Now it is time to reflect upon the dialectical development of reason from Kant to Hegel. In this attempt, we would not adopt any empiricist scientism or any analyticist dogmatism and that way handicap the dynamism and the interpenetrability of concepts in their revolutionary jumps at anything and everything including the impossible, untouchable and the prohibited areas of knowledge and reality in order to grasp them and even to change them. A dialectical critique of reason, same as ours, cannot just lament on the inabilities and limitations of it, but has also to bravely take the risk of demonstrating its abilities and strength, its capability to catch the uncatchable, to grasp the conditions of the unconditioned, to know the unknowable, to change the unchangeable, to visualise the invisible and even to outargue unarguable. Reason has the ability to demystify the mystified. Each and every intellectual and practical endeavour shows nothing less than this. And we would definitely, for instance, try to know the unknowable things
in themselves of Kant.

We have tried to establish in the chapter on Hegel that the reason is both subjective and objective, that it is both the knower and the known. We saw that the dialectical materialists also consider this unity of being and knowing as an inseparable and comprehensive one and that they consider this as one of the basic questions of philosophy.¹ We fully agree with the approach/truth of identity of being and knowing which was introduced by Hegel and later on accepted by Marxists. At the same time, we have to also see the weaknesses of Hegel in this identity.

In order to keep up the stream of reason unbroken, we follow, in the main, Hegel in reading Kant, and Marx in analysing Hegel. This is only part of the fact, and so this does not mean that we don't bring in the criticisms by others.

We will take care to avoid the insignificant questions like the number of categories or that of the formal strictness in deduction of them. Instead, our concern would be on the essential thread of their mission and on the question how far they are justified and successful in it. Naturally, on the whole,

this can only be an issue-wise treatment, and not a commentator-wise one.

In a short critique like ours, one is forced to limit the themes. And, we have chosen to concentrate on the logical and the closely related aspects of it. Definitely, this would be a consideration of reason's ability to know or not to know reality, and of the idealism or materialism involved in these attempts of reason. By reason, we mean the human faculty of cognition in its socio-historical continuity. We would take up this two-fold consideration in an order of development from Kant to Hegel. We would buttress this treatment from both sides with two additional planks— one, in the beginning itself, with a brief account of the socio-political background of the advent of reason; and the other, as an ending note, with a reflection on the insights left for the present and future by dialectics.

Below, the 'advent of reason' (6.1) deals with the circumstantial levers behind the resurgence of reason; 'Copernican turn of reason' (6.2) treats the subjective reason in Kant; 'unity of reason' (6.3) presents Hegel's objectivisation of reason through an assessment of Kant; 'de-ontologisation of reason' (6.4) is a critique of Hegel; and the 'message of dialectical reason' (6.5) is the ending note of this critique.
6.1 Advent of Reason

Strictly speaking, it is not the advent, but the successful come back with vengeance of a defeated reason that we are going to deal here. To view from the modern period, it is an advent; otherwise, it is a re-emergence of reason that flourished among the ancient Greeks and was forced to go underground during the scholastic reign. However, for the modern philosophy, the reason's comeback, in its immediacy, is only an advent. We will first justify the need to bring in the socio-political circumstances that make up the stage for the rise of new philosophy, the slow awakening of reason after a long medieval hibernation.

It is generally said that circumstances create consciousness. There is a part of truth in it. The other part lies in its dialectical complement. Commenting on the materialist doctrine of Feuerbach, Marx said:

The materialist doctrine that men are product of circumstances and upbringing and that, therefore changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that men themselves change circumstances... 2

2. Third thesis in Karl Marx's Theses on Feuerbach.
This statement of Marx correctly gives us a complete picture of the issue. We have already dealt with the realm of consciousness all through the earlier chapters and we are again going to reflect upon it. So, what is lacking in us and what we have to immediately bring in is the description of the circumstantial propellers behind the advent of reason.

The rise of capitalism is the major factor behind the advent of reason. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 to Turks, the consequent shift of the centre of trade from Venice to the West European cities and their competition in colonising the new found wealth overseas, the development of international finance and the revolution in productive forces especially in methods of farming pushed in front a new class, the bourgeoisie. The sudden inflow of wealth from the overseas, and the resultant new needs of merchant enterprises could not adapt to the old feudal economies. Land became a property that can be sold or bought. Businessmen and farmers needed changes in the old political and property set up. The glorious revolution of England, American War of Independence and the French Revolution that raised the slogans of liberty, equality and fraternity were all bourgeois revolutions.

The new monied class of bourgeoisie, basically bankers and merchants, are neither kings nor aristocrats. But, they controlled the whole means of exchange; they even financed the
campaigns of kings. Let us cite part of a revealing account of their deals:

The range of interests in which the German banking houses were involved is astonishing. The Welsers had invested in the Portuguese voyage of 1505 to the East Indies, financed an expedition, half commercial, half military, to Venezuela in 1627, were engaged in spice trade..., were partners in silver and copper mines in the Tirol and Hungary, ... The Fuggers... farmed a large part of the receipts drawn by the Spanish Crown from its estates, held silver and quick silver mines in Spain, controlled banking and commercial business in Italy,... They advanced the money which made Albrecht of Brandenberg archbishop of Mainz; ... provided the funds with which Charles V bought the imperial crown,...; and found the money with which Charles raised troops to fight the Protestants in 1552. 3

The power of this monied class is very evident from the account above. This class had to overturn many things old. The rise of this class, bourgeois political revolutions, the Reformation movement that challenged the papal power, the resurgence of reason in its rational and empirical modes in the new thought systems in both politics and philosophy, all went hand in hand during this tumultous transition period. If bourgeoisie has emerged as a class, the concepts of nation state and civil government have come up as their political tools.

The same class leadership was behind Reformation also. As the Bible thanks to the innovations in printing, could be made available to the Christian masses, the mediation of the Catholic church could be challenged. Martin Luther declared that Bible, not the Catholic church, is the source of truth, and nation, not the Pope or Emperor, the source of power. The new national sovereigns rejected the imperial pretensions of Rome in matters of politics and faith. John Calvin's protestantism also could mould a new business class in France and even in America. Though Calvin was against usury, he argued for a fair return on capital. As Crossman commented, these changes were "sufficient to enable a beginning to be made with the construction of a modern moral and political theory. The sober merchants of Antwerp and Lyons and Geneva, liberated from Rome, and freed from the restrictions of feudal economics gradually evolved that philosophy of industry, thrift and good works which was to provide a basis for business confidence and private enterprise in England and America too."\(^4\)

---

4. Ibid. p. 36.
The longing for the independent nation states coincided with the need for internal structural changes in the form of government. The old 'Divine Right' of Kings and the claims of church to challenge the state were exploded. Hobbes, despite his justification of a new despotism (*Leviathan*) and Locke (*Treatise on Civil Government*) did this job. Locke argued for a representative democracy, and natural rights of man. In France, Voltaire and Montesquieu followed Locke. More or less in the same line, Thomas Paine, in America, argued for a doctrine of rights of man and of democracy. Rousseau differed with Diderot's Lockean rationalism; but, in politics his justification were for 'The General Will'. Thus everything 'divine' in society and polity were subjected to interrogation by reason. Even God was brought down and soiled as we witness in the daring act of Spinoza's pantheism.

