly, it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to identify speculative rhythm. "When you think you have it, it evaporates and returns as a new rhythm" (Trinh 1999, 14). The situatedness of knowledge—even of absolute knowledge—that we discussed in the previous chapter returns here as the incessantly changing rhythm of the whole.

We will discover in this chapter that speculative rhythm emerges from the divided method of philosophical science, which juggles contrary demands. This method is grounded in sympathy understood as a sharing of non-identity, a sharing that itself is shared. Every articulation of a new insight thus alters the rhythm of the whole. Like someone who dances to her own heartbeat. Every move she makes with her arms, her

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legs, or her torso to accompany her heartbeat changes the rhythm of that beat, which in turn has an effect on her dance moves.[1]

Echolalia

Speculative rhythm has often been constructed as a regular three-step. In that case, dialectics becomes a rocking movement that feels soothing. It assures that individual concepts come and go, and that thought departs and returns, while nothing is lost and nothing imposes itself forever. But Hegel's analogy between logic and rhythm suggests something more disturbing. Hegel's rhythm has an element of chaos. It is reminiscent of the description of rhythm by Deleuze and Guattari, who specify that "what chaos and rhythm have in common is the in-between" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 313). Oscillating between different notions of the concept, between judgment and speculative proposition, and between philosophy and poetry, speculative rhythm introduces chaos and contingency into the realm of logic—and that can be a quite troubling thought. The elements of the two different logics of Hegel's divided methodology do not join under the rule of a common beat. Not one of these dancers leads. Instead, they bring different rhythms to bear on one another, forming "a zone in which dissonant, differently tuned voices, discordant voices out of tune with themselves and with the times, may be heard echoing through one another" (to use a formulation of Michael Levine 1997, 111). Yet the different logics "unexpectedly click in, come apart, meet halfway, and so on; in other words, . . . they do and undo one another in their diversified movements" (Trinh 1999, 261).

The self-actualizing activity of Hegelian concepts cuts across the clear-cut distinctions that traditional logic tries to enforce. For Hegel, language, thought, and reality overlap and are inseparable. Thoughtful statements are acts that alter reality. The "form of writing" must therefore be of great concern for Hegel when he embarks on the project of the *Phenomenology,* that is, of presenting spirit as it appears to itself (Hegel 2002, 251). It comes as no surprise, therefore, that he devotes an important part of the *Phenomenology*'s preface to his thoughts on the form of philosophical exposition (§ 56–66).[2]

Spirit appears (*phainesthai*) to itself in the logic and syntax of its language (*logos*). The *Phenomenology of Spirit* mediates spirit with itself through writing. Nevertheless, as we have seen in the previous chapter, Hegel is much attuned to the fact that a dynamic truth cannot simply be written

down. In response to this fact, the language of Hegel's *Phenomenology* divides itself between the language of traditional logic and the language of the speculative. Hegel describes the relation between the two forms of writing as a juggle, a tremulous harmony in motion, and as a rhythm that comes to life through the syncopated ensemble playing of two ways of thinking. This moving incongruence of the phenomenological text makes it emotional.

The always subtly changing rhythm of speculative writing resists quick understanding, and refuses the smooth supersession of the signifier "with a view to the concept" (Derrida 1986, 9a). The "magisterial coldness" and unemotional, "imperturbable seriousness" of Hegel's *Geist* is "semantically infallible" solely "for those who have read him a little—but only a little" (Derrida 1986, 1a); that is, for those who have read him only in one direction.[3] In the following, I will traverse Hegel's text back and forth in an attempt to bring its body to life again and again as a warm body. Then we might notice that, rather than the motionless flight of the eagle in the very high cold regions of the sky, the *Phenomenology* performs an eagle dance—the imitation of the afterfeeling of the eagle on the ground. Close to the ground, "very lowly, low down, close to the earth," the dancers respond to a multitude of at times contradictory calls: they save yet lose themselves curling up into a tight ball or crossing the road slowly with hundreds of swift little steps (Derrida 1991, 234). For German ears, the "eagle"—this emblem of Prussian authoritarianism, and this word that is already the translation of another echolalia: of the French echo of Hegel's name (*aigle*)—turns into an *Igel:* one of poetry's names.[4] Poetry sets the eagle on its feet.[5] There, on the ground, in an unfamiliar element, the eagle looks quite awkward and vulnerable.

The complex rhythm of Hegel's philosophical language restores thought to its body. Poetic language brings to the fore a general characteristic of texts, namely that they survive their physical vanishing in the uptake of information. Unable to decide where best to place the stress, we read over and over again and thus remain attached to the materiality of words. We keep the bodies of words company (or allow them to keep us company).[6] Doing so, we begin to notice that words communicate with one another, that they echo one another even where the grammar of meaning prevents such associations.[7] Lyric poetry, says Hegel, "allows particular ideas to subsist alongside one another without being related, whereas thinking demands and produces dependence of things on one another, reciprocal relations, logical judgments, syllogisms, etc."[8] By juggling logical judgments and syllogisms, Hegel invites some of the chaos of this lyric "alongside" in an effort to counteract dependence, oppression, and the hierarchical understanding of *Aufhebung*.

