

Rethinking Ideology from Spinoza to Hegel

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Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Vanderbilt University
in partial fulfillment of the requirement

for the degree of

DOCTOR IN PHILOSOPHY

in

Philosophy

August 31th, 2018

Nashville, Tennessee

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Deepest gratitude goes to my advisor, Kelly Oliver, for her support and guidance. A special thanks is due to Karen Ng for her keen feedback. I would also like to thank the rest of my committee - Ellen Armour and Elaine Miller — for their time and expertise. I cannot express enough gratitude to the Robert Penn Warren Center of Humanities at Vanderbilt for providing me with the support and resources essential for the completion of this project. A singular thank you to Amanda Parris not only for introducing me to Spinoza but — most importantly — for being a mentor and a friend. My gratitude goes to Kaleigh Bangor whose relentless striving toward wisdom is an infinite source of motivation.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Citations from the *Appendix Concerning Metaphysical Thoughts* is abbreviated CM followed by a page number, for example CM: 30. The text can be found at Spinoza 1985a under References. Citations from Spinoza's *Ethics* are abbreviated as E followed by the book number, definition or proposition number, and scholium or corollary where applicable, for example, EIP29S. The text can be found at Spinoza 1985b under References. Citations from the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect* are abbreviated as TDIE followed by page number, for example TDIE: 7. The text can be found at Spinoza 1985c under References. Citations from the *Theological-Political Treatise* are abbreviated TTP followed by a page number, for example TTP: 68. The text can be found at Spinoza 2016 under References.

Citations for Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* are abbreviated PhG followed by paragraph number, for example PhG, 22. The text can be found at Hegel 1977 under References.

Citations for Aristotle's *De Anima* are abbreviated DA followed by the Bekker pagination number, for example DA 414b5. The text can be found at Aristotle 1981 under References. Citations for Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* are abbreviated NE followed by the Bekker pagination number, for example NE 1139b1. The text can be found at Aristotle 1984 under References.

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INTRODUCTION

My aim in this project is to consider a viable concept of ideology by turning to Spinoza and Hegel. It is no secret that recently ideology critique has fallen out of fashion, whether because it was never quite able to offer a consistent standard of judgment such that everything — including itself — became ideological or because it could not quite shake its paternalism that rests on the *outmoded* distinction between essence and appearance. Yet, as Rahel Jaeggi suggests in ‘Rethinking Ideology,’ “there still are certain social circumstances, certain forms of social domination that require a critique of ideology” (Jaeggi 2009: 63). Of course, such a position relies upon and presupposes a concept of ideology so as to determine which social circumstances are in fact ideological. But, as Terry Eagleton suggests in his work *Ideology: An Introduction*, we can identify at least sixteen different concepts of ideology that are often in contradiction with one another (Eagleton 1991).

For my purposes, it is helpful to briefly look at Raymond Geuss’s conceptual taxonomy of the three main senses of ideology.¹ In his work *The Idea of Critical Theory*, Geuss suggests that we can identify three main senses of ideology: descriptive, positive, and pejorative (Geuss 1981). According to Geuss, ideology in the descriptive sense seeks to identify the beliefs and practices of a group but does not seek to evaluate them. Ideology in a positive sense introduces a normative dimension into the concept. Like the descriptive sense of ideology, it seeks to identify

¹ See Eagleton 1991, Jorge 1983, Rehmann 2013 for historical accounts of the concept of ideology. See Rosen 1996 for an investigation and ultimately a rejection of ideology along Marxist lines. See Ng 2015 for a concept of ideology as social pathology derived from Marx and Hegel. See Mills 2017 for a recent defense of ideology critique in the context of social epistemology.

the practices and beliefs of a group, but unlike the descriptive sense of ideology, positive ideology seeks to identify the beliefs and practices that accurately represent not only the interests of a specific group but society as a whole. In this respect, we can understand ideology in a positive sense as simply a struggle among competing world-views. Lastly — and for my purposes most importantly — the pejorative sense of ideology understands ideology as a set of beliefs and practices that delude the members of society “about themselves, their position, their society, or their interests” (Geuss 1981: 12). What makes this delusion ideological is its power to reinforce social domination. Whereas ideology in the positive sense sees ideology as a world-view and aims to identify the right kind of world-view among other world-views, ideology in a pejorative sense only applies to forms of Consciousness that work to reinforce social domination; in this respect, a pejorative form of Consciousness is always and necessarily false.

Geuss goes on to distinguish three properties that constitute ideology in the pejorative sense: epistemic, functional, and genetic properties. These are the properties that according to Geuss render ideology false in the relevant sense. Unsurprisingly, Geuss distinguishes four different ways ideology is epistemically false or false due to its epistemic properties: The first way in which a form of Consciousness can be to be epistemically false is if it contains certain beliefs that are central to the coherence of the form of Consciousness that are not empirically verifiable. The second way in which a form of Consciousness is epistemically false in the relevant sense is if it mistakes products of human activity as being independent of said activity. The third way epistemic status can render the form of Consciousness false occurs when a set of interests that belongs to a particular group is mistaken for the general interest. The final way in which ideology is false due to its epistemic status is if it contains “self-validating or self-fulfilling beliefs” which

are mistaken “for beliefs which are not self-variating or self-fulfilling.” It is important to remember that what renders these beliefs ideological in the pejorative sense is if their epistemic status contributes to the reproduction of social domination.

The second kind of ideology in a pejorative sense is functional ideology wherein the property that renders a form of Consciousness false is its effects rather than its epistemic status. In fact, the functional concept of ideology is not concerned with the epistemic status of beliefs; rather, what is important is whether the form of Consciousness or set of beliefs, causes socially oppressive effects. As Michael Morris puts this in his work *Knowledge and Ideology: The Epistemology of Social and Political Critique*:

We might, therefore, describe the functional critique of ideology as an attempt to unmask various soft, deceptive, and frequently internalized forms of power. The functional theory of ideology treats ideas as weapons or instruments of struggle. However, unlike fists and guns, ideological beliefs conceal their hostile purpose. Ideological beliefs thus represent a form of soft or covert power. Conceived as the critique of subtle or internalized forms of power, functional treatments of ideology naturally and rightly extend the scope of their study beyond the domain of ideas, beliefs, and theories, focusing upon the sociopolitical implications of a broad range of non-cognitive phenomena, including desires, ceremonies, habits, forms of address, fashions, etc. (Morris 2016a: 6)

Morris helps us see that functional ideology, unlike epistemic ideology, is not a matter of having epistemically false beliefs but a matter of engaging in the kinds of practices that lead to socially oppressive effects unbeknownst to the agents, hence its covert nature. In that respect, it does not matter whether the ideas we hold are true or false. What matters is whether our ideas

and practices reinforce oppression. This is precisely what Geuss means when he suggests that functional ideology is false irrespective of its epistemic status.

The third and final property that can render beliefs and practices ideologically false is the genetic property wherein it is the origin of those beliefs and practices that determine whether it is ideologically false. As Geuss explains, a form of Consciousness is rendered false by “virtue of some of its genetic properties, that is, by virtue of some facts about its origin, genesis, or history, about how it arises or comes to be acquired or held by agents, or in virtue of the motives agents have for adopting and acting on it.” The example *par excellence* is to argue that a form of Consciousness is ideologically false if it originates within the ruling class. If the genetic approach to ideology in the pejorative sense is to get off the ground, “one must clearly distinguish ‘context of discovery’ from ‘context of justification’ ... [and] must somehow show that the ‘genetic fallacy,’ granted its validity for scientific statements, is *not* necessarily a fallacy for forms of Consciousness” (Geuss 1981: 20). In conclusion, Geuss explicitly states that the most interesting pejorative concepts of ideology are those that include at least two of the three above mentioned properties.

Tommy Shelby has also suggests that the epistemic properties of ideology critique must be combined with functional properties because “what we need, then, is a critical conception of ideology that has both epistemic and functional dimensions, one that maintains that ideologies are to be rejected because they are illusory and because of their tendency to foster social oppression” (Shelby 2003: 174). That is to say, the concept of ideology cannot only consist of a set of beliefs that epistemically justify oppressive social practices; to have critical force, the concept of ideology must also be able to show that ideas that mistakenly legitimize oppressive social practices also have the effect of legitimizing, supporting, and reproducing oppressive social practices.

Most recently, Morris has also argued that the concept of ideology must include both epistemic and functional properties. However, Morris approaches this argument from a different perspective, suggesting that a merely functional concept of ideology lends itself to skepticism insofar as it is not able to establish a criterion of truth, resulting in a mere battle of ideas. Thus, for Morris, a functional approach must be supplemented with an epistemic approach. He is — however — careful to point out that ideology critique cannot have recourse to traditional models of epistemology; rather, epistemic properties of ideology critique should be drawn from social epistemology.

I began by noting that ideology critique is potentially its own worst enemy due to the plethora of definitions that frequently contradict each other. Following Geuss, Shelby, and Morris, we can narrow down Eagleton's sixteen contradictory senses of ideology to three main types: epistemic, functional, and genetic. I suggest that we should not dismiss the genetic sense of ideology insofar as it can express secondary, i.e., non-essential properties of ideology whereas epistemic and functional senses express the primary, i.e., essential properties of ideology. That said, the most promising avenue for exploring a viable pejorative concept of ideology is by focusing *both* on its functional and epistemic properties. I suggest that a concept of ideology that is both epistemic and functional can use its essential properties to check each other such that ideology does not fall prey to skepticism nor deem something ideological irrespective of its effects.

In this dissertation, I seek to develop a viable pejorative concept of ideology that includes both epistemic and functional properties. I suggest that my concept of ideology is epistemic insofar as abstract independence stems from practices that generate and support concepts that seek certainty and are unwilling to move to truth. Thus, fields of ideology are moved by ideas that are false in the relevant sense. Furthermore, my concept of ideology is functional insofar as false

ideas have the effect of self-contradictory practice. However, rather than using the term ideology, I want to conceptualize ideology as ideological fields. First, I understand self-contradictory practices of individuation as opening up ideological fields. For a practice of individuation to be self-contradictory, the movement of the practice is driven by pathological desire. This movement is driven by pathological desire then results in abstract independence or what Spinoza would call free will.

In other words, the aim of this project is to argue and defend a concept of ideology understood in terms of self-contradictory fields of individuation. The criterion for judging fields of individuation as self-contradictory, i.e., ideological is the presence or lack of institutions of mutual recognition. Thus practice of individuation that precludes the possibility of mutual recognition is, on my account, self-defeating. As such, it is also a practice of individuation that is moved by abstract independence or the drive for certainty. I suggest that ideological fields of individuation are the necessary but not sufficient condition of social domination and oppression. Thus, unlike Jaeggi, I want to suggest that ideology is not a specific instance of social domination but is a flawed practice of individuation that can lead to social domination.