Though the argument of the bourgeoisie for equality is infected with its own interests, overall theirs was a progressive act. The antifeudal character of this view expresses itself in its maturity in the philosophical declaration of Descartes (*Discourse on Method*) that "the ability to reason... is
naturally equal in all men."5

The reason in empiricism is still more incisive. Not only that extra human powers were questioned in the socio-political realm in this period, but that even innate powers of our own mind were questioned by empiricists. Nothing other than reason and science was accorded credibility. Even Euclidean axioms, so far considered to be self-evident analytic truths were questioned; Kant considered them synthetic (though, a priori). Kant had to declare that even metaphysics has to become a science, or else it should prepare itself to face death.

Newtonian science has given a tremendous impetus to this trend. This inspired empirical ventures and the quest for experimentation and discouraged the wild speculative attempts. Metaphysics was challenged; Newton's physics made its entry everywhere. It entered even in economics. Physiocrats led by Turgot argued for Newton's laws in economics. Later, Adam Smith had only to transpose their theories that had relevance in the realm of agriculture to something new suited to the area of commerce. Physics' rule of economics is nothing surprising compared to the challenges given to metaphysics by it.

By now, with confidence we can say that the advent of reason has reached to a point of no return. Once the reason ensured a safe landing, it was soon inflicted by the tensions of the rationalist-empiricist conflict. And Immanuel Kant was necessarily there to intervene in this dispute. The nature of his mediation we would see in the coming section (6.2).

6.2 Copernican Turn of Reason

Reason in its rationalist-empiricist polemic was what Kant had to face. He designated himself as a serious mediator. So, his mission was to reconcile the two opposing trends one viewing reason as a priori, innate, and the other taking reason as a posteriori, empirical. Rationalists took self-evident principles, internal to mind as truths of analytic certainty. Empiricists considered experience as the sole content of knowledge. For empiricists, there is nothing called self-evident truth.

As it was Hume who awakened him from his dogmatic slumber, Kant rightly took experience as an element of truth. He accepted this element for giving universality to knowledge so that it can be free from subjectivism. This was his device against rationalism. At the same time, Kant thought, an element of certainty (a priori certainty for Kant) also has to be
provided to plug the empiricist loophole. Thus Kant advanced a reconciliation, a solution to both what Kant calls the rationalist dogmatism and empiricist skepticism.

The possible knowledge, for Kant, is only a phenomenology realized through the unity of concepts and percepts. There are other elements of mediation and also conditions that make possible this knowledge. The whole incredible edifice he builds up to substantiate the reconciliation that he himself has advanced forms only element of fictional magneticism with which he attracted a philosophy audience. Kant was very successful in realizing this aim, and we also have no other way but to go through these bricks and plaster where and when we need.

Kant called this reconciliation, this third form of philosophy, critical philosophy. He called it also as transcendental idealism or sometimes as critical idealism. We would see in the course of this section whether Kant could really reconcile the trends. However, we shall first see what he means by transcendental.

Kant uses 'transcendental' not in the usual sense of 'not immanent'. He accords to it a unique meaning. This, in essence, means 'related to objects, but not yet empirical' or 'relating to objects in an a priori way'. This is the meaning in which transcendental philosophy or transcendental idealism is
used. Kant says:

I entitle transcendental all knowledge which is
occupied not so much with objects as with the
mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as
this mode is to be possible a priori. 6

Again,

... What can alone be entitled transcendental is the
knowledge that... representations are not of empiri-
cal origin, and the possibility that they can
yet relate a priori to objects of experience.7

Or again,

The term 'transcendental'... signifies such knowledge
as concerns the a priori possibility of knowledge,
or its a priori employment. 8

It is a strange meaning; but this is the sense in which
Kant tries to explain his reconciliation. When Kant unites the
a priori and a posteriori elements of knowledge, what he wants
is not a contingent synthetic combination of intuitions.9 The
synthesis is done in a conceptual level, not in an empirical
level.10 That means, the synthesis is done a priori. This

7. Ibid. p. 96.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid. p. 50.
10. Ibid. p. 51. "It cannot be experience, because the suggested princi-
ple has connected the second representation with the
first, not only with greater universality, but also with
character of necessity, and therefore completely a priori and
on the basis of mere concepts."
unity or synthesis is transcendental.

How is it possible to add something new to the a priori analytic knowledge without taking something from the empirical realm? True, the addition is taking place. But it is because of the active extension from the side of the a priori. This is because of the ampliative principles involved in synthesis. The difference between analytic and synthetic essentially lies in the fact that while the identity of subject and predicate in the analytic is immediate, this is mediate in the latter. And this mediation involved in the synthesis is just an espousal of what is already conceived a priori.

It is to give necessity and certainty to the knowledge that Kant avoided empirical synthesis. The experimentation, here, has no other way but to agree with the a priori conceptions. In the system of concepts/categories and percepts/sensible intuitions also, the former are the active participants. Thus, one thing is clear that Kant's emphasis is on the subjective; all experimentations and all the processes attached to the a posteriori/empirical elements are supposed only to vindicate the subject; predicate is just the subject. But, such a mediation allowed by Kant amounts to no mediation. Here, we find his subjectivism; the Copernican turn, the claim of Kant's revolution

11. Ibid.
in philosophy is also the same.

Kant himself has declared that the concern of his transcendental idealism is not on the relation of knowledge to its object. Kant:

The distinction between the transcendental and the empirical belongs therefore only to the critique of knowledge; it does not concern the relation of that knowledge to its object. 12

Again,

By transcendental idealism I mean the doctrine that appearances are to be regarded as being, one and all, representations only, not things in themselves, and that time and space are therefore only sensible forms of our intuition, not determinations given as existing by themselves, nor conditions of objects viewed as things in themselves. 13

The two quotes above together speak that neither the philosophy is concerned with the knowledge of reality, nor are we in a position to know the objects viewed as things in themselves. Later, we would interrogate the fairness in such a view. But now let us ponder on the question why Kant has taken such a negative attitude. Kant's main concern in the mission of the historic reconciliation turned out to be "a science of

12. Ibid. p. 96.
13. Ibid. p. 345.
the mere examination of pure reason, of its sources and limits."\(^\text{14}\) Kant preferred to call this a critique, not a doctrine;

... it should be called a critique, not a doctrine, of pure reason. Its utility, in speculation, ought properly to be only negative, not to extend, but only to clarify our reason, and keep it free from errors - which is already a very great gain.\(^\text{15}\)

Kant's whole project is negative because he is satisfied in 'better not extend knowledge than speculate errors'. Such an attitude could keep Kant only in a fix and that way make him commit negative errors. And Hegel's criticisms of Kant clearly established this truth.

Kant's choice to remain a philosopher of negative reason makes Hegel call him 'philosopher of the understanding' distinct from that of speculative and positive reason. We saw that the sides understanding (abstract) and negative reason (dialectical) are only two 'moments' or premisses which takes us to the 'truth' or conclusion, in Hegelian logical triad. Hegel regards the speculative side (positive reason) as rich in content, and as something worthy of philosophical endeavor.

\(^{14}\) Ibid. p. 59.