This chapter interrogates logic, that is, rules of intelligibility, in order to show not only that emotion is a mode of thought, but also that emotionality calls for and produces a different logic. The argument that emotions function like judgments, because they are intentional in that they have an object or aim, is rather problematic in my view.[9] The syntax of judgment demands the existence of a subject and an object, their separation, and their hierarchical organization. The established rules for logical judgments force us to think in hierarchical subject-object relations. And while Nussbaum, for example, is at pains to prove the intentionality of emotions and their status as "forms of judgment," she misses an opportunity to interrogate the very rules of intelligibility that separate emotionality from rationality in the first place (Nussbaum 1997, 234).[10] Hegel suggests that there is something to be gained from bringing together the two contradictory logics of traditional argumentation and speculative sympathy while allowing them to syncopate each other and to exchange their steps. The discord and confusion that is thereby introduced into the rigidly ruled discourse of conventional logic urges thought to move in more than one direction. A self-difference has opened up within logic to construct the emotional syntax of philosophical language. It creates resonances within that cannot close themselves off from resonating with other bodies or even other logics. Emotionality is lodged in the language of the *Phenomenology,* in the tremulous harmony of the "doleful cry of the owl at twilight" (Nancy 2001, 38).

Emotional Concepts

Hegel radically redefines the notions of concept and proposition used in traditional logic generally and, more specifically (and closer to Hegel's concerns), in Kant's transcendental philosophy. Traditionally, the definition of concepts as abstract, self-identical, and timeless terms has served to shield the rules of thought from empirical and emotional interference. Hegel's phenomenological approach counteracts this aversion against experiential knowledge. It undoes the traditional separation between logic and empiricism by insisting that a concept realizes itself and that reality comprehends itself. For Kant, concepts are general and abstract terms, empty containers or, as Hegel puts it, "inert receptacles" that need to be filled with the concrete material of experience (*gleichgültige Behälter;* Hegel 1975a, §162). Kant famously refers to concepts without intuitions as void, thus underlining their status as subjective forms of representation that call for objective content (Kant

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1990, B75 and B298–99). Hegel understands the concept (*Begriff*) as reaching through (*durchgreifen*) and undoing such abstract divisions as subject and object, form and matter, or logic and ontology.[11] The concept is no fixed entity distinct from comprehension. Herein consists precisely the novelty of Hegel's notion of the concept: that it is not a term but a movement, the movement of comprehending. But this activity doesn't necessarily require a human agent. Concepts comprehend themselves.

Hegel's phenomenology of spirit thus not only examines how a situated consciousness "applies" certain concepts, but traces how concepts "actualize themselves": how concepts self-differentiate and recollect, embrace themselves and tear themselves to pieces—all the while generating realities that affect and situate consciousness. Concepts thus have a reality somewhat independent from those who "use" them. When Hegel says that it is in the "nature of what is to be its concept in its being," he considers being not just as substance but also as subject (§ 56). Substance is usually understood as self-identical, timeless, and stable: "On account of its simplicity, that is, its parity-with-itself [*Sichselbstgleichheit*], [substance] appears to be fixed and persisting" (§ 55). But this appearance passes: "this parity-with-itself is likewise negativity" (ibid.). Traditional philosophy assumes that such negativity or moving force is exerted upon being by the thinking subject, that is, externally. "However, that [what is] has its otherness in itself and that it is self-moving are contained in that *simplicity* . . . which is the pure *concept*" (§ 55). No human subject is required for the concept to come to differ from itself and to emotionally respond to, negotiate, and juggle this disparity with itself. Hegel's radical contribution to the philosophy of emotionality consists in suggesting that, in their self-tearing and self-embracing dynamic, concepts themselves are emotional (and not just the philosopher). Hegel reinscribes the emotionality that traditional philosophy has severed from conceptual life back into the concept itself.

Kant's demand that "an abstract concept be *made sensuous*" must strike Hegel as redundant because a concept makes itself sensuous (Kant 1990, B299). It differentiates itself and takes the form of an *Ur-teil* ("judgment" or "predicative proposition," literally: "original partition").[12] Of course, Hegel's notion of judgment is as unusual as his notion of the concept. For him judgments are not formal and atemporal assertions, but living bodies ("the judgment of the plant," for example, develops out of the unity of the germ), concrete things ("all things are a judgment"), or conflict-laden propositions (Hegel 1975a, § 166 *Zusatz;* § 167). They change over time and at no time are they one with themselves.

Hegel thus introduces self-dissonance or emotionality into his notion of the concept, into his notion of judgment, and even into his notion of truth. While, according to traditional logic, predicative propositions are either (wholly) true or (wholly) false (depending on whether concepts have been correctly applied), for Hegel they are both true and false because their concept realizes itself in them in a self-contradictory way.[13] If nothing can be "wholly true," as Hegel indeed maintains, the truth comes always mixed with untruth (ignorance, error, opinion, madness, etc.). There is no solid, self-identical, and sober truth, but only a dynamic, precarious, and emotional process of self-reflection that must juggle self-affirmation and self-critique.

Hegel thus defines truth as subjective—not in the sense that it lacks reality, and not only in the sense that it is a reality perceived (a reality for another, as Hegel would say), but in the sense that truth itself constitutes a subject:

> In my view, . . . everything hangs on apprehending and expressing the truth not merely as *substance,* but equally as *subject.* . . . Furthermore, the living substance is the being that is in truth *subject,* or, what amounts to the same thing, it is in truth actual only in so far as it is the movement of self-positing, that is the mediation of itself and its becoming-other-to-itself [*sich anders Werdens*]. (§ 17–18)

The concept's activity of self-positing by way of partially negating and partially affirming itself thus can be apprehended—so Hegel proposes—as the self-reflecting subjectivity of the concept. This self-reflection juggles the conflicting and emotionally charged demands of self-othering and self-collecting; it is an activity that is not reserved for human agents.