Before I go on to unpack this, I want first to define my terms, and second briefly discuss why practices of individuation are the gatekeepers of ideological fields. First, I define ideology as self-contradictory fields of individuation *or* ideological fields. Specifically, I suggest that ideological fields are self-contradictory with respect to the aim of Self-Consciousness, i.e., practical unity by which I understand concrete freedom and concrete independence. In other words, by ideological fields, I understand practices of individuation that promise freedom but are structurally unable to deliver on this promise. I suggest that ideological fields are self-contradictory both with respect to the concept and the ability of the concept to find realization in practice. I further

suggest that ideological fields are moved by historically determinate practices of abstract independence, which I define as other negating, i.e., pathological desire.² Put differently, ideological fields express themselves via historically determinate forms of independence that fail to understand themselves as relationally dependent, i.e., that fail to see that dependence is the concrete condition of the possibility of independence. I suggest that this stance is moved by the desire to suppress the other. Ultimately, I conclude that ideological fields are the necessary but not sufficient condition of any form of social oppression and domination.

Second, practices of individuation have been the focus of ideology theory at least since Marx (Marx 1977b).³ In fact, Althusser⁴ tells us that Spinoza had already identified practices of individuation that result in abstract independence as the “the matrix of every possible theory of ideology” (Althusser 1997: 7). It is not a stretch to see in Spinoza the matrix of all possible ideology.⁵ After all, Spinoza’s main concern was to understand why human beings “fight for slavery as they would for their survival” (TTP: 68). Following Althusser, I locate the matrix of every possible theory of ideology in Spinoza’s account of imagination by which Spinoza understands knowledge of the first kind or ideas of the affections of the body. In other words, imagination is the perspective of experience and the condition of the possibility of knowledge. The prejudice of the imagination is to view the human individual as the “the center and origin of every perception,

² See Honneth 2007, Honneth 2016, and Neuhauser 2016 for a discussion of Hegel’s contribution to the concept of social pathology.

³ See Morris 2016b for a discussion of Marx and Engels’ implicit acceptance of Hegel’s two ontological premises: 1) the whole is grasped prior to its parts; 2) teleology of the real.

⁴ It is worth nothing that Althusser too focused on practices of individuation under the language of subject formation in his discussion of ideology. See Althusser 2014

⁵ See Lordon 2014 for an exploration of this question between Spinoza and Marx specifically with respect to the capitalist structure of work.

of every action, of every object, and of every meaning” (Althusser 1997: 6) because the perceptions of imagination are necessarily mediated through the affected body. As such, imagination always perceives more about itself than the external body. Althusser goes on to suggest that this prejudice is the “apparatus of the reversal of causes and ends, those of the illusion of subjectivity...” (Ibid.) If the human body is negatively affected by other bodies, then this causes the individual to strive for things that are antithetical to its perseverance in existence or to strive for slavery as if for salvation. In sum, with Spinoza, we discover that practices of individuation that produce individuals who believe themselves to be free causes are the conceptual loci of ideology.

To this end, I move from Spinoza to Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* to explore various historically specific practices of individuation that produce abstract independence or historically specific forms of free will. I suggest that while Spinoza offers us a matrix of every possible theory of ideology, it is Hegel who offers us a general theory of every possible ideological field.⁶ Out of Hegel, I develop a concept of individuation that understands practices of individuation as always already doubled fields of active folding and refolding. In other words, I take individuation to be the result of a dialectical process of concept formation and externalization via action, which transgresses the concept and so on. This process is necessarily dyadic.⁷ Importantly, it follows that the practical unity that Self-Consciousness aims at is not a static identity but rather an undergirding realization of the transgressive and dynamic structure of unity. This I suggest is absolute knowing.

⁶ I suggest that one of the differences between a matrix and a field is the respective differences in practices of individuation.

⁷ My account of ideological fields rests on the presupposition that individuation is dyadic. For the purposes of this project I will retain this presupposition./, however, any future work requires that this presupposition itself be examined.

I suggest that practices and fields of individuation take the place of Marx's concept of modes of production and reproduction. In this respect, my concept of ideology departs from the traditional and intuitive position that suggests that ideology *par excellence* is idealism or that all ideology shares the structure of idealism wherein Consciousness is seen to determine life rather than life determining Consciousness. On my view, this is only a particular determinate expression of abstract independence.⁸

Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* explores various practices of individuation that produce either fields of mutual recognition or fields of misrecognition. The latter, I argue, are ideological in the pejorative sense, whereby the properties that render Consciousness false are epistemic and functional. In order to define these fields, it is important, to begin with how Hegel understands practices of individuation. From there, we can move on to how these practices of individuation allow individuals to understand themselves and others in moments of both mutual and misrecognition. Lastly, we can focus on how all recognition is marked by the movement of specific kinds of desire. When and where desire is pathological, misrecognition occurs leading to the production of ideological fields. When and where desire becomes satisfied, this leads to the production of fields of mutual recognition, or moments of concrete and not abstract independence.

The practice of individuation for Hegel — and Spinoza — as Balibar has argued, is transindividual, i.e., the individual is always in the process of becoming itself. Transindividual

⁸ My view, however, takes into account the force of ideas, to borrow a phrase from Spinoza. For a position that refuses to acknowledge the force of ideas and reduced ideology to material practice is itself subject to abstract independence. This is why we might say Spinoza's so-called parallelism is so important, or why we always have to remember that mind is the idea of body. Or, mind and body are the same thing grasped from different perspectives. In this respect, my account of ideology is both functional and epistemic.

practices of individuation resist the opposition of abstract opposites such as part and whole or individual and community. It is important to note that because the practices of individuation are by definition constantly fluctuating—or rather the self is always in the process of becoming—fields of recognition and misrecognition are, too, constantly fluctuating no matter how much they may strive for persevere in existence.

For Hegel, the process of individuation is characterized by the striving of Self-Consciousness (*Selbstbewusstsein*) toward the practical unity. As such, the aim of Self-Consciousness is to find practical unity of itself with itself and this is the aim that determines any and all practices of individuation, be they ideological or not. To see what practical unity is, we briefly look at the development of Self-Consciousness from the stance of Consciousness. In learning that the object is not a self-standing, independent entity, Consciousness further learns that the object is not an accident that befalls it⁹, or to put it in Spinoza's terms: experience is not vagrant, *experientia vaga*. Rather, in initially becoming self-conscious, Consciousness realizes that it is actively implicated in the production of the object.¹⁰ That is to say, it is true that Consciousness has learned that in

⁹ As Pippin puts, “So the large question to which Hegel thinks we have been brought by his account of Consciousness in the first three chapters is: just what is it for a being to be not just a recorder of the world’s impact on one’s senses, but to be for itself in its engagements with objects? What is it in general for a being to be for itself, for ‘itself to be at issue for it in its relation with what is not it’? (This is the problem that arose with the “Kantian” revelation in the Understanding chapter of the PhG that, in trying to get to the real nature of the essence of appearances, “understanding experiences only itself...” (Pippin 2011: 26)

¹⁰ Honneth writes, “In a certain sense, both the observer and the observed subject have thus advanced to an epistemological standpoint already characterized by Kant in his transcendental philosophy. As a result, both parties are faced with the question as to the nature of the knowledge that subjects can have of themselves as creators of true claims. The ‘self,’ whose awareness of itself forms the object of Hegel’s subsequent considerations, is therefore the rational individual, who is already abstractly aware of its constitutive, world-creating cognitive acts.” (Honneth 2008: 78)

attributing unity to the object it is actually explaining its own structure as the structure of the object. However, this unity is immediate and in that respect Consciousness has not yet achieved unity or the realization of its self-conception in the world or “where Notion corresponds to object and object to Notion” (PhG, 80). In other words, whereas the theoretical attitude of Consciousness supposed that truth lies in the object and all Consciousness had to do was find the right way to apprehend the concept so as to attain knowledge of it, or what we might call the unity of concept (Consciousness) and object, Consciousness in becoming Self-Consciousness learns that the object is a result of its activity, thus the unity that it seeks is not the unity of itself with the object but rather the unity of itself with itself. The striving for practical unity is the striving of Self-Consciousness to find itself mirrored back to itself in its activity and find identity therein. It is *imperative* to see that for Hegel the aim of the striving for practical unity — of the striving for the identity of itself with itself — is freedom. In other words, concrete freedom is the power to recognize oneself in one’s activity.

Self-Consciousness is quick to learn that the only way to attain practical unity — no matter how momentary and fleeting — is mutual recognition. Now, for a practice of individuation to allow for and lead to mutual recognition, two individuals, in the midst of their own striving for practical unity must recognize each other as both mutual recognizing the other. If this fails to occur, there is mis-recognition and the ensuing struggle for recognition.

In order to achieve mutual recognition, both Self-Consciousnesses must let go of the certainty of itself by allowing other individuals to recognize it as something other and realize the need to do the same for other individuals. That is to say, both Self-Consciousnesses must recognize themselves as recognizing the other to become recognized in turn. Therefore, all mutual

recognition is precisely the recognition of the condition of each other's *mutual dependence* (*Abhängigkeit*) or a shared recognition of dependence. The important conclusion that follows is that concrete freedom and independence is only possible due to our shared condition of mutual dependence. A practice of individuation that allows for the mutual recognition of dependence is non-ideological insofar as it allows for concrete freedom. As such, mutual recognition is the criterion by which we can judge practice of individuation.

When both Self-Consciousnesses posit themselves in the attempt to establish mutual recognition each freely negates itself. This is precisely the power that allows mutual recognition to establish practical unity. Mutual recognition is not symmetrical insofar as each Self-Consciousness proceeds from its concrete position. As such I want to reject the 'popular' view of mutual recognition that understands it as the recognition of the identity of the identity and difference, or put differently, *simply* the recognition of our sameness in difference. Rather, mutual recognition emerges as an asymmetrical recognition of the mutual dependence in the desire for practical unity. To phrase it differently, mutual recognition is asymmetrical not in a sense that one Consciousness does more than the other, but rather the actions undertaken by each are different depending on their concrete social and historical position.

Here, it is important to note that all processes of individuation are only ever *provisional and cannot have an endpoint or the so-called end of history*. Rather, it is the case that Self-Consciousness discovers itself only after having acted and been checked by the other Self-Consciousness. Any attempt at lasting permanence of practical unity will always be undone by action, according to Hegel. Thus, the aim is to generate the kinds of practices of individuation that are aware of the very provisional, retroactive, *and* thus transgressive structure of Self-Consciousness, as thinkers like Pippin and Bernstein have already put forth.