\(^{15}\) Ibid. (emphasis added)
It is through a critique of Kant, that Hegel comes to the position of a speculative philosopher expounding positive reason. When we criticise Kant, one should not forget that we also uphold the trends of positive reason and speculation instrumental to the idea of a dialectical totality hidden in Kant despite his refusal of them. We would see this in the next section (6.3). Now we shall go through the facts of subjectivism and the inherent empiricism in Kant's transcendental/critical idealism, of the subjectivism in the Copernican revolution and Kant's inability in overcoming this in a sublated objectivism, of Kant's separation of method from content, i.e., separating the process of examination of instruments of knowledge from knowledge itself, and of the onesidedness in his defense of formal logic. In all through this treatment we would see that reason in Kant is subjective.

To begin with, Kant's project was similar to Hume's. Nicholas Capaldi points out the similarities in Hume's introduction to his Treatise and Kant's prefaces to his first Critique. In both Hume and Kant we can see (i) a need to put metaphysics in the right track, (ii) an attempt to make human reason as the centre of study and (iii) an appeal to experience to
reject transcendent explanations as unscientific. This similarity of project could retain Kant a Humean to a certain extent, despite the strong differences between them. Hume's fatal attacks on causality influenced to a great extent Kant. And Kant gives credit to Hume for wakening him from the 'dogmatic slumber' lulled by the Leibnizian and Wolffian rationalism. At the same time, Kant took much care not to fall a victim to Hume's empiricist, skeptical nihilism. As a precaution, Kant transferred causality from empirical realm to an a priori area making it a category of relation; he kept necessity also as an a priori category. In this attempt of subjectivisation, Kant could not escape internalising a bit of empiricism from Hume. Hegel also terms Kant an 'empiricist'.

Kant's system was against both rationalism and empiricism. Also what Findlay talks of Logico-mathematicism and Radical Empiricism amounts to the same. According to Findlay, Kant erected a system against these two related errors. Findlay is right in holding Kant for committing the same mistakes.

---


which he tries to refute. Findlay on Kant:

... The wonderment with which he regards what he calls the synthetic A Priori, his own discovery ..., is a wonderment derived in part from a superstitious reverence for a supposedly complete Formal Logic and in part from what one may call a deep seated crypto-empiricism. It is the latter which leads Kant to resort to the most fantastic hypotheses, themselves cryptically empiricistic and psychologistic,... 18

Kant's empiricism lies in his refusal to accept anything behind the representations, appearances and phenomena. The initial unity of the discrete appearances are not cognized from the real objects or the things in themselves, but supplied externally to it through the a priori categories of the subject, the knower. The objects for Kant are only what is given to us. This division of appearance and reality took Kant to resort to various hypotheses of introducing limiting concepts like noumena or of unsuccessfully attempting to bridge the gap between these two realms. In fact, subjectivism and empiricism are strongly linked in Kant, and we would see this again and again on the way of our appreciation.

Again, we can see the subjectivism in the very conception and execution of Kant's Copernican project. In the pre-Copernican

18. Ibid.
astronomy, earth is generally taken passive. Copernicus took earth an active participant in the solar system. The factor of the movement of spectator on earth or, for that matter, the movement of earth itself was taken into account in observations and conclusions regarding astronomy. This is the Copernican revolution in astronomy. Taking human faculty as an active element in the knowledge formation is Kant's Copernican revolution in philosophy. True, he took a priori concepts as the active component and treated intuitions (sensible intuitions, percepts) as passive component of appearances. Already, we saw that the synthetic a priori judgements are just ampliative principles resulting from an a priori extension to objects (not things in themselves). One should note that this extension is from the side of the a priori, and it is only an a priori checking of the data (still, strangely, not empirical) where the intuitions are only to agree with the a priori concepts. Intuitions just 'apply' to concepts, while concepts 'apprehend' a priori the intuitions, not empirically.

So, it is clear that the whole Copernican perspective is a subjectivist one, and the over-enthusiasm shown in the suppression of intuitions to passivity is the over-Copernicanism in Kant which could have been avoided. In essence, the external, objective element of knowledge, i.e., the intuitions are just unwanted ornamental appendices in Kant's epistemology.
Analysing the metaphysics and subjectivism involved in this, Hegel says that the subject-object identity in Kant is only formal. We also saw that the mediation involved in the subject-predicate identity in the synthetic a priori statements is no mediation.

Hegel sees that the subject and things exist each for itself in Kant. We are separate, epistemologically separate from things, and they are separate from us. We only assume or posit that things are. As we are not knowing them (things in themselves of Kant), we only posit them. That means, the objectivity of the external world is just subjective, not made subjective, not made known; things are objective in the sense that the knowledge of them is denied to us. To use another language of Hegel, that we saw in the chapter on Fichte and Schelling, there is only a subjective subject-object identity. That is, the finite categories of understanding in Kant are not able to clasp the original identity in totality to the point of absolute grasp of it. This is because of the finite and subjective nature of Kant's categories. Here, Hegel terms the idealism of Kant psychological also. Because, in a strict sense, Kant is not able to come out of the Cartesian 'I think'. No sublation of Kant's subjectivism takes place.

Moreover, the natural objectivisation attempts of the subjective reason in Kant are never allowed by Kant as logically and epistemologically legitimate. Again this is a subjective limitation of a conscious Kant. Kant thinks that it is an inherent mistake on the part of human reason to enter into the unauthorised realms of objects and things-in-themselves. In the ascending series, reason which is able to know each and every condition in the series aims, illegitimately in Kant’s parlance, to know the totality of conditions and even the Unconditioned. This objectivisation trend of reason is the hidden other in Kant’s subjective reason that Hegel later on posits objectively. We will see later that this unity of reason in Hegel is inclusive of the illicit reason in Kant. When Jonathan Bennet calls the objective trend of Kant’s reason as ascending reason\textsuperscript{20} (derived from the ascending series) neither he visualize any bud of objective reason in it nor he is for it. Bennet sees the ascending reason as only the part of the subjective reason that, for him, is really and shall be legitimately subjective.

Limiting this reason only as subjective and as a method is the manifest attitude of formal logic. While talking about the ascension/objectivisation/trascendentalisation of reason, Kant points out as a misdeed of this reason that this wants to make a systematic unity "necessary, not only subjectively and logically, as a method, but objectively also."\(^{21}\) We quote this to state that in common philosophy, subjectivity, logic (read formal logic) and method go together. Logic is subjective, formal and a method. When Hegel argued for a content to this, the whole concept of logic has changed. Hegel opposed the separation of method from content. Now let us see Hegel's opposition to Kant in separating method from content.

Hegel opposed the very idea of first analysing our faculty of knowledge before we gain any knowledge. The very separation of knowledge from the faculty of knowledge, that of content from method, is paradoxical. The paradox is that knowledge is a must to draw limits to knowledge. The Idea that instrument of knowledge should be inspected before and without using it is an impossibility. Kant's subjectivism and empiricism can again be sensed here. Kant follows Locke in taking the

\(^{21}\) N.K. Smith (Tr.), *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, op.cit. p. 536.
examination of powers of reason and understanding as prior to the very attempt of making any beginning in knowledge. Empiricists as a whole including Kant, and rationalists as well, not to exclude Kant again, has only part of reason, finite reason at hand; the unity of reason, the infinite reason where the identity of infinite and finite is explicit, which is capable of grasping the totality, the whole, the things in themselves is lacking in these philosophers. That is why Hegel called Kant a philosopher of the understanding with finite reason, the empiricist, the absolute thinker lacking in means to grasp the concrete that is rich in sides.