All this said, the emotional and material reality of Hegel's concept is easy to overlook because Hegel twists the traditional use of the word "concept" so radically that it is difficult to accept. Most interpretations of the Hegelian text—even the best—have in fact disregarded the concept's materiality and self-dissonance in favor of an understanding of the concept as metaphysical abstraction. Derrida, for example, offers a weak reading of the notion of the concept when he writes that for Hegel "language accomplishes itself [and] thus becomes signifying only by relieving within itself the (sensible, exterior) signifier, traversing it and denying it with a view to the concept" (Derrida 1986, 9a). While tradition justifies the view that "the logic of the concept is the eagle's," Hegel certainly opposes this tradition (Derrida 1986, 55a).

Emotional Judgments

In the preface of the *Phenomenology,* Hegel introduces the rhythm of the speculative judgment as actively critiquing and disarticulating the logical form of philosophical writing that is the predicative judgment (§ 60–66).[14] Predicative judgments are composed of or can be logically reduced to three parts: the subject, the copula, and the predicate.[15] Hegel denounces the predicative judgment as the symptom of a rigid, overly clear-cut and hierarchical thinking. He shows that its claim to simplicity and straightness only superficially covers over the conflicts it actually harbors. In the previous section, I already noted that concepts actualize themselves in judgments in a self-contradictory way. It is now time to specify these contradictions.

According to Hegel's analysis, every judgment presents a discord between what it means and what it says. The judgment means that subject and predicate are identical—*a* is *b*—but in reality it separates them into two different terms—*a* and *b*—and the copula physically stands in between the two, holding them apart. "The meaning seems to be that the difference is denied, although at the same time it appears directly in the proposition" (Hegel 1989, 90, trans. modified). The letter of the judgment is at odds with its spirit; the judgment means to cover over a difference that its body exhibits. In this situation, "clever argumentation [*Räsonnieren*]"—as Hegel calls the formal thinking that produces predicative judgments—solves or, rather, controls, the conflict by establishing a hierarchy (§ 58).[16] The body of the text is rejected once the meaning is retained.

But the judgment contradicts itself in more ways than one. Not only do its meaning and its physical appearance fail to coincide, but it is also of two minds about what it means. While the judgment claims to express the identity of subject and predicate, its own rules of intelligibility prohibit this identity.[17] Good judgment demands that the predicate must not be the same as the subject. Whenever they are indeed identical, the proposition doesn't make any sense; it is, as Hegel observes, commonly rejected as saying nothing: "If, for example, to the question 'What is a plant?' the answer is given 'A plant is—a plant,' the truth of such a statement is at once admitted by the entire company on whom it is tested, and at the same time it is equally unanimously declared that the statement says *nothing*" (Hegel 1989, 415). "A rose is a rose" says nothing. Supposedly. The predicate has to be different from the subject, and difference—logically—is understood as subordination. The subject in its particularity or individuality is supposed to be subjected to the universality of the predicate. Even if subject and predicate are different but equal,

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the proposition does not constitute a logical judgment because it is impossible to decide which term should govern the "identity" of the two. Does "poetry is a hedgehog" say anything? Can we subsume poetry under hedgehog? The sentence is grammatically correct, but it is no predicative proposition because it contains no predicate. According to good judgment, it gives no answer to the question "what is poetry?" because it joins two terms that are equally particular. In order for the predicate to say anything about (*über*) the subject, it has to be higher, more general, and more significant than the subject which must be lower, more particular, and without the ability to speak for itself.[18]

Again the conflict is managed—or attempted to be managed—by introducing a hierarchy. The order of the terms in the judgment must not be reversed: a (every) rose is a plant, but that does not mean that every plant is a rose. Or, to cast the same in more humanistic—albeit not more human—terms: Socrates is a man, but not every man is a Socrates. The logic of "clever argumentation" here betrays its inherent violence. The Enlightenment holds that all men have reason and understanding. These faculties allow them to make judgments, construe arguments, and engage in public reasoning. If we listen to the logic of the judgment, though, it turns out that only those who subject themselves to Socrates can claim reason (his name functions as shorthand for the canon of Western philosophy). The others teeter precariously at the edge of having their humanity denied. Socrates agrees to sending the flute player away. Her unruly rhythm would only disturb a rational "evening in conversation."[19] The basic idea of the Enlightenment does allow for the contraposition—someone who does not have reason and understanding (or quite unreasonably declines to follow its rules) is not a man.

Together with Hölderlin and Schelling, the early Hegel demands that the style of philosophical conversation be changed. In the "Earliest System-Program of German Idealism" they urge that "the philosopher must possess just as much aesthetic power as the poet" (Hegel, Hölderlin, and Schelling 2002, 111). In order to counteract the discrimination inherent in philosophical discourse, the new philosopher must display the contradictions at work in any assertion, the contradictions that the formal rules of logic so far have worked hard to subdue. The new philosopher must be able to attend to the sensuous qualities of language, register the subtle syncopations between the letter and the spirit or the body and the meaning of a judgment, and develop a philosophical syntax that juggles or rhythmically interweaves both logical and poetic language. "Thus in the end enlightened and unenlightened must clasp hands" and dance, with not one of these dancers leading (ibid.).[20]

Instead of the clear-cut logic of the judgment, which separates

enlightened and unenlightened, Hegel proposes the syntax of speculative rhythm. Against the covering-over of conflict through the hierarchical organization of subject and predicate, or matter and meaning, Hegel exposes the conflicts and affirms that "the *non-identical* aspect of subject and predicate is also an essential moment" (Hegel 1989, 91). While "in the judgment this is not expressed," speculative syntax arranges together the different pieces of the whole (that is the truth) in a way that they gesture toward each other, figure one another, and imitate each other's steps across the vast interval of their differences. It creates a complex and moving interplay, a strange—partly monstrous and partly ludicrous, at times powerful and at times heartbreaking—configuration: the dance of the *Igel* with the eagle.