It follows that the failure of mutual recognition is a failure to recognize and accept the shared condition of mutual dependence. This is a position of Self-Consciousness that refuses to let go of the claim that it can establish practical unity all by itself. I suggest that this is the Hegelian equivalent of Spinoza's free will. I am calling this certainty of itself, that refuses to recognize relations of mutual dependence, abstract *independence*. In fact — echoing my previous point — to suppose that practical unity can have a terminal utopian end is to commit oneself to a version of abstract independence.

With these steps laid out, I understand ideological fields as self-contradictory practices of individuation by which I mean the following: all practices of individuation aim at practical unity. However, individuals who are unwilling to let go of the certainty of themselves or of their abstract independence are incapable of mutual recognition. As such, practices of individuation that produce abstract independence are self-defeating.

Based on the understanding of practices of individuation that lead to mutual recognition, I turn to those practices that do not allow for mutual recognition. These practices produce a false Consciousness when they *seem* to strive toward practical unity *but* by the very structure of their movement are unable to allow for that to occur. This is what I understand to be a Hegelian interpretation of ideology. Insofar as the very practice of individuation precludes mutual recognition, the practice becomes self-contradictory, which may or may not lead to individual tragic instances or flaws.

Next, I turn to desire (*Begierde*), which I argue is *the* dynamic of both ideological and non-ideological fields. I argue that desire is the very striving of Self-Consciousness towards practical unity. As such, desire is not just a momentary step along the path of the development of Spirit — by which I understand the totality of human activity — but essential to the structure of

Self-Consciousness and any potential field of mutual recognition. Furthermore, I suggest that desire is the activity of negation, putting Hegel in opposition to Spinoza's desire as the positive striving for perseverance in existence.

Desire finds its satisfaction in the movement of mutual recognition when both Self-Consciousnesses come to achieve practice unity by positing themselves and freely self-negating themselves. Or as Hegel puts, "the satisfaction of Desire is...the reflection of Self-Consciousness into itself, or the certainty that has become truth" (PhG, 176). If we understand certainty as abstract independence, the satisfaction of desire is the supersession of abstract independence in and through asymmetrical mutual recognition.

Desire does not find satisfaction when Self-Consciousness fails to self-negate and thus fails to complete the double movement of other and self-negation. When this happens, I understand the movement of desire to be pathological. This is the striving of Self-Consciousness that fails to move from certainty to truth or from abstract independence to concrete independence. As such, pathological desire is the striving of an individual that be independent of its relations in a specifically determinate historical form. In other words, by maintaining this stance pathological desire is other-negating. The varying degrees of other-negation depend on the concrete practice of individuation and its intersection with other practices of individuation.

It is important to note that insofar as practices of individuation are always already doubled, it is possible for an ideological field to contain a Self-Consciousness that is other-negating and a Self-Consciousness that is self-negating. Put differently, it is possible for an ideological field to have one Consciousness who is recognized and one that is recognizing, i.e., lord and bondsman. It is also possible to identify ideological fields where both Consciousnesses are other-

negating, e.g., Hegel's example of the dialectic of the beautiful souls. But an ideological field cannot have two self-negating Consciousness for that would amount to mutual recognition.

As such, I argue that ideology understood in a pejorative sense as false Consciousness is an ideological field opened up by self-contradictory practices of individuation characterized by the movement of one-sided other-negating desire, i.e., abstract independence. Again, I suggest that thinking ideology in terms of ideological fields allows us to think ideology as sets of dynamic self-contradictory practices of individuation that have multiple foci rather than a form of Consciousness that belongs to a single social subject. Rather, ideology understood as an ideological field, consists of multiple social subjects all of whom are caught in a self-contradictory practice of striving for practical unity.

Thinking ideology in terms of ideological fields allows us to think about both the different positions each individual occupies while at the same time understanding their relation as a dialectical struggle in which all agents are caught in a self-contradictory striving for recognition. In other words, ideological fields harm all individuals who are individuated by these processes insofar as they are precluded from attaining practical unity. This is not to say that certain individuals are not able to benefit from these practices of indication for this is true of the lord and not the bondsman. However, I want to claim that all forms of social oppression exist within ideological fields. Importantly, the ideological field or fields of which a certain form of domination is part of does not explain the essence, structure, or function of the form of domination. Rather, it points to its concrete material condition of the possibility of domination.

Lastly, I want to suggest that we have to think of ideological fields as non-totalizing, intertwined, and multilayered. Since no individual is a result of only one practice of individuation but is constantly undergoing multiple processes of individuation, ideological fields occur at the

intersection of other ideological and non-ideological fields, thus creating distinct spaces and temporalities. Here we might also want to consider how the intersection of ideological and non-ideological fields may infect each other. Understanding ideological fields as dynamic intersections precludes us from reifying ideology into an abstract universal, e.g., capitalism. Rather, following Spinoza's materialist epistemology, we must study each specific and concrete practice of individuation in order to analyze the essential feature of a specific ideological field or fields with the possibility of determining their general features. Thus, on the one hand, ideology becomes a weak concept for it is not able to explain any specific form of social injustice and on the other hand, gains strength by becoming the condition of possibility of any form of social oppression.

The reader may ask, why bring Spinoza and Hegel into dialogue on the issue of ideology. As Pierre Macherey puts it, it is impossible to read one without thinking of the other (Macherey 2001). Yet, the differences between the two thinkers, despite their uncanny similarity, are so drastic that each understands the other as anathema.¹¹ Although, I suggest that those who hold this position reduce Hegel and Spinoza to thinkers of negativity and positivity, respectively. Working between these two thinkers — as I do — or even understanding them as compatible often amounts to charges of philosophical heresy. Nonetheless, I want to posit that while Hegel offers us a theory of every possibly ideological field, it is Spinoza that ultimately allows us to think ideology critique in a non-paternalistic and *joyous* sense.¹²

¹¹ See Melamed 2012a, Moder 2017, Read 2012, Read 2016, and Sharp and Smith 2012 for recent takes on the relationship between Hegel and Spinoza.

¹² However, to make this claim is it imperative to thoroughly consider what mutual recognition is and whether it is *indeed* anathema to Spinoza's materialist ontology.

In chapter one, “Spinoza’s Matrix of Ideology,” I establish the trajectory of the dissertation by identifying the central feature of ideology: free will or what I am calling abstract independence. I do so by following Althusser’s insight that Spinoza discovered the matrix of all possible theory of ideology in the Appendix of the first book of the *Ethics*. Specifically, Althusser suggests that the illusion of a free will is central to understanding subjectivity, which for Althusser is always already ideological. However, rather than focusing on Althusser, per his suggestion, I look to Spinoza’s *Ethics* and do the following: 1) argue that Althusser is correct in identifying the free will as Spinoza’s locus of prejudice and superstition; 2) explore Spinoza’s materialist ontology in order to show why the free will is a fiction; 3) explore Spinoza’s epistemology, specifically focusing on the imagination, in order to show how the fiction of the free will is produced; 4) show that the free will is a true fiction insofar as it is a necessary condition of experience that expresses how the body is affected by other bodies; 5) conclude by showing how the fiction of a free will expresses the self-contradictory striving of an individual to persevere in existence.

In chapter two, “Hegel’s Ideological Fields,” I argue for a concept of ideology conceived in terms of fields of self-contradictory practices of individuation, or what I am calling ideological fields. I build on the previous chapter by arguing that ideological fields are characterized by the movement of abstract independence. Leaving Spinoza’s *Ethics*, I turn to Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which I argue works through historically determinate forms of abstract independence. In order to establish the concept of ideological fields I do the following: 1) establish a concept of fields of individuation, which I suggest is the always already doubled generation of Self-Consciousness which aims at practical unity of itself with itself via other; 2) argue that practical unity is a deferred transgression insofar as action necessarily transgresses itself; 3) suggest that

mutual recognition is the doubled recognition of the transgressive nature of practical unity that is grounded in mutual dependence and as such is the condition of concrete independence;

4) argue that mutual recognition is the criterion by which to judge fields of individuation and suggest that fields of individuation that structurally preclude the possibility of mutual recognition are self-contradictory fields of indication, i.e., ideological fields; 5) argue that ideological fields are expressed and moved by abstract independence. Ultimately, I conclude that ideological fields are multilayered, nested, and intersecting self-contradictory practices of individuation that aim at static unity and identity thus failing to understand and realize unity as a deferred transgression.

In chapter three, “Desire: The Striving of Self-Consciousness Toward Practical Unity,” I concretize the movement of ideological fields by exploring the structure of abstract independence. I argue that abstract independence is the movement of one-sided pathological desire, specifically other-negating desire. In order to show that abstract independence is other-negating desire I do the following: 1) argue that desire is the very striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. As such, I suggest that desire is not a momentary shape of Self-Consciousness that is overcome but is an essential feature of Self-Consciousness; 2) argue that satisfied desire is the doubled desire of mutual recognition: desire that is both doubly self and other negating. I suggest that the doubled movement of desire is the movement of concrete independence that recognizes mutual dependence as its condition of possibility; 3) argue that pathological desire is one-sided desire: desire that is either self or other negating. I further suggest that while one-sided self-negating desire occurs within an ideological field, it is other-negating desire that is the stance of abstract independence.

In chapter four, “Pathological Desire: Two Examples,” I further develop the concept of pathological desire. I do so in the following way: 1) analyze the dialectic of the lord and the

bondsman and suggest that this is the most abstract expression of pathological desire insofar as it clearly splits up the doubled movement of self and other negation between the lord and the bondsman. I suggest that insofar as ideological fields are multilayered, intersecting, and nested pathological desire does not occur in such abstract simplicity; 2) analyze the dialectic of the beautiful soul and suggest that this is the most developed expression of abstract independence insofar as it culminates in the vanishing of the beautiful soul, thus taking self-contradiction to its limits. I suggest that both the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman and the dialectic of the beautiful soul allow us to see that the one-sided other-negating desire takes a stance of abstract independence towards both action and another Self-Consciousness; 3) conclude by analyzing the only instance of satisfied desire in the *Phenomenology*, i.e., the dialectic of confession and forgiveness. I conclude by arguing that any non-ideological field of individuation must include historically determinate practices of confession and forgiveness, which I suggest underwrite the possibility of mutual recognition.

CHAPTER 1
SPINOZA'S MATRIX OF IDEOLOGY

"I discovered in [Spinoza] first an astonishing contradiction: this man who reasons more geometrico¹³ through definitions, axioms, theorems, corollaries, lemmas, and deductions — therefore, in the most 'dogmatic' way in the world — was, in fact, an incomparable liberator of the mind."