The so-called testing in abstraction is more or less nothing. This misguided process can reveal an abstract side. But only actions can reveal the concrete full truth. In Lesser Logic (Logic in Encyclopaedia), Hegel ridicules Kant's kind of endeavors by resorting to a metaphor. Kant's attempt is like refusing to enter water until one has learned to swim, says Hegel. Hegel positively asserts, and he is right in doing so, that the act of knowing an object and the being of the object are not separable; these cannot be two separate enterprises as Kant has thought. Kant's metaphysical separation of form from content is one and the same folly of his formalism, subjectivism and empiricism.
When Capaldi says that

contrary to what critics such as Strawson say, the Copernican model is coherent when correctly understood, and where difficulties arise they are the result of Kant's Aristotelianism and of his not being Copernican enough, 22

It is Capaldi who does not understand that the Copernican model of Kant (subjectivism) and the Aristotelianism (formal logic) in him are one and the same thing. In one way, Capaldi is correct in reading Strawson. Critics like P.F. Strawson 23 are involved in further cutting down Kant who himself has self-edited to the point of unexcisable subjectivism and empiricism. Despite the bulkiness of Kant, thanks to the construction of his big fiction of 'as ifs', regulative ideas, limiting concepts, so on and so forth, the essential Kant, especially in epistemology and logic, is a largely self-edited subjectivist. When we have already established that Kant remained defensive and negative with the self-defeating aim of 'better not take risk and advance than to commit errors', the preamble of his transcendentalism, that the execution of his

22. Nicholas Capaldi, op.cit. p. 239.

whole Copernican project amounted to partial, finite, one-sided, abstract, formal, subjectivist and empiricist results, and that we indirectly suggest that Kant could have gone further, sublated himself into a position of positive reason, enabling thus to have a grasp of the total, the concrete, the whole, the empiricist attempts like that of Strawson in further excising an already excised Kant would amount to be meaningless.

Findlay terms Strawson's attempt of reconstructing (or destructing) Kant as what is called Transcendental Excision.24 He means by this cutting short a thinker, cutting out the inconsistent, incoherent parts. In Kant's case, Findlay also argues for a transcendental excision, though he differs with Strawson in what to cut and what not to cut.25 We argue not for an excision, but instead a sublation of the subjectivism. The implicit attempts of such a sublation can be seen in Kant which we would reveal soon. Before that we like to conclude a major point we were explicating so far. This is that the valid reason in Kant is basically subjective; his categories are subjective; space and time, the forms of


25. Ibid. p. 147. "...I would wish the last trace of constructive subjectivism to be excised from Kant..."
intuition, are subjective; synthetic knowledge is also an a priori attempt. The essence of the Copernican revolution is the subjectivisation of reason. And in the mission of reconciliation, he is a failure to a great extent; his metaphysical separation of subject and object of knowledge allowed all the dichotomies their onesided abstractions; his bridging attempts could not save him from being a dualist.

6.3 Unity of Reason

So far we have seen only the negative Kant. And we understood that this is the essential Kant in epistemology. The other part of his dualism is the Kant who talks of freedom and practical reason. There is no real synthesis between the two. Such a sublated unity is there only in Hegel. The unity in Kant is not at the level of truth and knowledge, but a question of faith, a mere ought; the unity in Kant, is not an achievement of reason, as Hegel has remarked. At the same time we can see flashes of speculative thought in the form of hidden unrecognised middles or sometimes as flexible conceptions or even mediations and triplicities or bridging ventures which Hegel also recognises in the course of his criticism of Kant. In this section, we will arrive at Hegel's objective unity of reason, objectivisation and the
subsequent ontologisation of reason by way of scanning Kant and projecting these hidden gems. The implicit possibility of cognition of things in themselves in Kant would be made explicit.

In Kant, things in themselves are an abstraction devoid of content. It becomes an assumption; we know that we don't know them! Without relating to them, how can the subject say that there are things in themselves? The logic in this question can be used also to delete things in themselves. Also, Fichte did it. The same logic is also useful to bring back these unknown and unknowable entities into the frame of knowledge. That is, the identity of what is perceived and what is existent, that of what is for us and what is in itself or the identity of appearance and reality, that of phenomena and things in themselves can be substantiated by this logic. Here, either appearance or the reality can be accepted; or again both can be accepted as identical or at least related through some mediating links. Our attempt here is on the lines of the latter, i.e., to point out the original identity of phenomena and things in themselves.

Our perception is entirely different from the kind of identity that Bennet conceives. In *Kant's Analytic*, Bennet says:

*I can find no sense in talk about a mode of knowing, intellectual or otherwise, which*
presents one with things not as they appear but as they are. 26

Here Bennet finds sense only in modes of cognition which present things as they appear, and not as they are. Since we already saw in the Chapter on Hegel that a dialectical identity is a differentiated one, we cannot and do not reject either appearance or reality. We conceive both together as different and identical, not as an abstract identity devoid of determinations. When all determinations of a thing is grasped, we grasp the reality of it. Appearance results out of a less complete grasp of determinations. Bennet's concern is with the appearance and his worry is that Kant has wrongly introduced an illogical appendix, the things as they are. Our worry is that Kant is right in doing this, but he is wrong in not pursuing further its cognition. Instead, Kant introduced limiting concepts to obstruct even the natural pursuit of human reason in conceiving the things in themselves.

Let us take up two cases to project the unrecognised mediating links between the appearances/phenomena and things in

themselves from Kant's edifice itself:

(i) One is the concept of noumena, introduced as a problematic and limiting concept. We will see that this is actually a mediating concept. Kant claims that the function of this concept is "to curb the pretensions of sensibility." The assumption of things in themselves on the one hand, and the acceptance that sensible intuitions, i.e., the schematised representations or the percepts or the temporal data form the objects of our knowledge on the other, together gives a clear indication that the source of these sensible intuitions is nothing but the things in themselves, not as such given to us; what is given to us are the appearances. That means, appearances are appearances of things in themselves. But this possible relating has to be stopped. For this he introduces the limiting concept.

But the limiting concept, against his aim, gives another clue of its relation to both things in themselves and appearances. Noumena is possible through what is called intellectual intuition. Negatively, noumenon is "an object of non-sensible intuition", and positively it is comprehended through "a special mode of intuition, namely, the intellectual." Kant says

28. Ibid. p. 268.
that this mode of intuition is a possibility, but not for
human beings; we can only think of it. Here also, as usual,
Kant introduced a possibility of a mode of expression of
things in themselves, as he did, in the beginning, the possi-
bility of the existence of the things in themselves. Kant
accepted that human reason can think of it; without this
acceptance, Kant could not have availed the right to think and
assume these.