Invitation to Dance

Hegel does not advocate a purity of expression that "rigorously excludes" the logic and grammar of judgment (§ 64). He makes use of predicative propositions even though he considers them inappropriate for speculative philosophy. In the *Science of Logic,* Hegel warns: "We must, at the outset, make this general observation, namely, that the proposition in the *form of the judgment* is not suited [*nicht geschickt ist*] to express speculative truths" (Hegel 1989, 90). According to the (general) principles of his systematic philosophy, judgments have no place in philosophical discourse. And yet he was dealt his cards and he is committed to play them. Tradition has sent (*geschickt*) him a philosophical language that is not suited (*nicht geschickt*) to express speculative truth, and he will not argue with tradition.[21] Neither does he desist from presenting or exposing the speculative. But he is happy to forego the claim of expression with its calls for authenticity and purity.[22]

The *Phenomenology* clarifies what it means to remain faithful to speculative truth: "The exposition [*Darstellung*] which stays true to its insight into the nature of what is speculative must retain the dialectical form and must import nothing into it [*nichts hereinnehmen*] except what is both comprehended and is the concept" (§ 66). Hegel breaks the vow of fidelity by admitting judgments. He hosts the foreign logic in his own system. It is a move that will cause him, his readers, and his text a lot of trouble. It is a move that generates emotionality. Yet this unfaithfulness to his principles allows him to flexibly respond to the historical reality of non-Hegelian philosophical discourse, and ultimately to remain true to his own thinking. Allegiance to the speculative necessitates unfaithfulness

to general principles. It would be quite un-Hegelian to abstractly oppose tradition. Instead, Hegel seduces those readers who expect conventional logic by speaking their language. (He knows that, as far as philosophy is concerned, there is no other language.)[23]

Hegel's style is susceptible to its others, including traditional logic. The rhythm of Hegel's moving exposition juggles two ways of philosophically constructing propositions: speculatively and "argumentatively [*räsonnierend*]."[24] Such "commingling" upsets both speculative and argumentative thought since "each of those modes interferes with the other" (§ 64). His writing thus loses in clarity and definition. "It is only the kind of philosophical exposition which rigorously excludes the ordinary relations among the parts of a proposition which would be able to achieve the goal of plasticity" (ibid.). With "plasticity" (*plastisch sein*), Hegel means here that only this kind of exposition would achieve the definition and well-rounded completeness of sculpture. But Hegel happily renounces the well-proportioned tangibility of Greek sculpture in favor of a philosophical elasticity.[25] Hegel has noted that the ideal of Greek self-containment and repose favors an "aloofness from feeling" and turns life quite literally into stone.[26] With the *Phenomenology* he is interested, rather, in the dynamic plasticity of something as unending and difficult to identify as rhythm. Troubled and torn like the "doleful cry of the owl at twilight," speculative rhythm has replaced the "tranquil trait of mourning" that the solitary statues retain (Nancy 2001, 38; Pinkard 2008, fn. 28).

In Hegel's rhythmic exposition, the different modes (argumentative and speculative) take part in one another while taking each other apart. Traditional logic does not persist untouched; it is shaken by speculative rhythm. Similarly, by embracing the very logic that rejects the speculative, Hegel invites trouble into the heart of his philosophy. Yet the emotionality generated by the fact that different grammars mingle is not suppressed by hierarchical sublations of one mode in the other. The dance of the *Igel* crosses the dance of the eagle without crossing it out. Hegel even speaks of a "harmony" between the two, but this harmony, to be sure, amplifies dissonance, interference, and syncopation:

> This conflict between the form of a proposition per se and the unity of the concept which destroys that form is similar to what occurs in the rhythm between meter and accent. Rhythm results from the juggle [*schwebende Mitte*] and unification of both. In that way, in the philosophical proposition, the identity of subject and predicate does not abolish their difference [*Unterschied*], which is expressed in the form of the proposition. Instead, their unity emerges as a harmony. (§ 61, trans. modified)

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This passage renders the friction between two possibilities of reading—reading the material form and reading the meaning—as, once again, a conflict between identity and difference. For Hegel, this conflict does not have to be (dis)solved but can be made productive as a harmonic disunity in oscillating motion. Pinkard translates Hegel's complex expression *schwebende Mitte* as "oscillating midpoint," conveying the sense that speculative rhythm finds balance through constant counterbalancing movements. I translate it as "juggle" in order to communicate that unification, for Hegel, is a precarious juggle and not a stable synthesis (no matter how insistently the third step of the dialectical three-step is read as such).[27]

To construct judgments argumentatively is to follow the steady meter of a strict grammatical arrangement: subject, copula, predicate. The "subject constitutes the basis" for the succession of beats, the "solid ground [*feste Boden*]" on which predication advances (*fortlaufen,* § 60). There are two ways of accentuating predicative judgments. The subject can be understood as agent, that is, as privileged over and against its various and passing activities. Then the emphasis lies on the individual. Or the subject can be taken as remaining mute, demure, and (e)motionless while it "passively [*unbewegt*] support[s] the accidents" (§ 60). Without being an agent or having a voice it simply provides substance for judgment. In this case, "the understanding downgrades [the subject] to the status of something lifeless, since it merely predicates it of another existence, and takes no cognizance of the immanent life of this existence" (§ 53, trans. modified). The predicate, on the other hand, then makes a fuss (*macht ein Aufhebens*). It suppresses difference and sublates phenomena into the unity of its abstractly universal concept.[28] Its mode of *aufheben* is again unilateral: it puts an excessive emphasis on universality. Without much art, the proposition's accent thus lies either on the first term, the subject—*one* two three; *a* is b; *god* is being; *poetry* is x—or on the last term, the predicate—one two *three*; a is *b*; god is *being*; poetry is *x*. Either way, it presents a simple cadence.