Louis Althusser

Introduction

In this chapter, I argue that abstract and indeterminate independence — or what Spinoza calls the free will — is the locus of ideology. Rather than suggesting that abstract independence is the cause of ideology, I argue that abstract independence is the expression of disempowering and self-contradictory relations. I begin with Althusser and the Appendix to the first book of Spinoza's *Ethics*. In this provocative section of the *Ethics*, Althusser identifies the matrix of any theory of ideology, which he locates in the illusion of the free will. I then work through Spinoza's ontology: namely God and Modes in order to show why the free will is an illusion. I then turn to Spinoza's epistemology to show how the illusion is produced. Furthermore, by focusing on the imagination and error, I show that while an illusion, the free will does express the status of the body and the relations that compose and affect the body. As such, I argue that free will is a necessary illusion. I conclude with an analysis of why the free will is the locus of ideology. Having done so, in the following chapters, I move onto to Hegel whom I take to have offered a robust analysis of the failures of various determinate forms of abstract independence.

¹³ See Curley 1988 for a classic discussion of Spinoza's geometrical method and Garrett 2003 for a more recent interpretation.

The Appendix to *Ethics* I

In the few pages that Althusser explicitly wrote on Spinoza, he suggested that “It is in the appendix to part I of the *Ethics* that Spinoza developed his admirable critique of religious ideology, in which the human subject endowed with finalized desires projects himself into God as the original and final cause of the Universe...I saw in it immediately the matrix of every possible theory of ideology” (Althusser 1997: 7). It is not a stretch to see in Spinoza the matrix of all possible ideology. After all, Spinoza’s primary concern was to offer an analysis of what concrete or determinate freedom is and to understand why human beings “fight for slavery as they would for their survival” (TTP: 68). Althusser locates the locus of all possible ideology in Spinoza’s account of imagination that is the perspective that leads human individuals to the view that they are “the center and origin of every perception, of every action, of every object, and of every meaning” (Althusser 1997: 6). It is the “apparatus of the reversal of causes and ends, those of the illusion of subjectivity, of the man who believes himself to be the center of the world and becomes ‘an empire within an empire,’ master of the world’s meaning (the *cogito*), although he is entirely submitted to the determinations of the world” (Althusser 1997: 6).

To show this, I look to the Appendix of the First Book of the *Ethics* which is arguably the first genealogy of religion. Spinoza argues that

all men are born ignorant of the causes of things, and that they all want to seek their own advantage and are conscious of this appetite. From these [assumptions] it follows, first, that men think themselves free, because they are conscious of their volitions and their appetite, and do not think, even in their dreams, of the causes by which they are disposed to wanting and willing, because they are ignorant of [those causes] (EIAppendix)

As Althusser points out, Spinoza offers a critique — and we might even go on to say a genealogy — of religion in the Appendix to Part I of the *Ethics*. It is an important decision on Spinoza's part to append the critique of religion to the first part of the *Ethics*, titled “On God,” wherein Spinoza demonstrates that God is Nature, i.e., God is neither a transcendent nor an eminent sovereign Being who through its free will and intellect governs and bestows good upon its creations. Presumably after having undergone the rational demonstration of Part I, why would the reader require another critique of religion? Does the rational demonstration not suffice for the task?

At this point, it behooves us to ask: Why should we look for a concept of ideology — and in fact more than just a concept but the very matrix of the theory of ideology — in Spinoza's work? Why is Spinoza preoccupied with ideology or, to avoid a blatant anachronism, with prejudice and superstition? For it is clear that Spinoza was consumed with prejudice and more precisely with the worry that he would not be heard due to the common prejudice of his time.¹⁴ This concern is not merely intellectual, a fear of being misunderstood or ridiculed, but a fear for one's life in the face of radical critique. We need only to remember that Spinoza was excommunicated for his radical beliefs and survived an assassination attempt. In light of this, we can suppose that Spinoza was preoccupied with prejudice and even more importantly, superstition because he understood how prejudice is a powerful obstacle to adequate knowledge and freedom. It is not enough to simply assert the truth, and this is precisely one of Spinoza's great insights, for truth is not match to the power of prejudice.¹⁵ What is required is an immanent critique that reveals prejudice as such. Thus, even after a rational demonstration, it is still important to directly confront

¹⁴ Of course, this is not a unique concern to Spinoza. Plato in the *Republic* already expressed a similar worry, “‘Could you really persuade,’ he said, ‘if we don't listen’”^{327c}

¹⁵ I suggest that this insight is key for thinking the practice of ideology critique, i.e., keep in mind that ideology critique is not a battle of ideas for this would amount to a form of ideology itself.

the prejudice rather than naively hope that the demonstration suffices, “Further, I have taken care, whenever the occasion arose, to remove prejudices that could prevent my demonstration from being perceived. However, because many prejudices remain that could, and can, be a great obstacle to men’s understanding the connection of things in the way I have explained it, I consider it worthwhile to submit them here to the scrutiny of reason” (EIAppendix: 440). Spinoza’s other great insight — which we can signpost as the origin of immanent critique — is that in order to confront prejudice we must show how it is produced and as such reveals itself to itself as prejudice. In other words, we cannot confront prejudice from without with demonstrations but must confront it from within and show it its internal inadequacy. The Appendix to Part I works to address those prejudices that were not removed by the demonstration offered in Part I. In so doing, Spinoza also lays out what Althusser takes to be the matrix of all ideology.

According to Spinoza, all the prejudices that the *Ethics* exposes depend on “this one: that men commonly suppose that all natural things act, as men do, on account of an end, indeed, they maintain as certain that God himself directs all things to some certain end for they say that God has made all things for man, and man that he might worship God” (Ibid.: 439). In other words, *the* prejudice that undergirds all the others is teleology. However, I want to suggest — along with Althusser — that it is not teleology that represents the matrix of all ideology but abstract independence that allows for the possibility of teleological thinking. Alternatively, teleology is an effect of abstract independence or the fiction of a free will, the uncaused cause, the unmoved mover.

This is of course not to dismiss Hasana Sharp’s (Sharp 2007) insight that ideas have a force, i.e., that ideology critique is not merely a change of material practice. This too would amount to an ideological field on my view.

Abstract independence emerges because “all men are born ignorant of the causes of things, and...they all want to seek their own advantage, and are conscious of this appetite” (Ibid.:440). Because of their finitude, human beings are not by nature aware of the causes that determine them to have the conscious desire to do this or that thing. However, insofar as they have that desire, they suppose that they are free to act on it and, as such, imagine themselves as the sovereign origins of their activity. In this respect, Consciousness is always self-conscious insofar as it is aware of itself as desire and in so doing participates in the production of abstract independence. This process, Spinoza states in a phrase that will later be made famous by Nietzsche, “turns nature completely upside down. For what is really a cause, it considered as an effect, and conversely [NS: what is an effect it considers as a cause]” (Ibid.: 442).

Moreover, because human beings find many things that are useful to them, “eyes for seeing, teeth for chewing, plants, and animals for food, the sun for light, the sea for supporting fish” (Ibid.), they conclude that someone had to have created all of this for their sake. In other words, because human beings act with an end in mind, they conclude that there is a being that also acts with an end in mind and this end is them because all things that are created are created to be used by them. Moreover, finally, human beings project the fiction of human freedom onto God and conclude that all the things God created for their use and enjoyment it did so freely as the true and original uncaused cause. These conclusions occur because human beings “turn toward themselves, and reflect on the ends by which they are usually determined to do such things; so they necessarily judge the temperament of other men” as well as those of the God “from their own temperament” (Ibid.: 440). So, human beings conclude that since they do things to control other human beings, God must have directed “all things for the use of men in order to bind men to them and be held by men in the highest honor” (Ibid.: 441).

Most importantly human beings do not create only one image of God, but each human being projects onto God their own temperament thus resulting in as many Gods as there are human desires, and each one strives to show that their God is the superior and the true one. However, human beings, according to Spinoza, are fickle, and their beliefs are subject to quick change,

As easy, then, as it is to take men in with any superstition whatever, it's still just as difficult to make them persist in one and the same superstition [...] This inconstancy has been the case of many uprisings and bloody wars [...] To avoid this evil [of inconstancy], immense zeal is brought to bear to embellish religion — whether the religion is true or illusory — with ceremony and pomp, so that it will be thought to have greater weight than any other influence...The greatest secret of monarchic rule, and its main interest is to keep men deceived, and to cloak in the specious name of Religion the fear by which they must be checked so that they will fight for slavery as they would for their survival (TTP, Preface)

Thus, from the first fiction of the freedom of the will is born the “political and ideological apparatus for the subjugation of thought” (Balibar 1994, 11).

Here, we arrive at the most interesting point, and one which I think connects the matrix of ideology we find in the Appendix to Part I to Marx's concept of ideology. From the fiction of the sovereign subject that possesses a free will comes the production of social pathology wherein each human being strives for their own death which is contrary to their essence. The essence of each singular thing is its power to persevere in existence and as such “No thing can be destroyed except through an external cause” (EIIIP4). In other words, no existing thing contains the cause

of its annihilation. Etienne Balibar, however, suggests that prejudice and ideology ‘inverts’ the actual essence of each individual thing,

Exploiting a natural fear in each individual, the monarchical and ecclesiastical apparatus of superstition reproduces it and so expands it as a mass phenomenon, thus rendering it uncontrollable...Men, then, ‘fight for slavery as if for salvation, and count no fame but the highest honor to risk their blood and their lives for the vainglory of one man.’ This is a surprising thesis on Spinoza’s part since this inversion of the natural *conatus* of individuals goes so far as to give substance, in the fury of mass movements, to the desire for their own death, and self-destruction (Balibar 1994, 11-12)

Having identified free will, i.e., abstract independence as the central concept of ideology, this chapter aims to show how abstract independence is produced and functions as an ideological fiction. The first two sections will explore the relationship between God *or* Nature *or* Substance and modes while showing that individuals are always transindividual, or always requiring an external cause to become adequate causes themselves which in turn undermines the idea of a free will and abstract independence. The last section will explore how abstract independence is produced by the imagination. Importantly, this section will show that the goal is not to overcome the imaginative perspective because it is not flawed in itself; instead it expresses how the body is affected by other bodies. The aim rather is to intellectually habituate the imagination so as to understand it properly rather than give into the power of abstract independence and the social pathologies that follow from it.

God *or* Nature

Beginning by clarifying some terminology, it is very important to note that Spinoza equates God with Nature using an inclusive *or* — *Deus sive Natura* — God or Nature. That is to say, God is Nature and Nature is God. I will continue to use the inclusive disjunction throughout in order to continually remind the reader that for Spinoza God is Nature.¹⁶ A question that we will have to address in the course of this section is whether Spinoza identifies God only with the eternal part of nature or with nature as a whole. That is, whether Spinoza identifies God only with *Natura Naturans* or with both *Natura Naturans* and *Natura Naturata*. I will argue that Spinoza identifies God with both aspects of Nature and in that respect completely naturalizes God.