The ideological intention of Kant to avoid the contradiction
between the real and experiential realms takes him to the
task of finding these third possibilities between the two
which are "not in any way contradictory".29 Kant's status of
an inconsistent formal logician, a status of a consistent
standing in between the formal and dialectical logics, a rich
position of progress in our view, helps him to take two
positions at a time. One is a formal logical position of
consistency which does not defy the law of formal contradic-
tion. For this, Kant makes two contradictory (in our view, two
related) things into two absolutes in order to avoid a contr-
adiction between them, a method of formal logic we saw in
the second chapter. For instance, here, two absolutes of

29. Ibid. p. 271.
appearances and things in themselves, two absolutes of sensible intuition and intellectual intuition. In the question of cognition, Kant is consistent with the appearances and sensible intuition. Then the question how human reason relates with the other ontological positing, i.e. here, the things in themselves and intellectual intuition, takes him to resort to dialectical and speculative modes of thinking, no way consistent with the traditional law of contradiction. But still, Kant wished to state that there is no contradiction in resorting to such concepts. Kant, on noumenon:

The concept of a noumenon - that is, of a thing which is not to be thought as object of the senses but as a thing in itself, solely through a pure understanding - is not in any way contradictory. 30

So, by the concept of noumenon, Kant means the concept of a thing in itself, thought about solely through pure understanding unaffected by sensibility. If pure understanding is affected by sensibility and mediated by schematism, then the nature of intuition would not be intellectual and atemporal, but sensible and temporal. Thing in itself is immediately intuited in noumenon, distinct

30. Ibid.
from its being mediately intuited in phenomenon. The mediation of schema in phenomenon makes them available to us to be conceived through categories. This is not possible in the case of noumena. So, sensibility, schematism and for that matter the categories are not applicable to the noumenon which is intellectually intuited, but not by us. Because pure understanding is just a possibility, not a possibility for us. Intellectual intuition is a possible kind of intuition, but not possible for human reason. This assumption of impossibility of human reason is due to the obstinate negative reason in Kant. But he went to the extent of pointing out a possibility. The subjectivised reason is incapable of realizing this possibility. A sublated, objective unity of reason can realize this possibility as a reality.

What we want to state beyond doubt is that though, we agree with other readers of Kant in seeing these concepts of appearance, phenomenon, noumenon and thing in itself as discrete, as Kant also has seen it, we, as an addition, see also a necessary connection between them which Kant himself predicted, but only to the extent of a possibility. And we should be obliged to Kant in that he gave us the maximum possible through his method, through his reason. The conclusions we reached here can again be substantiated by analysing the antinomies in Kant.
(ii) Our second case of example to explicate the possibility of the cognition of things in themselves is an analysis of antinomies. The antinomies expressed as cosmological ideas are appearances in Kant. Here also, in his hasteness to save the formal law of contradiction, Kant resorts to certain devices. These devices, against Kant's wish, become practically fillers bridging the antinomial gaps. Here also, noumena come forward in Kant's help. Especially in the dynamical set of antinomies (third and fourth), Kant introduces a heterogeneous member (we have seen this in the chapter on Kant - 3.7 and 3.8), an intelligible member among the homogeneous series of sensible conditions.

This introduction of a break, which Kant does not permit in the case of the mathematical group of first and second antinomies, helps him to differentiate absolutely the sensible series from the new intelligible member. This is again the same method that we saw in the case (i), a method of absolutising two sides of contradiction to diffuse contradiction and that way safeguard the formal law of contradiction. The intelligible condition that we get here is made absolutely different from the rest of the series. This member, in our view, is a member able to negotiate with both the conditional and the unconditioned. This member is again the noumenon only.
As an example, let us take the third antinomy - that of causality and freedom. Kant removes the contradiction between the thesis (there is not only determinism, but freedom also) and antithesis (there is no freedom at all, but only causal laws of determinism) with the help of the intelligible member that brings in a qualitative difference in the series making thesis and anti-thesis as things of two different levels, as two kinds of causality. What Kant introduced as an intelligible member of the series is the unconditioned. He says that in this way "the unconditioned is set prior to the appearance"\textsuperscript{31} without cutting short the series and without hurdling the "invariably conditioned character of the appearances."\textsuperscript{32} This makes the unconditioned empirical though non-sensible (intelligible).\textsuperscript{33} Kant:

\begin{quote}
In the dynamical series, ... the completely conditioned, which is inseparable from the series considered as appearance, is bound up with a condition which, while indeed empirically unconditioned, is also non-sensible. We are thus able to obtain satisfaction for understanding on the one hand and for reason on the other. \textsuperscript{34}
\end{quote}

Here, a beautiful unity is also achieved. Here, the infinity of the series is not destroyed; but the infinity is finitely conceived as the unconditioned. If we don't follow

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. p. 463.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
Kant's formal logic, and if we follow Hegel's dialectical logic, we can clearly find that the unity of finite and infinite and that of the conditioned and the unconditioned, reveal, in essence, the unity of opposites. A continuity between nature and 'beyond nature' which Kant does not accept as a logical possibility is actually conceived by Kant. Otherwise, how can Kant call the dynamical antinomies "the transcendent concepts of nature"? The immanent-transcendent continuum is implicit here.

Kant calls freedom *causa noumenon*. Freedom is the causality at the noumenal level. This interconnection is taken in apodictic validity for practical purposes only. In Practical Reason, freedom gets this certainty. Otherwise, as we again and again pointed out earlier, because of legitimacy attached to the formal law of contradiction in Kant, he separates freedom from the laws of nature. Kant transcendentalises freedom:

If freedom were determined in accordance with laws, it would not be freedom; it would simply be nature under another name. Nature and transcendental freedom differ as do conformity to law and lawlessness.

---

35. Ibid. p. 393.
This observation of Kant is valid as far as his negative reason is concerned. On the other hand, the possible unity of reason reveals that causality as phenomenon and freedom as noumenon are derivations from one and the same nature, things in themselves. We think that these two cases are strong enough to comprehend the possibility of the cognition of things in themselves by human reason.

We shall see some more traces of elements of identity and mediation in Kant. Through every third category in all of the four sets, the first two categories of each set are related. In all the four sets, the third is the unity of the first and second. The dynamism shown in the interrelation of judgements is more than that of categories. All the twelve judgements are interrelated. This is because all of them are related to the same schema of time; in all are applied the same manifold of sensible intuition. 38

Schematism in Kant is also an interesting example of mediation. The a priori extension involved in the synthetic a priori knowledge is also aimed by Kant as a case of mediation. But, as we have seen in the previous section (6.2), this is no genuine mediation; the identity involved in this

38. Ibid. pp. 107-10.
is an immediate one, but still the idea behind the unity of concepts and percepts is commendable. "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind".\textsuperscript{39} The very project to synthesise content and form, especially in the context of an empiricist-rationalist conflict, is definitely a symbol of speculative and dialectical insight, no matter whether Kant failed in this or not.

The mediation and triplicities are actually due to the speculative faculties unnoticed in Kant. In understanding itself we will see such productive faculties; we will see the unity of reason; we will see understanding in reason, and reason in understanding as well. Before going into this, we shall see a manifestation of this flexibility in Kant's usage of the word 'transcendental'. We are already used to the unique sense in which this word is used by Kant in his transcendental idealism. This is process of relating to the objects a priori, not empirically. This is an alternative to the rationalism and empiricism. But, the word, in practice, sometimes oscillates between these two trends. These other two meanings of the word are, in essence, 'empirical' and 'rational'. In Transcendental Dialectic, 'transcendental' is

\textsuperscript{39}. Ibid. p. 93.
used to express the trend to apply to the objects and things in themselves. Here, transcendental is closer to objects, to the objective, the empirical, or at least far from the subjective and a priori. The other sense of this usage is 'rational'. Kant talks of rational or transcendental element of history. In *Architectonic*, Kant contrasts the rational with the empirical. These three senses of a single word, we feel, cannot be accidental. The reason behind this flexible usage can only be a subconscious dialectic invisible but present throughout the Kantian philosophy.