To construct judgments speculatively is to juggle both of these cadences, to keep them both in play. Of course it is quite difficult to render both cadences at the same time. Therefore, "much has to be read over and over again" (§ 63). First, one might conclude that "*the I is a thing,*" i.e., that the subject as agent is predicated of a lifeless and abstract accident (§ 790). Yet this very emphasis on the subject "compels knowledge to come back to the proposition and now to grasp it in some other way" (§ 63). The correction reads the initial statement in the opposite direction and says "*The thing is I*" (§ 790). The supposedly lifeless accident is in fact an I or a self-reflecting agent. But then how can one categorical

statement change into its reverse like that? Clever argumentation feels impelled to reinforce the status of the copula by clarifying "that the *being of the I is a thing,*" i.e., that "is" establishes a solid and stable, thing-like or categorical link (§ 790). But it has already been stated that "the thing is I." Thus, the thing (the copula) which is the being of the I is I. The copula itself acts, moves, and reflects upon itself. The self-negating movement of the copula functions as the "oscillating midpoint" that unifies this quasi-syllogism (or speculative syllogism) into which the one judgment has unfolded through multiple readings.

But we have jumped ahead to the final chapter of the *Phenomenology;* let us return to the preface and read again Hegel's account of the emotional syntax of judgment. Speculative thinking raises the prosodic charge of philosophical language. It introduces a disruptive accent that syncopates the pattern of formal logic. The speculative deals a "counter-punch" to the normal accentuation of philosophical language:

> The nature of judgment, that is of the proposition per se which includes the distinction of subject and predicate within itself, is destroyed by the speculative judgment [*spekulativen Satz*], and the identical proposition which the former comes to be contains the counter-punch [*Gegenstoß*] to such relations. (§ 61, trans. modified)

The proposition has doubled: there is "the proposition per se which includes the distinction of subject and predicate within itself" and "the identical proposition" which deals the counterpunch that confounds these distinctions. When the proposition "God is being" is read speculatively, the second term "being" trades the abstract universality of the predicate for the dynamic self-mediation of the subject (in Hegel's emphatic sense), that is, of the self-negating concept. In the movement from the first to the second term, the subject, thus, reappears—as in "Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose." The subject is entangled in the predicate: "thought, instead of getting any farther with the transition from subject to predicate . . . finds the subject also to be immediately present in the predicate" (§ 62).[29] The note of the subject lasts through the beat of what is usually the predicate, and the reader finds the attack on the third count lacking. What now? The reader "feels . . . inhibited [*gehemmt*]." The predicate makes no fuss, *macht kein Aufhebens,* and allows for no stress. The proposition breaks off in the middle of an enjambment and leaves the reader hanging with one foot in the air (§ 62). Trying to figure out where to rest the foot, the reader "is thrown back to the thought of the subject" (§ 62). She pivots on one foot to move through the proposition in the other direction. Yet, turning around in an attempt to regain the sub-

ject, she realizes that the accent on the first count is lost, too. "God" has ceased to provide the stable ground on which the movement of thought can rest. Instead, this subject has been tossed in the air: "Here, 'being' is not supposed to be a predicate. It is supposed to be the essence, but, as a result, 'God' seems to cease to be what it was by virtue of its place in the proposition, namely, to be a fixed subject" (§ 62).[30] Speculative reading turns an abstract subject into the self-reflecting concept that tears itself to shreds and recollects itself. Instead of referring to something outside of language, the subject has become a reality that writes itself: "Since the concept is the object's own self, that is, the self which exhibits itself as *the object's coming-to-be* [*sein Werden*], it is not a motionless subject passively supporting the accidents; rather, it is the self-moving concept which takes its determinations back into itself" (§ 60). The subject makes its own sense. Realizing this, the reader has lost her former definition of the subject: "Within this movement the motionless subject itself breaks down [*geht zugrunde*]" (§ 60). Now that "the subject has dropped out of the picture [*verlorengeht*]," the suspended foot is thrown back to the count of the predicate (§ 60). Yet it does not safely land there to resume the course of a measured choreography. With this awkward pirouette, the reader—who has lost her footing on this base that "totters [*schwankt*]" (§ 60)—falls into the arms of the subject now understood as self-reflexive subject-matter: "Thought thus loses its fixed objective basis [*Boden*] which it had in the subject, when, in the predicate, it is thrown back to the subject [*darauf*], and when, in the predicate, it returns not into itself but into the subject of the content" (§ 63, trans. modified).

The clear-cut separations between subject and predicate, as well as between the reading subject and the content or subject matter of the proposition, are unsettled by the fact that the concept reaches through these divisions. Moved by the concept, the reader is unable to dissociate herself from what she reads. Drawn into the dance, she finds that she is not grounded in herself but depends on the other, the one she reads, to hold her. But clever argumentation loathes giving up control. Hegel, thus, exerts a certain kind of violence when he seduces the reader to read the judgment speculatively. His diction betrays this violence. According to his description, the reading subject "suffers from a counter-punch" (§ 60). It "feels . . . inhibited . . . and . . . thrown back" (§ 62). The violence of Hegel's writing style consists in not allowing the reader to translate the conflicts of a proposition into the higher synthesis of a stable meaning. It interferes with the reader's wish to be done with the text.