The aim of this section is to show why the free will is erroneous according to Spinoza's ontology. Or, put differently, the aim is to conceptualize Spinoza's ontology in a way that shows that abstract independence cannot be a *real* expression of Nature nor does it belong to the essence of Nature or its expressions. Unlike the critique or genealogy of religion we encounter in the Appendix to Part I, which moves from human beings to God, this section will first show the ontological impossibility of a 'divine' or natural free will or sovereignty and subsequently show the ontological impossibility of a human free will or sovereignty.¹⁷ In order to do this, I will argue that the relationship between nature and its expressions is immanent and aspectual, that is

¹⁶ While Spinoza not only retained but actively used 'God' as tool for immanent critique, to contemporary readers that terminology only works to confuse and distract, especially since our aim is not the critique of religion *per se* but the production of sovereign subjectivity that expresses the movement of ideology.

¹⁷ At this point, a question may arise: Why begin with Nature, or why discuss Nature at all? If sovereign subjectivity is the logical center of ideology, why not begin by examining human subjectivity or human individuality? The reason for beginning with Nature is that it is impossible to understand Spinoza's concept of non-sovereign individuality without explaining modes, i.e., expressions of God *or* Nature's power, through Nature.

God *or* Nature and modes are two different perspectives on the same thing. In so doing I will also show that despite being finite, modes do have reality. The outcome of this reading is that we no longer separate nature and its creations and we no longer deify nature or concern ourselves with pantheism. Rather we develop a reading of nature and of finite existence as a dynamic transindividual relations of power.¹⁸

Spinoza identifies God's essence with God's power¹⁹ and God's existence:

E1P20: God's existence and his essence are one and the same.

E1P34: God's power (*potentia*) is his essence itself.

We should not lose sight of the trifold between essence, power, and existence insofar as it is power that allows us to read the identity between essence and existence a dynamic and not static. In other words, the key to understanding the essence of God *or* Nature is by exploring what Spinoza understands by power.

First, a few words on essence. Spinoza offers a rather traditional definition of essence, "I say that to the essence of anything belongs that which, being given, the thing is [NS: also] necessarily posited and which, being taken away, the thing is necessarily [NS: also] taken away; or that without which the thing can neither be nor be conceived, and which can neither be nor be conceived without the thing" (EIID2). Essence, simply put, is that which makes the thing what it

¹⁸ In this respect, it is very interesting to consider Spinoza as both early modern but also already post-modern insofar as he already articulates a structurally displaced subject constructed through power relations. It would be quite interesting to develop the relationship between Spinoza and Foucault (who had to have been influenced by Spinoza even if indirectly due to his intellectual relationship with Althusser and Deleuze).

¹⁹ See Hübner 2017 for a view that rejects the identification of essence and power on the grounds that this identification undermines the foundation of Spinoza's ethical and political project. Instead, Hübner suggests that affects as modes of power modify God's essence.

is. Yet, despite offering a traditional definition, by equating it with essence and power, Spinoza changes its otherwise static meaning.

God's essence is existence. Insofar as that is the case, God exists necessarily or eternally. Thus, to ask whether substance will endure is to rely on a contradiction, i.e., it is to suppose that God does not exist necessarily or that existence can be taken away but God's essence will remain. With that said, we must be careful to avoid falling into abstractions by thinking of existence as a property of God. Rather, substance is existence; it does not have existence. As David Savan points out, "God does not have life, he is life" (Savan 1994: 17). God *or* Nature is perfect insofar as it *is* reality.

Yitzhak Melamed (Melamed 2012b) also suggests that God's existence and essence are absolutely identical. However, he raises an important question: Does Spinoza completely identify God's existence with nature or does Spinoza argue that God's essence involves existence but can also involve something else, that is to say, God's essence is not identical with its existence. Put differently, either God's existence is its essence or God's essence involves existence but is not solely defined by it. Melamed identifies the following passages as the proof of the dilemma:

EIP20: God's existence and his essence are one and the same.

And for the non-identity reading, he cites the definition of the cause of itself,

EID1: By cause of itself I understand that whose essence involves existence, *or* that whose nature cannot be conceived except as existing.

or,

EIP7: It pertains to the nature of substance to exist.

Dem.: A substance cannot be produced by anything else (by P6C); therefore it will be the cause of itself, i.e. (by D1), its essence necessarily involves existence, *or* pertains to its nature to exist, q.e.d.

In order to show that God's essence and existence are one and the same i.e., existence exhausts God's essence, Melamed examines Spinoza's use of the Latin *involvit*. However, it is also important to point out that Proposition 20, which articulates the identity between God's essence and existence, occurs after Spinoza has shown what God *or* Nature is in Proposition 14:

EIP14: Except God, no substance can be or be conceived.

Dem.: Since God is an absolute infinite being, of whom no attribute which expresses an essence of substance can be denied (by D6), and he necessarily exists (by P11), if there were any substance except God, it would have to be explained through some attribute of God, and so two substances of the same attribute would exist, which (by P5) is absurd. And so except God, no substance can be or, consequently, be conceived.

Prior to Proposition 14, Spinoza has not proved that God exists. We should not suppose that by starting with the definitions as he does, Spinoza simply asserts the existence of God. That being said, the propositions that occur prior to Proposition 14 and definitely prior to Proposition 20 have not yet asserted what God's essence is. Thus, the proposition that is key to understanding the relationship between essence and existence is Proposition 20, "God's existence and his essence are one and the same," and not any of the propositions that occur prior to the proof of God's existence.

Let us now turn to power. Throughout his texts, Spinoza uses two terms for power²⁰: *potestas* and *potentia*. While both terms translate as power in English (unlike other languages that

²⁰ See Viljanen 2011 for a discussion of power that operates within and responds to Anglo-American rather than continual Spinoza scholarship. See Della Rocca 2003 for a reading of power and causation in terms of the principle of sufficient reason. See Poppa 2013 for a rejection of Della Rocca's argument for the principle of sufficient reason and a defense of the position that

have preserved the distinction, e.g., German *Macht* and *Vermogen* or Russian: *сила* and *возможность*), they do have a conceptual difference that is key to understanding the essence and existence of God *or* Nature and its expressions, i.e., modes. Unfortunately, many Spinoza scholars have not only dismissed this distinction²¹ but have dismissed the importance of power for understanding God *or* Nature.²²

Gilles Deleuze and Antonio Negri have both focused not only on the importance of power but also on the distinction between *potestas* and *potentia*. Negri (Negri 1991) explores the political dimensions of the distinction by showing that Spinoza aligns *potestas* with sovereignty²³

causal relations undergird conceptual dependence. See Hübner 2015a for a discussion of formal causation as understood by the 17th-century mathematicians, namely that efficient and mechanical causation are not enough to explain the metaphysics of the *Ethics*.

²¹ Edwin Curley, in a footnote to the dictionary attached to the end of the first volume of Spinoza's completed works writes, "Some French scholars see an important distinction between *potestas* (which they render *pouvoir*, suggesting a mere capacity) and *potentia* (which they render *puissance*, suggesting a power 'en acte'...Gueroult, who accept this distinction...comments that Spinoza introduces the distinction in order to reduce it immediately to nothing. It is unclear that a systematic examination of Spinoza's usage would confirm even a prima facie distinction between *potentia* and *potestas*. The main symptoms of one seem to be that *power* in the phrase *power of acting* always represents *potentia*, whereas in the phrase *in one's power* it always represents *potestas*. And *potestas* is the term used to refer to the political power held by an established government..."

²² For example see Hallett 1957, "It follows that all interpretations of the doctrine of Spinoza that fail to take due note of its *activism*, and interpret causation in terms of the confessedly impotent categories of positivistic theory are thereby hamstrung from the start, and can only proceed to further and more mischievous misunderstandings which seem to involve him in fallacies so futile and obvious as to lie beyond the possible stupidity of the merest tiro [sic]." (Hallett 1957: 132).

²³ "By God's power (*potentia*) ordinary people understand God's free will and his right over all things which are, things which on that account are commonly considered to be contingent. For they say that God has the Power (*potestas*) of destroying all things and reducing them to nothing. Further, they very often compare God's power with the power of Kings. But we have refuted this...and we have shown in IP16 that God acts with the same necessity by which he understands himself, i.e., just as it follows from the necessity of the divine nature (as every maintains unanimously) that God understands himself, with the same necessity it also follows that God does infinitely many things in infinitely many modes. And then we have shown in IP24 that God's power is nothing except God's active essence. And so it is as impossible for us to conceive that God does not act as it is to conceive that he does not exist...I could also show here that that power

and *potentia* with dynamic and democratic power immanent to substance. This is a very fruitful and interesting distinction that functions not only in Spinoza's explicitly political writings but is also thoroughly present in the *Ethics* and shows that Spinoza's so-called metaphysics was always already a politics.²⁴

Deleuze agrees that "one of the basic points of the *Ethics* consists in denying that God has any power (*potestas*) analogous to that of a tyrant" (Deleuze 1988, 97). In that respect God does not have *potestas* – God is not an omniscient force whose free will hovers above the world of the living. Rather, God is absolute *potentia* or activity. However, Deleuze does suggest while Spinoza denies God's *potestas* as tyrannical power, he does affirm it as the absolutely realized capacity to be affected. In that respect, we can actually identify three concepts of power: *potentia*, i.e., creative activity; *potestas*, i.e., capacity to be affected; and *potestas*, i.e., tyrannical force (often associated with State power). God does not have *potestas* understood as the dominating

which ordinary people fictitiously ascribe to God is not only human (which shows that ordinary people conceive God as a man, or as like a man), but also involves lack of power...For no one will be able to perceive rightly the things I maintain unless he takes great care not to confuse God's power with the human power or the right of Kings" (E2P3S quoted in Negri 1991).