His bridging attempts like bridging the two critiques with a third one, and bridging two faculties with a third faculty, the adhoc addition streak of adding and building whatever that suits him, the whole story of the 'as if' expressed in his proud use of hypothesis on the lines of Copernicus, all point at the hidden dialectic.

Now we shall come to another important and related issue - the question of identity of faculty of knowledge in Kant.

40. A detailed but a different kind of treatment of this enquiry into the meaning of the word 'transcendental' is available in Bencivenga. See Ermanno Bencivenga, *Kant's Copernican Revolution*, Oxford University Press, 1987. pp. 3-10.
Kant is very prolific in supplying us with a large number of faculties of knowledge. Valid knowledge in Kant is the synthetic a priori knowledge. And Kant has imposed strictures on reason to stop it from its quest for further knowledge, knowledge of things in themselves. Understanding is used as a limiting faculty of reason. Reason is a guiding faculty of understanding. Kant also talks about the productive imagination. Though these are all used in various ways and senses, we can find an identity also in them. Hegel says that the productive imagination or the transcendental imagination in Kant is the reason itself, because this is not the empirical imagination. Imagination is taken "an active faculty for the synthesis of manifold." Here, imagination mediates between sensibility and understanding. Again, 'productive imagination' is "a faculty of a priori synthesis." Here, this is understanding itself. Imagination is 'spontaneity' and hence productive. We are of the opinion that reason, understanding and imagination are all an identical faculty of cognition in human reason. Ascending reason is the speculative, dialectical

41. N.K. Smith (Tr.), op.cit. p. 144.
42. Ibid. p. 145.
43. Ibid. p. 165.
reason. Descending reason is understanding. Imagination is the all pervading spontaneity of reason.

Kant talks of conditions and ground of knowledge also. This is nothing but his concept of mind. The objective unity is one consciousness; the original apperception,^{44} unity of consciousness, original synthetic unity, identity of consciousness, the transcendental unity of apperception, synthetic unity of apperception, 'I think', ego, etc. are all one and the same thing in Kant. Why this much indirectness in Kant? A direct acceptance of the mind, Kant thought, would not be a proper answer to Hume. Both Hume and Kant accept no necessary connection between events, series, percepts. Both accepted what is called associability/association. Kant introduces a difference through a transcendental principle. This is an advance over Hume. Kant says that the associability or affinity of appearances needs an objective or transcendental ground by which the necessity of series can be understood. This positioning of a transcendental self as a ground of all syntheses is really an advance over the empiricist self.^{45} This was

---

44. Ibid. p. 145.

A Constructive Assessment Picturisation of Kant's Epistemology About the Possibility of Cognition of Things in Themselves

- Things in Themselves
  - Sensible Intuition (temporal)
  - Intellectual Intuition (atemporal)

- Phenomena (appearances)
  - Analysis
  - Descending Reason (understanding)

- Transcendental Self (Ego, 'I think', Identity of consciousness, Unity of Apperception, Original Identity)

- Nature (epistemologically transcendental and legitimate)

- Morals (epistemologically transcendental and illegitimate)

MATTER

COGNITION

FACULTY

MIND
much appreciated by Hegel. Walsh has rightly said that "...the Kantian unity of apperception is the germ of Hegel's doctrine of Spirit".\textsuperscript{46}

We have so far realized in this section three identities - (1) unity of matter or objects or things by pointing out the appearance-phenomenon-noumenon-thing in itself continuum, (2) unity of faculty by pointing out the unity of reason in the understanding-imagination-reason identity, and (3) unity of consciousness - a subject mind - by accepting Kant's transcendental unity of apperception. Now we have our own assessment picture of Kant's epistemology.

In \textit{Critique of Judgement}, the dialectical insight of Kant becomes very prominent, though in the final analysis he becomes, here also, a dualist. But still it is worth-discussing. We will take up the reflective/reflecting judgement, mainly because this would give us an opportunity to witness a possible mode of cognition of the actuality.

Kant talks of the "concept of causality of nature as of a being acting according to purposes",\textsuperscript{47} idea of a natural purpose, 'design'. The object of such an idea cannot be fully


determined according to mechanical laws of causality, because a question of purpose, a teleological element, is also involved. Here, Kant had to face something in between mechanism and teleology, between causality and freedom. How to determine the object of this idea? Kant answers that the judgements about this cannot be a determinant one; we can only reflect upon it; we cannot adequately determine the idea. But there can be a mode of understanding, a possible mode of intuition, higher than ours, which can determine these products of design and purpose. Kant calls it intuitive understanding. This is "a faculty of a complete spontaneity of intuition", "distinct from sensibility and quite independent of it." The dualism of actuality and possibility of objects inherent in human understanding (in Kant's view) is not there in intuitive understanding. The ground for this dualism "lies in the subject and in the nature of our cognitive faculties." "If our understanding were intuitive, it would have no objects but those which are actual." This possible mode of cognising

48. Ibid.
49. Ibid. p. 254.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid. Section 76 - 'Remark'.
52. Ibid.
the actuality is again dogmatically denied by Kant to human reason. Kant is against "...the irrepressible demand of reason to assume something (the original ground) necessarily existing as unconditioned, in which possibility and actuality should no longer be distinguished..."\textsuperscript{53}

Kant almost misses here an opportunity of perceiving the whole. In the sections on the reflective judgement, Kant comes almost to a dialectic of possibility and actuality, universal and particular, whole and part, causality and freedom etc.

In determinant judgement, a particular is identified as a universal when the former is subsumed under the latter. In reflective judgement, the particular is given; the universal has to be found for it. This is the opening left for the universal, the infinite, the whole, the unconditioned, freedom, the things in themselves. The particular is causally determined; freedom of choice is given in finding/selecting the universal. Here also creeps in the dualism of keeping the parts, particulars, finites, and the like along with causality of nature on the one hand, and the treating of infinite, whole, universal etc. along with transcendent concept of freedom on the other.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
Still, we can say that the reflective judgement mediates between the concepts of nature and concepts of freedom, even though there is no genuine reconciliation or dialectic between them. Similarly, the hypothetical faculty of 'intuitive understanding is a speculative middle that could have diffused the dualism of the possibility and actuality of objects, of appearances and things in themselves. In reflective judgement, imagination and reason are also taken identical which vindicates our earlier conclusion.

In the case of the concept of beauty also, Kant finally absolutises the antithetic in the identity of the sensuous and the super sensuous, as Hegel has rightly analysed. Like reason, beauty is made something finite and subjective in Kant. "A possible mode of insight into the metaphysical structure of the whole is reduced to a psychological relation between the individual and the aesthetic object", as Stephen Priest has correctly commented.