> However, since that former subject [subject of the proposition] enters into the determinations [accidents] themselves and is their soul, the

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> second subject, which is to say, the knowing subject, finds that the former, which it was supposed to be over and done with, which it wants to go beyond in order to return into itself, is still there in the predicate. Instead of being able to be the agent [*das Tuende*] in the movement of predication . . . the subject is still occupied with the self of the content. The subject is not supposed to exist on its own, but it is supposed to exist together [*zusammensein*] with this content. (§ 60, trans. modified)

Hegel frustrates the reader's desire to withdraw as quickly as possible from the contact with the other into the aloof identity and superior authority of the I. Speculative science asks us to "be with [*zusammensein*]" being (apprehended and articulated as subject) to sympathize with its self-disruption without losing our own beat, to join hands with it and dance.

Half-Sympathetic Speech Acts

Let us return once more to the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter: "It is in this nature of what is to be its concept in its being that *logical necessity* in general consists. This alone is the rational and the rhythm of the organic whole . . .—that is, it is this alone which is the *speculative*" (§ 56). Speculative philosophy does not rely on a set of unchanging rules of logic that it applies equally to all cases. Rather, the speculative philosopher observes—while acknowledging the impact of her own subjectivity on the phenomenological scenario—how being comprehends itself and how this process of self-comprehension (or of being "in its being its own concept") plays itself out in particular situations. The method of speculative philosophy is thus divided between attending to its own rules and attending to the way its subject grasps itself. Speculative thought juggles this self-division: "This nature of scientific method—that partly [*teils*] it is inseparable from the content, and partly [*teils*] it determines its rhythm by way of itself—has . . . its genuine exposition in speculative philosophy" (§ 57, trans. modified). The divided methodology of speculative thought consists partly (*teils*) in dancing to its own beat, and partly (*teils*) in following the lead of its subject matter. Rather than simply applying abstract (i.e., ostensibly objective, timeless, and universal) rules of logic, the speculative thinker needs to attend to the way the particular concept at hand comprehends itself (what criteria it sets for its comprehension). And she needs to do so without losing her own beat. As a matter of fact, she needs to foreground the particularity of her own way of grasping. Only a dance of (at least) two different beings, trying to comprehend

themselves and each other by trying to respond to each other's and their own movements, realizes what Hegel calls philosophical science.

Dancing thus to two different measures requires effort and attentiveness. Hegel describes what he calls the "exertion of the concept [*Anstrengung des Begriffs*]" and the "attention to the concept [*Aufmerksamkeit auf den Begriff*]" as emotional labor (§58). It might be intellectually difficult to find the right category for a phenomenon and draw inferences according to the formal rules of logic, but there is no emotional difficulty here. Speculative philosophy, on the other hand, requires emotional labor. It is frustrating for the philosopher to renounce authority over the matter.[31] Hegel notes the emotional difficulty of injured pride. He even suggests that the movement of the concept can produce a feeling of shame—"the kind of shame which supposedly lies in something's having been learned"—since learning implies an acknowledgment of previous mistakes.[32] But the speculative philosopher must be able to bear such shame.[33] Hegel, in fact, asks her to transform vanity and shame into sympathy with what she is trying to comprehend. He demands of the philosopher to "sink [her] freedom into the content [*diese Freiheit in ihn zu versenken*]," that is to say, to refrain from manipulating the content and instead to follow and to imitate the movement of the content's self-reflection (§ 58, trans. modified).[34]

In its proximity to empathy, sympathy is certainly not an uncontentious notion. Scholars today ardently debate whether empathy is appropriate in matters of epistemology and hermeneutics, whether it is politically helpful, and whether it is even possible.[35] Complicating my use of the term here is the fact that it has undergone important changes in meaning between Hegel's time and ours.[36] I don't have room here to thoroughly engage in this debate, but I do want to clarify two aspects of sympathy that are important to me and that differentiate it from similar terms (and from different understandings of the same term). I'd like to understand sympathy strictly as feeling with or feeling together, as sharing feeling, or, in short, as commiseration. That is to say, sympathy has nothing to do with the condescending notion of compassion. In addition to the horizontal relationality of sympathy, I would like to stress its temporal character. I take sympathy to translate the German *Nachempfinden* ("having an afterfeeling" or "imitating a feeling"), as opposed to *Einfühlung* ("feeling into"). The latter reinscribes interiority whereas I appreciate the temporal lag and supplementarity of *Nachempfinden*. The Greek *empathês* simply means "in a state of passion," as opposed to *apathês,* which means "without passion." But this neutrality of the term is lost when, around 1900, Lipps uses *Einfühlung* to initiate an important discussion about the knowledge of other minds that nevertheless suffers from presupposing an all-too-stable notion of the self.[37]

Hegelian sympathy is a resonance between transports, rather than between individuals.[38] Indeed, Hegel finds sympathy possible because he doesn't have an emphatic notion of the singularity of the individual. Instead, he operates with a logic of figuration. The three moments of the concept—individuality, universality, and particularity—figure one another in the sense that they are distinct but that "each distinction is confounded in the very attempt to isolate and fix it" (Hegel 1989, 620). By the same token, individual concepts figure one another. The individual, according to Hegel, tends to isolate and fix distinctions. It conceives of itself as an indivisible monad without openings toward others—as one who excludes and repels other individuals. As such, the individual is an important moment in the movement of the concept (across individuality, universality, and particularity), but it necessarily passes. Unlike Kierkegaard and those who follow his criticism that Hegel lacks regard for singularity, I appreciate this passing of the individual, because it is the condition of the possibility of transport. The logic of figuration makes it possible that one be carried out of oneself and to a different self.[39] Hegel's rhythm of partial sympathy breaks up the integrity of the individual. Rather than unifying to full singularity, divided characters resonate across a distance in a way that might partially confound their distinction.