²⁴ See Balibar 1998, "The relationship between philosophy and politics is such that *each implies the other*. By posing specifically philosophic problems, Spinoza is not choosing to approach his political concerns by an indirect route, he is not transposing them from their proper place and recasting them in a 'metapolitical' medium. He deals in philosophical terms because only philosophy can give him the means to know exactly, or, as he would say, 'adequately' the power relations and the particular interest that are at stake in politics" (Balibar 1998: 4) Warren Montag also writes, "...according to Balibar, it is impossible to separate Spinoza's metaphysics from his politics, as if the latter were an application of the former. Instead, Spinoza's philosophy must be seen as political in its entirety: even its most speculative utterances constitute responses to certain political imperatives and are tied to specific historical stakes. Thus, Balibar's title *Spinoza and Politics* (as opposed to 'Spinoza and Political Philosophy'), refuses at the outset the separation of philosophy into the speculative and the practical, a separation that is itself a perfect expression of the dualisms of mind and body and of the universal and the particular that Spinoza so vehemently rejected: all philosophy is political, inescapably embodied, no matter how it may strain to deny this fact, in the practical forms of its historical existence" (Balibar 1998: v).

force that is to be obeyed, but God does have *potestas* that is the absolutely actualized capacity to be affected or to realize *potentia*, creative power.²⁵ In other words, Nature's essence is not a static identity but eternal that is the necessary expression of power or existence.

What follows from this conception of Nature's power insofar as it necessarily and completely actualizes itself is that "whatever is in God's Power must be so comprehended by his essence that it necessarily follows from it, and therefore necessarily exists" (EIP35D).

E1P16: From the necessity of the divine nature there must follow infinitely many things in infinitely many modes

E1P17: God acts from the laws of his nature alone, and is compelled by no one.

Cor.1: From this follows, first, that there is no cause, either extrinsically or intrinsically, which prompts God to action, except the perfection of his nature.

The important question is: What do we understand by necessity?²⁶ Necessity here does not mean determinism and thus a lack of freedom. Rather, in suggesting that God's existence is necessary Spinoza precludes the possibility of thinking God *or* nature as an independent or sovereign subject capable of willing anything into being. In other words, the concept of necessity works to deny abstract free will and the faculty psychology that makes free will possible. Spinoza forces us to think freedom and necessity together insofar as the "That thing is called free which exists from the necessity of its nature alone, and is determined to act by itself alone. But a

²⁵ As Deleuze puts it, "For in Spinozism all power bears with it a corresponding and inseparable capacity to be affected. And this capacity to be affected is always, necessarily, exercised. To *potentia* there corresponds an *aptitudo* or *potestas*; but there is no aptitude or capacity that remains ineffective, and so now power that is not actual" (Deleuze 1992: 93).

²⁶ Much of the literature surrounding necessity in Spinoza has focused on determinism. In this respect, I think these discussions are missing the crucial reason why Spinoza chose the language of determination over and against abstract freedom.

thing is called necessary, or rather compelled, which is determined by another to exist and to produce an effect in a certain and determinate manner” (EID7). God *or* Nature is free and necessary insofar as it self-determines itself to actualize.

Julie Klein suggests that necessity is also best understood in terms of eternity, which Spinoza defines as “existence itself” (Klein 2002). That is to say, necessity is but the infinite enjoyment of existence.²⁷ The same point can be made by stating that every determinate cause necessarily produces a determinate effect.²⁸ If we render cause in terms of ratios, such that every determinate ratio necessarily produces a determinate effect, we see that every body, a ratio of movement and rest, necessarily generates a determinate effect bound to generate a further effect and so on. And thus from “the necessity of the divine nature there must follow infinitely many things in infinitely many modes” (EIP16)²⁹. Necessity refers explicitly to the power of a determinate cause to generate an effect. Insofar as bodies are understood as determinate causes or ratios, they are not discrete, because they are bound to generate an effect. Or as Savan puts in a different idiom, “One form of activity passes without discontinuity into other forms of activity” (Savan 1994: 17).

Thus, God *or* Nature cannot be said to have a free will or cannot be said to be an undetermined cause. Rather nature is self-determining. But to fully understand what it means to say that Nature acts necessarily or that from one effect another follows necessarily we have to discuss Nature as an immanent cause and understand modes as expressions of Nature. In other words, we

²⁷ EID8: By eternity I understand existence itself, insofar as it is conceived to follow necessarily from the definition alone of the eternal thing.

²⁸ EIA3: From a given determinate cause the effect follows necessarily; and conversely, if there is no determinate cause, it is impossible for an effect to follow.

²⁹ See Matheron 1991 for a discussion of EIP16 namely the identification of properties and effects.

have said that Nature expresses itself necessarily in its effects, now the question becomes how does the cause relate to its effects or how does Nature relate to its modifications? Is God *or* Nature a transcendent, eminent, or immanent cause? This discussion is important because by showing that God *or* Nature is an immanent cause of its expressions and thus its expression inhere in Nature, we will have the conceptual tools to understand why modes and thereby human beings are not subjects endowed with a free will, how their individuality is produced, and how the error of abstract independence is produced.

Spinoza writes:

EIP18: God is the immanent, not the transitive, cause of all things.

Dem.: Everything that is, is in God, and must be conceived through God (by P15), and so (by P16C1) God is the cause of [NS: all] things, which are in him. That is the first [thing to be proved]. And then outside God there can be no substance (by P14), i.e. (by D3), thing which is in itself outside God. That was the second. God, therefore, is the immanent, not the transitive cause of all things, q.e.d.

Seemingly this should make the discussion rather straightforward. If Spinoza says that Nature is an immanent cause and that its expressions inhere in Nature, does it not follow that Nature is an immanent cause? However, the literature has greatly diverged on this matter. Steven Nadler (Nadler 2008) points out another passage that surrounds the discussion of how to properly understand immanence in Spinoza:

EIP15: Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be or be conceived without God.

Dem.: Except for God, there neither is, nor can be conceived, any substance (by EIP14), i.e. (By EID3), thing that is in itself and is conceived through itself. But modes (by EID35) can neither be nor be conceived without substance. So they can

be in the divine nature alone and can be conceived through it alone. But except for substances and modes, there is nothing (by EIA1). Therefore, [NS: everything is in God and] nothing can be or be conceived without God, q.e.d.

According to Nadler, the meaning of *in* in the phrase ‘whatever is, is in God’ is ambiguous. Something can be in something as a part of a whole, or as a property of a subject, or as an object in a container (Nadler 2008: 54). Nadler identifies two interpretations that have been dominant in defining the relationship between Nature and modes. Pierre Bayle understood modes as properties of a subject.³⁰ But according to Bayle this inevitably leads to some serious problems: God would be subject to change, God would be inherently self-contradictory in so far as modes are not identical to each other. This must be a contradiction since Spinoza states that God is eternal and perfect and therefore either God is not an immanent cause, or Spinoza was utterly confused.

Edwin Curley³¹ represents the other major interpretation that has dominated Anglo-American Spinoza scholarship. According to Curley, Bayle’s reading is wrong because we cannot regard real things as properties, “Spinoza’s modes are, *prima facie*, of the wrong logical type to be related to substance in the same way Descartes’ modes are related to substance, for they are particular things, not qualities. And it is difficult to know what it would mean to say that particular things inhere in substance” (Curley cited in Nadler 2008: 56). On Curley’s reading God is an eternal and necessary cause of all things, and in that respect, modes do not inhere in substance in any real way. In that respect, Curley identifies Nature with *Natura Naturans* “What is in itself

³⁰ Nadler points out, “Bayle admired Spinoza’s character, but abhorred his philosophy. He called it ‘the most monstrous that could be imagined, the most absurd, and the most diametrically opposed to the most evident notions of our mind’” (Nadler 2008: 55).

³¹ See Melamed 2009 for another rejection of Curley’s view and a defense of modes as both inhering in God and as being predicated of God.

and is conceived through itself, *or* such as attributes of substance as express and eternal infinite essence” (EIP39S) but not with *Natura Naturata*, “whatever follows from the necessity of God’s nature, *or* from any of God’s attributed, i.e., all the modes of God’s attributes insofar as they are considered as things which are in God, and can neither be nor be conceived without God” (Ibid.) In that respect, Bayle identified God *or* Nature with both aspects.

Insofar as God is identified with Nature, we have to understand both aspects of Nature - both nature naturing and nature natured as part of Nature at large. But perhaps the more persuasive argument is that Spinoza explicitly says that there is nothing outside of God. I suggest that to suppose that God is only identified with *Natura Naturans* is to suggest that the effect of nature is not in God but is external to God, and thus there are other substances outside of substance. The same conclusion has to be reached if we suppose that the connection between God and its affects is logical, that is the only way that modes inhere in substance is as a logical connection between the cause and the effect.

If we conclude that God is an immanent cause and modes inhere in substance, or that Nature is both *Natura Naturata* and *Natura Naturans*, then there cannot be any remainder of God beyond the effects of God. Or we might say, God, disappears in its effects or becomes but a perspectival relationship between God as the infinite totality of existence and God as the dynamic totality of expressions. This is precisely the position that I hold. Importantly, this reading is why Spinoza has been charged as a pantheist or a thinker who deifies nature and remains God-obsessed. Nadler, however, points out — and I agree with his reading — that a pantheist and an atheist would agree that God disappears in Nature or is reduced to Nature. But unlike a pantheist, an atheist would never suggest that we must find wonder and awe in nature. Rather, as Spinoza constantly argues, we are to come to know nature conceptually without awe and wonderment.

After all, wonderment or awe are but the vacillations of the imagination or inadequate knowledge.

Transindividual Individuals

Having shown that God *or* Nature is not sovereign, i.e., not an abstract free cause but is free insofar as it is necessary, the aim of this section is to show why human beings are also not sovereign agents, i.e., modes that pose and act out of a free will. In order to do this, I will show how individuality is produced, and that individuality is always transindividual, which renders abstract independence impossible. Finally, I will conclude with a brief discussion on the reality of finite individuals.

But let us begin with a problem: Given that we have shown that God *or* Nature is an immanent cause, does it not follow that finite modes insofar as they inhere in Nature lack reality?³² Yitzhak Melamed explains that this reading was first advanced by Solomon Maimon, and after became the standard reading shared by most German Idealists, especially Hegel (Melamed 2010). The standard opinion that emerged after the fervor of Spinoza's atheism had died down had become that Spinoza was not only not an atheist, but — as Novalis put — a God-obsessed man whose God is an Eleatic substance and whose modes are mere illusions.³³ According to this

³² See Della Rocca 2012 for a discussion of Spinoza's rationalism and monism in relation to German Idealism; Della Rocca's view ultimately commits Spinoza to a view that things really do lack reality. See Hübner 2015b for a discussion of the relationship between the infinite and the finite and whether determinate negation undermines the reality of finite modes and ultimately suggests that negation is not metaphysically necessary. See Hübner 2014 for an argument akin to mine that substance is fully self-determined by its modes thus suggesting the necessity of modes.