Hegel is in favour of the cognizability of the thing in itself. As Hegel says, the fact that "the unity of the object and the

Notion is, after all, only Appearance does not end there. On this point, "it is precisely in the Notion that this manifoldness, in so far as it pertains to intuition in contrast to the Notion, is sublated and that through Notion the object is reduced to its non-contingent essential nature." Here the appearance becomes a manifestation of essence. In a balanced appreciation of Kant, Hegel says:

It will always stand out as a marvel how the Kantian philosophy recognised the relation of thought to sensuous reality, beyond which it did not advance, as only a relative relation of mere Appearance, and perfectly well recognised and enunciated a higher unity of both in the Idea in general and, for example, in the Idea of an intuitive understanding, and yet stopped short at this relative relation and the assertion that the Notion is and remains utterly separate from reality - thus asserting as truth what it declared to be finite cognition, and denouncing as an unjustified extravagance and a figment of thought what it recognised as truth and of which it established the specific notion.

Hegel not only referred to endorse the agnosticism in Kant, but also established an essential motion between the appearance and reality through mediations, justifying his perspective in

56. Ibid. p. 591.
57. Ibid. p. 592.
what he said that "motion is existent contradiction itself."\textsuperscript{58}

More or less similar to what Lenin considered, of course after a century, as knowledge - a movement from incompleteness towards completeness - was what Hegel had depicted in his Science of Logic. Hegel:

\ldots the Notion in its formal abstraction reveals itself as incomplete and through its own immanent dialectic passes over into reality; but it does not fall back again on to a ready-made reality confronting it and take refuge in something which has shown itself to be the unessential element of Appearance because, having looked around for something better, it has failed to find it; on the contrary, it produces the reality from its own sources. \textsuperscript{59}

Here, the incomplete appearance develops into an essential reality. Hegel effectively blocked the skepticism in Hume and agnosticism in Kant. Lenin rightly analyses:

\ldots Hume and Kant do not see the appearing Thing-in-itself in "phenomena", divorce phenomena from objective truth, doubt the objectivity of cognition, remove everything empirical from the Thing-in-itself... \textsuperscript{60}

What Kant is not able to hold fast is the contradiction between the finite and infinite. Things in themselves have to

\textsuperscript{58} Ibid. p. 440.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. pp. 591-2.

\textsuperscript{60} V.I. Lenin, \textit{Philosophical Notebooks} (Collected Works, Vol.38), Progress, Moscow, 1981. p. 205.
be transferred into things for us, not losing the unity between them. About this, Lenin:

The question how the infinite arrives at finite is sometimes considered as the essence of philosophy. But this question amounts to elucidating their connection... 61

Again,

The thing-in-itself is altogether an empty, lifeless abstraction. In life, in movement, each thing and everything is usually both "in itself" and "for others" in relation to an Other, being transformed from one state to the other. 62

In Engels, we get a completely demyfified picture of the dialectic of thing in itself and thing for us. Anything unknown can be a thing in itself which can be made for us through the progress of science and society. Engels is giving some examples:

The chemical substance produced in the bodies of plants and animals remained such "things-in-themselves" until organic chemistry began to produce them one after another; whereupon the "thing-in-itself" became a thing-for-us,... 63

We will not get into the details of the concrete examples he is giving. Now we shall limit this analysis of Kant with a declaration that it is possible to conceive things-in-themselves. Also, once again we will project the law of formal

contradiction as the cause of this inconsistency of Kant by quoting Kant himself:

... on the supposition that our empirical knowledge conforms to objects as things in themselves, we find that the unconditioned cannot be thought without contradiction, and that when, on the other hand, we suppose that our representation of things, as they are in themselves, but that these objects, as appearances, conform to our mode of representation, the contradiction vanishes... 64

Contrary to Kant, Hegel denies the formal law as devoid of content. By capturing the hidden identities in Kant, Hegel demonstrated the law of identity of opposites through his own system of thought. The 'subjective alone' reason of Kant is objectivised by Hegel. This he achieved through an identity of object reason and subject reason, that of being and knowing.

6.4 De-Ontologisation of Reason

As we have seen, the objectivisation of reason in Hegel is achieved through his identity of knowing and being, that of subject reason and object reason. It is important to answer the question that how Hegel achieved this identity without much difficulty. It is through a monism of idea, of thought. Kant accepted a material substratum at least unwillingly of

64. N.K. Smith (Tr.), op.cit. p. 24.
which we cannot have knowledge. Though this acceptance of matter is something that Kant rightly did, he could not achieve the unity of reason, an objective unity of reason which Hegel could achieve. Hegel made everything idea, thought, and from this everything into reason and logic, though matter/nature is accommodated within an overall frame of thought. His thought/idea is an objective idea and hence objective idealism.

Though Hegel stands and argues for a differentiated oneness, he, in practice, could not retain a subject reason as a faculty of cognition distinct from the object which for him is again reason or thought. This mixing up is mostly aided by the fact that the object of thought is itself thought. Here, on two counts, Hegel is deserved to be criticized - one, that he should have taken the objective world not as just thoughts but as the material world causing ideation in the subject mind; and two, that subject reason should have been distinguished as a faculty of knowledge and then, and only then it be considered part and parcel of the ontological whole, i.e., thought or idea or reason (in Hegel). Here, the development of reason, a reason that could swim across the odds of empiricism, rationalism and the dualist subjective idealism, has come to a stage of getting swallowed up into the all embracing ontology of reason. Now it is left to the task of dialectical materialists to liberate reason from the clutches of ontology and
install it to a proper position of relative autonomy. This is the process of de-ontologisation of reason, in which reason gets back its chair in the department of epistemology and logic. This liberation is not to the extent of dualising or pluralising the coherence of monism.

Marx and Marxists have inherited the dialectical method of Hegel as a premise to start with. One would naturally doubt the logic in such a separation of method from system. And we know that Hegel could discover the logic of dialectics because of his fight against Kant's separation of method from content. Even after, knowing all this, are we justified in supporting this separation of method from system? We think that this separation is entirely justified because once the method is taken out, it not only is amended but also united with an entirely new content. Materialist dialectics has differences with idealist dialectics, and the materialist pursuit of Marx is different from Hegel's idealism as well. So, the unity of method and content again comes up, but with an amended method and a new content.

New systems are natural in the development of dialectic, and they are perishable too, as Engels has splendidly remarked with a Hegelian punch. He said:

With all philosophers it is precisely the "system" which is perishable, just because it springs from
an imperishable need of the human mind, the need to overcome all contradictions. But if all contradictions are eliminated once and for all, we shall have arrived at so-called absolute truth — world history will have come to an end. 65

This so-called ending of history and attainment of absolute truth, has happened in Hegel. Hegel conceived the self-realization of world spirit in human consciousness in Hegel's philosophy itself, thus ending the whole motive of any further movement. This inherent inconsistency of absolutes — absolute truths and absolute systems — in Hegel paves also a way out from itself, an unintended result for Hegel, a strange 'cunning of reason'. Engels declared:

We abandon "absolute truth", which is unattainable..., and instead we pursue attainable relative truths along the path of positive sciences and of the syntheses of their results by means of dialectical thought. With Hegel philosophy as such comes to an end;... he shows us, albeit unconsciously, the way out of this labyrinth of systems to real positive knowledge of the world. 66

Here, by 'philosophy as such', Engels means the classical systems of philosophy. So, what is worth pursuing constitutes (1) the ventures in positive sciences (mainly a method of

65. Frederick Engels, op.cit. p. 11.
66. Ibid. (Emphasis added).
formal logic) and (2) the syntheses of their results (dialectical method). This same conclusion was taken already in the chapter on dialectical logic (2.8). Thus, dialectical materialism demystified the whole trend of the magical system construction by trimming of its idealist misgivings and retained science and philosophy (formal logic and dialectical logic in one sense) as genuine and real pursuits of human reason. Let us once again clarify that what dialectical materialists including Engels objected to is not philosophy as a whole, but the worthless system building in it.