Nevertheless, as already noted, Hegelian sympathy has little to do with compassion. Rather, having an afterfeeling or imitating another's feeling (*Nachempfinden*) involves the (partial) negation of the other and the self. Juggling identity and difference includes that one speak in another's voice while twisting his words.[40] Rather than compassionately affirming the fullness and sincerity of someone's feeling, Hegelian sympathy moves the other and the self: it transports. We have begun to see in the last chapter, and will discuss it further in this and the remaining chapters, that emotion, for Hegel, is always mediated intersubjectively and across a temporal lag. All emotion, thus, necessarily takes the shape of sympathy in the sense of afterfeeling or *Nachempfinden* (be it a sympathy with oneself). At the same time, *Nachempfinden* (in the sense of "adapting from") opens a future for transports because it calls for further textual enactments (or readings) of emotional judgments.

It becomes clear, then, that the emotional labor Hegel is concerned with has an ethical bent (if a somewhat perverse one). The "attention" and "exertion" that Hegel demands of the speculative philosopher consists in renouncing vanity and instead bearing the shame of risking sympathy (§ 58). The method of speculative philosophy thus shapes the relations between self and other. It helps the emotionally thinking and reading subject to identify with what at first appears as alien.[41]

With his opaque writing, Hegel responds to the violence he registers in conventional reading acts. Hegel specifies that the straightforward

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meaning that clever argumentation retains by avoiding the difficulty of attending to an unstable rhythm is, in fact, a negative one, or simply the negation of the subject-matter: "clever argumentation conducts itself negatively towards the content apprehended; it knows how to refute it and reduce it to nothing" (§ 59). The argumentative reader has everything already understood; her purely intellectual or formal knowledge, then, negates the otherness of the other by capturing it in a knowledge statement. Or she quickly makes up her mind and says: "*A rose is a rose* means nothing." In both cases, she is able to position herself above the "object" of her thought:

> Instead of entering into the immanent content of the subject-matter, the understanding always surveys [*übersieht*] the whole and stands above the individual existence of which it speaks, or, what amounts to the same thing, it does not see it at all. However, scientific cognition in fact requires that it give itself over to the life of the object. (§ 53, trans. modified)[42]

From the scientific thinker, that is, the speculative reader, Hegel demands sympathy with the life of the subject matter.

Sympathetic reading and sympathetic knowledge partially negate not only the other but also the self. They spring from the acknowledgment of self-difference.[43] Sympathetic "identification," for Hegel, does not consist in the affirmative recognition of the inner contents of other minds. Rather, "what is shared . . . is sharing itself, and consequently everyone's nonidentity, each one's nonidentity to himself and to others" (Nancy 1991, 66). The ethics of Hegelian sympathy thus destroys individual integrity. Rather than trying to preserve the unity of indivisibility, the subject opens to the self-difference and emotionality of the concept and becomes self-dissonant, unsettled, and emotional. Negativity thus plays an important part in Hegel's version of sympathy. "It is death—but if one is permitted to say so, it is not a tragic death . . . it is death as sharing and exposure. It is not murder—it is not death as extermination" (Nancy 1991, 66–67). The loss of self on either side must only be partial if this movement of comprehension is not to end in nothingness. The concept half-exerts itself by dancing to (at least) two different measures.

Reading Hegel's prose resembles reading a poem aloud: one hesitates as to where to put the accent—is it in accordance with the meter, or with the syntax, or with the stress of the meaning? What if all three differ from one another? Where to articulate the beat? When to rest the foot? The reader feels herself checked halfway through the sentence, gets lost, and is forced to go back, to repeat the reading in order to find

the subject. Subject and predicate exchange positions. Back and forth. Predicative propositions are by law irreversible, but the speculative judgment breaks this law to construct its rhythm. Rhythm "changes direction," as Deleuze and Guattari have it (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 313). The speculative philosopher reads propositions backward and forward. Such reading acts transform linearity into textuality and create plasticity.

The *Phenomenology* as a whole is one unendingly plastic—shape-taking—emotional judgment. I read the *Phenomenology* as the meticulous exposition of all the conflicts and contradictions Hegel could detect in the one infinite judgment that is the self-reflection of spirit. The different figures of consciousness in the *Phenomenology* articulate this emotional judgment in progress while consciousness reads itself differently in each of its shapes: consciousness is a consciousness is a consciousness is a consciousness. The *Phenomenology* in its entirety provides the speculative reading of this one judgment: the self-differentiation of spirit, across which spirit appears to itself by negating itself again and again. Speculative reading refuses to reduce the proposition to one single and straight meaning. The union of subject and predicate allows for difference while their absolute difference accepts being articulated as identical: "Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose."[44] While Rose is ceaselessly signifying rose and multiplying particularity without aspiration to the universal, the repetition also articulates her self-differentiality.