³³ "Taken as a whole, this constitutes the Idea of Spinoza, and it is just what $\tau\acute{o} \acute{o}\nu$ was to the Eleatics." Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy Vol. 3*, 257. See Moyar 2012 for a discussion of Hegel's reception of Spinoza and the stakes that are raised by how we understand Hegel in relation to Spinoza.

position, still held by Alexandre Kojève, it is possible to suggest, “the *Ethics* explains everything, except the possibility for a man living in time to write it. And if the *Phenomenology* explains why the *Logic* appears at a certain moment of history and not at another, the *Ethics* proves the impossibility of its own appearance at *any* moment of time whatsoever” (Kojève 1980: 118).

And so, by way of showing what individuality is for Spinoza, it is also upon us to show that modes are real expression of Nature insofar as they are not merely fictitious representations of ourselves. I argue that there is nothing but the actual existing modes that are the expressions of God’s power. In that respect, God is not static or an eternal substance — such a reading still presupposes a God that is either transcendent or eminent but not a God who both necessarily is in its effects and disappears in its effects. As I argued above, such a perspective fails to appreciate and understand Spinoza’s radical materialism³⁴ and continues to interpret Spinoza via the lens of prejudice and superstition.

This reading seems to suppose that God as *Natura Naturans* is a stable one, in which case modes cannot be real but illusions of change. But what this reading also forgets is that the abstract One of Parmenides or its various permutations was built on a model of emanation and the division between reality and appearance. Insofar as Spinoza makes Nature an immanent cause the dualism between reality and appearance disappears and in necessarily expressing itself in its effects, God disappears or is nothing other than the infinite dynamic totality of its modification, “In short, ‘substance’ is nothing *other* than individuals; especially, it does not ‘transcend’ or ‘underlie’ their multiplicity, as a platonic *paradeigma* or a Kantian *ding an sich*, but it is the very name by which we designate the causal unity of this infinite multiplicity of ‘modes’” (Balibar

³⁴ See Montag 1999 for a defense of Spinoza’s radical materialism against positions that interpret Spinoza as either a Cartesian or as a liberal.

1997: 8). Nature and its expressions are two different perspectives on the same thing. *Natura naturans* — or Nature as conceived through itself — is the perspective of the dynamic self-differentiating infinity of Nature. *Natura naturata* — or that which is conceived through another — is the perspective of the infinity of finite determinations. Thus, to suppose that modes lack reality is to misunderstand the relationship between Nature and its modifications and to reintroduce dualism and theology into Spinoza’s thought precisely where he works to undermine it.³⁵

Having established that Nature is not sovereign and having established the relationship between Nature and its modifications, we are finally ready to discuss concrete individuals and why they are not sovereign subjectivities, i.e., why concrete individuality or singularity is not defined or determined by abstract independence or a free will. In that respect — to return to the terminology we employed earlier — concrete individuals have *potentia* but not *potestas*, the latter being an ideological fiction.

According to Balibar, individuality³⁶ is not only a “central notion, but it is the very of *actual existence*. In the strong sense of the term (associated with necessity) only individuals really exist” (Balibar 1997: 8). This is a particularly effective way of expressing the two ideas we have

³⁵ Montag writes, “In declaring God to be the immanent cause of the world, Spinoza rejected not only every dualism of spirit and matter but also the dualisms of unity and diversity, of the temporal and the eternal” (Montag in Balibar 1998: ix). Julie Klein expresses a similar sentiment, “As read by the French commentators, Spinoza emerges as a key ancestor, even a progenitor, of historical materialism. For these decidedly non-idealistic, anti-transcendent and anti-transcendental readers, Spinoza’s philosophy provides a way to think about embodied, affective knowers in their concrete interactions and differentiations. . . . Seen in the context of political theory before Marx and in the context of the contractarian tradition, Spinoza stands as a thinker of politics as a science of actual bodies in actual circumstances, not abstract, ideal or universal individuals emerging from the pre-social state of nature” (Klein 2002: 42). Klein further suggests that “Spinoza’s aspectival, perspectival way of thinking releases thinking from dualism” (Ibid.)

³⁶ See Shein 2015 for defense of the transindividual argument grounded in EIP28 and emerging out of/remains in conversation with contemporary Anglo-American Spinoza scholarship.

developed so far: that Nature does not exist or has existence, but is existence itself and that it disappears in its effects, suggesting that only individuals are said to exist. That being said, let us define an individual, “By singular things, I understand things that are finite and have a determinate existence. And if a number of Individuals so concur in one action that together they are all the cause of one effect, I consider them all, to that extent as one singular thing” (EIID7).

The first thing to be said is that in so far as Nature is infinite, it does not allow for any discrete parts thus rendering an atomic universe impossible. In that respect, it also renders discrete individuals equally impossible. In order to understand that and further in order to understand what it means for multiple individuals to concur together so as to compose another individual, we should briefly look to Spinoza’s so-called physical digression,³⁷ “Bodies are distinguished from one another by reason of motion and rest, speed and slowness, and not by reason of substance” (EIIL1). That is to say, bodies are not discrete entities but rather are various movements of motion and rest. What either unites bodies together and keeps apart is the difference in their rhythm or their movement of motion and rest:

When a number of bodies, whether of the same or of different size, are so constrained by other bodies that they lie upon one another, or if they so move, whether with the same degree or different degrees of speed, that they communicate their motions to each other in a certain fixed manner, we shall say that those bodies are united with one another and that they all together compose one body or

³⁷ See Brandom 1976 for an account of mind’s intentionality in terms of causal relationship grounded in causal relationship between extended modes. See Rice 1971 for a reading of the relationship between individuation and the physical digression that rejects understanding individuation in Spinoza via personal identity.

Individual, which is distinguished from the others by this union of bodies (EIIA2" D).

Individuals come to be when various bodies begin to move and rest at the same rate. The whole of Nature in that respect is one individual.³⁸ Individuals are always undergoing the process of coming together or coming apart. And importantly, from this perspective Nature itself is a dynamic immanently self-differentiating individual.

In that respect, individuality is always produced. But perhaps most importantly it is not the case that once an individual, i.e., various bodies begin to move and rest at the same rate and produce the same effect, that the individual is self-contained. The individual is always necessarily transindividual insofar as there is never an end to the process of production, or every determinate cause necessarily has an effect and so on. Which is also to say, Nature is necessarily or eternally infinitely self-differentiating in an infinite number of ways. Such a conception of individuality — wherein an individual is defined by the capacity to produce a singular effect, which is to say to be a determinate or adequate cause — is transindividual insofar as an individual cannot become a determinate cause on its own. Thus, an individual is not only a composite, but it also depends on external causes, i.e., other individuals to become a determinate cause and to increase its power of acting. It is not surprising that Spinoza's account of individuality caused some problems insofar as on the face of it, it denies individuality, while in reality, it offers a concept of individuality that does not fall prey to the falsity of ideology, i.e., indeterminate individuality with a power of a free will.³⁹ Balibar points out that such a conception of individuality

³⁸ See Barbone 2002 for a rejection of the view first advanced by Matheron that political states can be understood as individuals.

³⁹ Balibar writes, "This kind of criticism began soon after Spinoza's doctrine became known. However, in my opinion, they are not rooted only in ignorance or and faith. They ultimately refer

moves Spinoza beyond individualism and holism: there are concrete individuals, but who are always necessarily beyond themselves *but* insofar as they are individuals, they do not become overdetermined by the whole.⁴⁰

Material Epistemology of Abstract Independence

Having examined what the logic or the matrix of ideology is and having shown why it is conceptually inadequate, I now move to on to consider how is that the fiction of the free will and abstract independence is produced. Furthermore, the aim of this section is to show that while the free will is an inadequate idea, it is an idea that is necessary to our experience insofar as it expresses embodied the first-person experience. An ideological error consists not in the image of a free will but rather in affirmation of the free will as the real and adequate nature of modes. However, when the free will is understood as the necessary but inadequate expression of first-person

to the intrinsic difficulty which readers had (and still have) in understanding a doctrine which virtually escapes (or dismisses) the basic antinomies of metaphysics and ethics which arise from ontological dualism: individualism vs holism (or organicism), but also the opposite ways of understanding the human ‘community’ itself, in which either ‘intersubjectivity’ or ‘civil society,’ ‘interiority’ or ‘exteriority,’ is given primacy” (Balibar 1997: 7). Sharp makes a similar point, “The composition that we pick out as discrete individuals and the dependencies that we regard as essential vary according to habit and cultural milieu. What this notion of composition foregrounds is that while the beings that constitute an ‘individual’ could not exist without one another, this does not entail that any member of a composition has an instrumental purpose in relationship to another or to the total composition that is nature. Thus, it is justified to say that Spinoza’s thought is not holistic; parts are not servants of the whole. Finite modes do not exist for the sake of the totality of nature, and neither does nature exist so that finite beings can.” (Sharp 2011: 39). For an additional reading of politics of transindividuation see Read 2016 and Morfino 2014

⁴⁰ Here we may draw some interesting connection between Hegel and Spinoza on the question of dialectics. Balibar argues that Spinoza’s transindividual thinking is like diabetics a rejecting of abstract opposite, “Of course to picture Spinoza as a ‘dialectician’ — at least in any pre-established meaning of the term — would only produce confusion. Nevertheless, the astonishing logic of *coincidentia oppositorum* (better said: the logic of *simultaneous rejection* of abstract opposites) which is at work in these arguments calls for a special terminology. The best term I can find is *transindividuality*” (Balibar 1997: 10).

experience imagination is guided by the intellect, and thus the ideological error is avoided.

Imagination or Inadequate Ideas

Spinoza defines the imaginations of the mind as “the affections of the human Body whose ideas present external bodies as present to us...even if they do not reproduce the figures of things” (EIIP17S). First, it is imperative to note that imagination, as well as reason and intellect, are not distinct and stable faculties; rather, they are movements of ideas and for that reason better referred to in the plural rather than in the singular. Instead of an imagination, there are imaginations, etc.⁴¹

Returning to our main point, imaginations are ideas of the affections, or images, of the human body⁴² that result from an encounter with another body. This is a two-fold movement of presentation and *r*epresentation, presentation of presence. When another body affects the human body, the external body is said to present itself to the human body. Presentation, as David Savan writes, expresses “the actual existence of this interaction between external body and human body, together with the perceptual idea of this correlation” (Savan 1994: 11). Savan goes on to explain that presentation involves only two ideas, the idea of an external body and the idea of the human body, or mind. Representation, making ‘present external bodies as present,’ involves three ideas: idea of the external body, mind, and the idea of the presence of the idea external body to the mind. While presentation is an activity on the part of the external body making itself present to the body, representation is an activity on the part of the mind insofar as it presents an

⁴¹ This is not a trivial point insofar as denying the reality of faculty psychology allows Spinoza to articulate a different account of freedom and necessity.