We saw here that the very system of Hegel pointed out, unintentionally, the need to come out of the "labyrinth of systems." In a similar way, Hegel's idealism itself led to materialism. Engels, Plekhanov and Lenin among others pointed out this fact. While speaking on Hegel, Plekhanov once remarked that Hegel's idealist conception of history could not help him to explain things with "some scientific character." Of Hegel's idealism, Plekhanov said:

He himself seemed dissatisfied with the results he had achieved and he was often obliged to come

down from the misty heights of idealism to the concrete ground of economic relationships. **Everytime** he turned to it, economics freed him from the shallows into which his idealism had led him.68

Hegel took data from the society; he took the data of poverty, private property, growth of wealth, excess of poverty, riches on few hands, so on and so forth. This is, to an extent, materialism if, as Plekhanov commented, "materialism had to turn first and foremost to economics."69

Lenin is also of the opinion that Hegel comes closer to materialism. Lenin appreciates much Hegel's treatment of the development of consciousness as a stage of nature as well as of spirit. Hegel says that this is

the Notion in its own absolute character which constitutes a stage of nature as well as of spirit. Life or organic nature, is the stage of nature at which the Notion emerges,...70

and in its stage of origin it is "blind", "unaware of itself and unthinking."71 Lenin describes the union of nature and spirit in consciousness as 'The "eve" of the transformation of objective idealism into materialism'.72 Both Engels and Lenin consider Hegel's system as "materialism turned upside down."

68. Ibid.
71. Ibid.
72. V.I.Lenin, op.cit. p. 169.
It is not the nature that ideates into logical idea, but the latter that develops into former in Hegel. About this, Lenin:

The transition of the logical idea to nature. It brings one within a hand's grasp of materialism. Engels was right when he said that Hegel's system was materialism turned upside down. 73

On the element of materialism in Hegel, Lenin, while commenting on the Science of Logic, said:

The sum total, the last word and essence of Hegel's logic is the dialectical method - this is extremely noteworthy. And one thing more: in this most idealist of Hegel's works there is the least idealism and the most materialism. "Contradictory", but a fact! 74

Lenin rightly thought that objective idealism "came very close to materialism by a zig-zag (and a somersault), even partially became transformed into it." 75

It is the logical idea that is coming down from above and transforms to become nature in Hegel. This is the reverse in Marx and Engels. Here, it is the matter that develops into consciousness, a movement from below upwards. They have clearly pointed out this in The German Ideology:

In direct contrast to German philosophy which descends from heaven to earth, here we ascend from earth to heaven. That is to say, we do not set out from what

73. Ibid. p. 233.
74. Ibid.
75. Ibid. p. 276.
men say, imagine, conceive, nor from men as narrated, thought of, imagined, conceived, in order to arrive at men in the flesh. We set out from real, active men, and on the basis of their real life process we demonstrate the development of the ideological reflexes and echoes of this life process. The phantoms formed in the human brain are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life-process which is empirically verifiable and bound to material premises... In the first method of approach the starting point is consciousness taken as the living individual; in the second method, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness.76

Out of being and knowing, the former is taken as prior in dialectical materialism, whereas primacy is accorded to the latter in dialectical idealism (Hegel). Actually, as the dialectical materialists have analysed, the thought or spirit in Hegel is the alienated, objectivised human thought itself, reified into the status of an independent object which takes the role of the same single actor behind all the characters in the Hegelian scheme. Regarding this projection and hypostatisation of the mental constructs as entities external to human consciousness, Marx had a clearer statement adducible to our assessment.

To Hegel, the life process of the human brain, i.e., the process of thinking, which, under the name of "the Idea", he even transforms into an independent subject,

is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of "the idea". With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought.

These words of Marx, put in one of the afterwords of Capital, positively states the elements of knowledge process, the relation between subject and object, in a completely demystified language. That is, matter gets reflected into thought/idea in human mind. And human reason, the faculty of knowledge, is the character of human mind. This subject reason swallowed up by the ontology, the realm of object reason in Hegel, gets this way de-ontologised in Marx.

One should not confuse this de-ontologisation of reason with the subjectivisation of reason in Kant. It is not a retreat of reason but a dialectical progression, because the subject reason in dialectical materialism, as opposed to the Kantian claims, never considers that the certainty in the connections perceived from the objective world is an a priori subjective gift; but instead, these connections and relations are taken as real reflections of the objective world. As this is the case, the

whole thought system of Hegel should be rightly taken as the inverted reality. Then, the inversion of Hegel accomplished in Marx is an inversion of inversion. All ideologies are basically an inversion, a false consciousness. In German Ideology, Marx and Engels resort to an interesting analogy to explain the inversion:

If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside-down as in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life process. 78

So ideologies are historical; they are inevitable stages in the history of epistemology. In the second chapter, we have discussed the ideology of formal logic. There also, we saw that it is up to the history to set aright in practice the ideological inversions.

A Marxist critique of Hegel would in itself constitute a vast subject of study that cannot be permitted within the purview of such a short sketch. Let us limit our pursuit for the time being as we have already traced the status of logical reason in dialectical materialism in its continuity from the previous stages of its development.

78. Marx Engels, op.cit. p. 25.
As Lenin has pointed out, Hegel genuinely and seriously believed that materialism is an impossibility in philosophy because in it what matters is thought and logic, as philosophy is the science of thinking. But Hegel's thinking was effectively overturned by the matter behind his thinking. While criticising Hegel's Philosophy of Right in 1843-'44, Marx announced: "Not the logic of the matter, but the matter of logic is the philosophical element." 

6.5 Message of Dialectical Reason

The essential teaching given to us by dialectics is that any transformation from one to another, from one to even its opposite, is possible only through continuous mediations that negate and assimilate the innumerable middles which come up and disappear on the way until it develops into an other. Unity and struggle of opposites is throughout this continuum of mediations. This is the dialectic in anything; emotions, revolutions, reforms, growth, death and none else is an exception to this principle.

The discovery of dialectics could create tremendous impact in the field of social change. The new vigour and optimism unleashed

79. V.I.Lenin, op.cit. p.276. "Hegel seriously "believed", thought, that materialism as a philosophy was impossible, for philosophy is the science of thinking,..."
by the materialist dialectics, Marxism being its initial, concrete stage, left no stone unturned in initiating a series of revolutionary social and political changes. These changes, imbued with what can be called a materialist teleology, should be perceived as stages of an ongoing socio-political dialectic.

Without envisaging conscious participation in and through the mediating links of a movement, or without envisaging even such links, real and concrete intervention, an intervention with content and substance, becomes impossible or amounts to no intervention. This would end either as extremism or as conservatism. Both are formal or no intervention. A concrete political act is always a mediating link and is internal to movement. An extremist act and no act are external to the movement and in no way able to mediate in the process of change in any positive manner. Like in the manner a strategy is mediated by a number of tactics, a single total span of social change is mediated by a number of measures. A need to grasp this essence of social mediations and to positively participate in the 'practical-critical' activity is the revolutionary message that we should inherit from dialectical reason.