This kind of reading undermines the logic of argumentation by refusing to answer the question: "What is a speculative proposition?"[45] Nancy suggests, "We shall not reply to the question: Hegelian discourse nowhere does so. But it is against it, along it or on its edge, that we shall see Hegelian discourse being laid out, used and scattered, to the very extent that it is forced to change its form" (Nancy 2001, 77). "Hegel has already subtracted his text from the logic of argumentation, from the play of the *Gegenreden*" and responses (Nancy 2001, 11). Against and alongside predication, speculative writing prolongs the reading. And as this reading takes shape, moving back and forth in endless repetition, Hegel's discourse transforms, if ever so slightly. It begins to verge on poetry.[46]

Hegel's quasi-verse takes part in conventional logic while taking it apart. Not only does his strategy of seduction entangle the reader in the movement of the speculative, but it also leaves his own writing trapped in the logic of predication. In order to seduce the reader to give up her aloof position and superior authority, to renounce her vanity and to move with the content, Hegel himself has to write with, instead of about and above (*über*), the subject matter. "Speaking nearby or together with certainly differs from speaking for and about" (Trinh 1989, 101). But if he wants to stand a chance of being accepted when asking the reader

for a dance, Hegel needs to speak the language of his philosophical audience, the language of judgments and of formal logic. His exposition therefore must be divided within.

Hegel does not invent an idiom that would unambiguously express speculative movements. In order to appear, spirit borrows the form of judgments: "It is worth remembering that the dialectical movement likewise has propositions for its parts or elements. Thus, the highlighted difficulty seems to recur continually" (§ 66). Spirit's self-reflection requires that spirit abandon itself to finite assertions. Whether it will grasp itself across that difference remains an open question.

What is meant as interplay between predicative judgment and speculative judgment can always be read simply as predication. "The philosophical proposition, because it is a proposition [a *Satz*], evokes the common opinion about both the usual relationship between subject and predicate and the customary procedure of knowledge" (§ 63). Hegel conceives of the speculative as a movement, yet every sentence (*Satz*) is set (*gesetzt*) according to grammatical and logical laws (*Gesetze*), which Hegel is not ready to break. Hegel does not invent a language different from the one that can be read as predicative judgment. There is no new speculative language which escapes the spider web of predicative judgments spun by blood-sucking concepts (to invoke Nietzsche). There is no strictly speculative idiom that avoids finite thought and precludes argumentative reading by corresponding only to the speculative movement of the concept. Herein lays the passion of the new science that gives the reader the power to transport the text—despite the often-repeated fact that Hegel's texts feel like mousetraps.

Infinite judgments might best perform the exertion and attentiveness of the concept. In them, difference does not remain locked in or *eingeschlossen,* but gets disclosed or *aufgeschlossen.*[47] The labor of the concept consists in reaching through (*durchgreifen*) and joining what is commonly regarded as incompatible. Infinite judgments posit the incongruous as identical: for example, "the I is a thing," "spirit is a bone," or "poetry is a hedgehog." But these judgments make no sense in the context of traditional logic. For traditional logic—which is bound up with metaphysical ontology—mind and body or body and soul are incompatible.[48] Against the foil of traditional logic, it becomes clear, then, that it is neither mysticism nor metaphoric speech when Hegel describes the concept as a life-giving force. We call it life when spirit gets embodied or when a body is moved by soul. Life—the interpenetration of body and spirit—becomes possible, then, because the concept juggles both.

Yet such life is always haunted by death. "Spirit is a bone" can always be read as a straightforward assertion. It would not even be incorrect, or

against speculative logic, to say that spirit is a dead thing, inert and defenselessly exposed to the abstractions of clever argumentation. "Taken just as it stands, that judgment is devoid of spirit, or rather is itself the epitome of what it is to be devoid of spirit. However, in terms of its *concept,* it is in fact the richest in spirit" (§ 790, trans. modified). Speculatively comprehended, this infinite judgment manifests the power of spirit to join the disjointed. It is a precarious power, however—because spirit depends on others to read itself. Precisely because the speculative links the incompatible, the spheres it links can always fall apart.

Traditional logic accepts infinite judgments only in their negative form. Even Hegel mentions only the negatively infinite judgment (with examples like "spirit is not red," "the rose is not an elephant," and "the understanding is not a table") in his *Science of Logic* (Hegel 1989, 642). When the infinite judgment is taken literally (which is always possible), we are in the realm of the negatively infinite judgment, and that means the death of the life of spirit: "Similarly death [is] a negatively infinite judgment . . . in death, as we ordinarily say, body and soul part, i.e., subject and predicate utterly diverge [*auseinanderfallen*]" (Hegel 1975a, §173, *Zusatz*). Death passes through the speculative judgments—and Hegel juggles identity and difference to keep them alive.[49]

The precariousness of speculative unions can provoke violence. Hegel is almost ready to smash the face of anyone who reminds him of this tenuousness: "The retort here would really have to go as far as smashing the skull of the person who makes a statement like that in order to demonstrate to him in a manner as palpable as his wisdom that for a person a bone is nothing in-itself and is even less *his* true actuality" (§ 339). Speculative sympathy includes anger, fear, despair, and grief. *Tropes of Transport* traces these figures of emotionality in the Hegelian text. The source of the text's power and fragility—its emotionality—lies, however, in its divided language that juggles argumentative and speculative syntax. Hegel's speculative thought is infected to the core with the abstract logic of the understanding. Power is shared: "in fact, non-speculative thinking also has its rights, which are valid"; and such power-sharing requires the ceaseless renegotiation of the terms of their disunity, and an incessant mediation and exposure to negativity (§ 65). In short, there is a constant demand for the work of emotionality.