⁴², See d’Allonnes 1999 for a defense of the position that suggests that the affectivity of the body is the foundation of Spinoza’s political theory.

idea as present to itself. This being the case, representation no longer signals an actual existence of the external body but can occur irrespective of it.⁴³ Precisely this is the condition of error.

Taking a brief detour to examine error will allow us to understand how imaginations can lead to prejudice. Or differently put, affirming the representations of the imagination as real leads to the affirmation of abstract independence as the ontological reality of individuals

Spinoza writes,

the imaginations of the Mind, considered in themselves contain no error, *or* that the Mind does not err from the fact that it imagines, but only insofar as it is considered to lack an idea that excludes the existence of those things that it imagines to be present to it. For if the Mind, while it imagined nonexistent things as present to it, at the same time knew that those things did not exist, it would, of course, attribute this power of imagining to a virtue of its nature, not to a vice (EIIIP17S)

Imaginations as modes of thought, and thus as “affections of substance” (EID5), do not and cannot contain error in themselves as that would suggest that substance contains privation, or put differently, that substance is not an infinite expression of power. But substance is an infinite expression of power. It follows that “[there] is nothing positive in ideas on account of which they are called false. If you deny this, conceive (if possible) a positive mode of thinking which constitutes the form of error, or falsity. This mode of thinking cannot be in God. But it also can neither be nor be conceived outside God” (EIIIP33). Ideas are positive expressions of God’s power and cannot be otherwise. For positive ideas to constitute error would 1) amount to a contradiction, for how can we think something positive that is at the same time a privation, and 2) cannot be in

⁴³ Thinking through the structures of presentation allows us to grasp the temporal structure of the present. This, however, goes beyond the scope of the present paper.

God insofar as it is a lack and cannot be outside of God for nothing can be or be conceived outside of God. And so imaginations do not contain error in themselves.

What, then, does error consist in? Error consists in affirming imaginations as accurate representations of external bodies - or, which is the same, in lacking an idea that excludes the image as present. Unlike presentations, which are the effects of external bodies acting upon the human body, representations occur irrespective of the actual existence of an external body. Differently put, the mind can present something as present whether or not an external body is actually affecting the human body. Thus, the mind can remember, fantasize, and even present as possible the existence of objects whose actual existence is a contradiction. Looking at the distinction between *ab experientia vaga* and *ex auditis et signis* as two different modes of imagining will allow us to see precisely how imaginations relate to error.

Ab experientia vaga is the “[p]erception we have from random experience, that is, from experience that is not determined by the intellect” (TdIE: 12). By random experience, we can understand the fortuitous encounter with other bodies, whose affections express themselves as imaginations. Importantly, *ab experientia vaga* is experienced as random or fortuitous because “the order of causes is hidden from us,” which is but another way of saying that the intellect does not determine vagrant experience and, thus, mind insofar as it is imagining does not know the essences of other bodies. This is the case because all imaginations are necessarily mediated by the body. The mind does not know the human body “except through ideas of affections by which the Body is affected” (EIIP9). Thus, for the mind to know the human body, the latter must be af-

affected by external bodies, and as a consequence, imaginations cannot know external bodies except as they are experienced by the human body.⁴⁴ Error, in this case, consists in affirming imaginations as accurately representing external bodies. To take a familiar example, error would consist in affirming that the sun is as small as it appears to the naked eye. However, instead of affirming imaginations as expressing the essence of an external body, but rather affirming them as indicating the nature of the human does not constitute an error.

Mind, insofar as it is imagining, cannot have distinct ideas of all the affects undergone by the body because “the human Body, being limited, is capable of forming distinctly only a certain number of images at the same time” (EIIP40S). This limitation gives rise to universals. Rather than forming distinct ideas that differentiate between singular affects, imaginations group similar affects under a single determination of a universal. Thus, arise universal ideas of human, mind, or God. Affirming universals as actually existing is an error, one that wants to affirm as possible the existence of which is a contradiction. Yet, universals are not errors in themselves insofar as they indicate how a singular body is affected by various other bodies. Treated as such, universals allow one to classify various affection of the body.

The second kind of imaginations are “[p]erception we have from report or from some conventional sign” (TdIE: 12), *ex auditis et signis*, hearsay, and signs. Signs are twice removed from body’s experience of other bodies. Universals are related to the body’s affections since they are the forms imaginations take when the body is not capable of differentiating affections, thus requiring universals to classify its actual experiences. Signs are the sounds and images that are

⁴⁴ Importantly Althusser understands what we take to be our lived experience as imagination. That is to say, it is impossible to make a real distinction between lived experience and imagination. For an Anglo-American perspective on the relationship between experience and the three kinds of knowledge see Curley 1973. See Gilead 1994 for defense of the indispensability of imagination as necessary condition of experience and second and third kind of knowing.

only accidentally associated with any given universal and in that respect, have no relation to existing bodies. Whereas knowledge *ab experientia vaga* can in principle emended, the same cannot be said for knowledge *ex auditis et signis*.

Seeing that error is not to be framed in terms of privation, the appropriate determination is in terms of the distinction between adequate and inadequate ideas, “Falsity consists in the privation of knowledge which inadequate, or mutilated and confused, ideas involve” (EIP35S). Adequate ideas are intrinsically determined, meaning that the standard of truth is internal to the idea rather than being determined by an agreement with an external object. Inadequate ideas, on the other hand, are determined extrinsically, meaning that they result from the common order of nature and the fortuitous encounter of the human body with an external body. In other words, inadequate ideas depend on the action of an external body upon the human body, and “[f]rom this it follows that so long as the human Mind perceives things from the common order of nature, it does not have an adequate, but only a confused and mutilated knowledge of itself, of its own Body, and of external bodies” (EIP39C). Having undone the language of falsity or privation, we see that Spinoza instead frames error in terms of external determinations, which shows that inadequate ideas, despite being confused, indicate something about the nature of the body.

Having undergone an examination of the relationship between imaginations and error⁴⁵, we can turn to the fourth proportional. The purpose of working through the fourth proportional is to see that all three modes of knowledge, despite their respective confusion, lead to the knowledge of the fourth. Suppose you are given three numbers – 1, 2, and 3 – and you are “seeking a fourth, which is to the third as the second is to the first” (TdIE: 14). If the mind is seeking

⁴⁵ See Aldea 2015 for a discussion of the importance of the imagination as a necessary epistemic stage and as such a rethinking of the negative connotations of passivity.

to find the fourth by way of imagining it will proceed by one of two ways: either like the merchants who “do not hesitate to multiply the second by the third, and divide the product by the first, because they have not yet forgotten what they heard from their teacher without any demonstration” (EIIP40S) or, like those who “will construct a *universal* axiom from an experience with simple numbers, where the fourth number is evident through itself” (TdIE, 15 [emphasis mine]). The route of the merchants is *ex auditis et signis*: Having been taught the procedure, merchants do not hesitate to apply it without demanding a demonstration. Differently put, merchants rely on the authority of their teachers and their experience without seeking their first-person experience. The other route is *ab experientia vaga* insofar as the mind creates a universal axiom from particular experiences, which it imagines to be truly universal rather than stemming from a single, and limited perspective. Importantly, signs and hearsay allow merchants to derive the fourth because the procedure the procedure they use was once grounded in a demonstration, but through transmission became divorced from embodied experience. Thus, it is not a question of whether the merchants can derive the fourth through *ex auditis et signis*, but whether they can emend this knowledge.

From the preceding, we can conclude that the image of a sovereign subject imbued with abstract independence emerges from the body’s encounter with other bodies wherein the body experiences itself as a free cause insofar as it is aware of its desires but not aware of the causes of those desires. This is not error in itself insofar as that is how the body experiences itself but the error consist in affirming this experience as adequate.

Reason and Intellect or Adequate Ideas

Unlike imaginations which arrive at the fourth proportional either by having been taught the procedure or by constructing a universal axiom, mind insofar as it is reasoning attains knowledge of the fourth proportional by coming to know the nature of the proportion,

But Mathematicians know, by the force of the demonstration of Proposition 19 in Book VII of Euclid, which numbers are proportional to one another, *from the nature of proportion, and its property*, viz. that the product of the first and fourth numbers is equal to the product of the second and third. Nevertheless, they do not see the adequate proportionality of the given number (TdIE: 15 [emphasis mine])

The above distinction between *ex auditis et signis* and *ab experientia vaga* is not irrelevant here. While the former is ‘a repulsive force against knowledge,’ insofar as it precludes the possibility of having an idea that excludes the presence of what the sign makes present, the former, precisely because it is an actual experience of external bodies, can lead to adequate ideas and as such is the necessary condition for knowledge. Imaginations take the form of universals because of the body’s incapacity to differentiate its affections. That said, they nonetheless indicate how external bodies affect the human body. Importantly, bodies are affected by other bodies only if they have something in common. Imaginations indicate this from the confused perspective of a single body; reason, on the other hand, grasps the common property that allows bodies to affect one another. Thus, while imaginations are beholden to an extrinsic determination, reason is internally determined, “It is of the nature of Reason to regard things as necessary and not as contingent. And it perceives this necessity of things truly, i.e., as it is in itself” (EIIP4D2). Here, the example of the fourth proportional takes on an added layer of significance. Spinoza defines bodies as the proportion of the movement of motion and rest and an individual body as a certain ratio.

Reason⁴⁶ grasps the intrinsic property – nature of the proportion – that determines the fourth. Which is to say, reason grasps the intrinsic property of embodiment. Imagination, on the other hand, constructs a universal from seemingly random numbers. It has confused knowledge of itself as a ratio of movement and rest, and its proportional relation to other bodies. Nonetheless, a human body must be affected by another body — hence it must imagine — in order to comprehend the common properties that allow the bodies to affect one another. The latter does not preclude the mind from imagining, but it excludes the presence of a confused and mutilated idea and precludes the mind from affirming the imaginations as expressing the essence of external bodies. And in that respect, as Julie Klein notes, “Reason and imagination are, in essence, different ways (*modi*) of undergoing the same experience: differently put, the mind and the body are the same thing, viewed under different attributes” (Klein 2002: 305).

Despite having adequate knowledge of common properties, reason does ‘not see the adequate proportionality of the *given number*.’ It is upon us to distinguish the ways in which reason is said to have and to lack adequate knowledge. In the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*, Spinoza explains that a definition of a thing cannot follow from its properties, but rather that the properties of a thing must be “inferred from its definition” (TdIE: 40).⁴⁷ To be called adequate in an unqualified sense, an idea has to have as its object the essence of the thing under question, rather than the properties that it shares with other things. The foundations of reason are the “properties of things” (EIP40S), which “explain those things that are common to all, and which do not explain the essence of any singular thing” (EIP44D2). In that respect, reason can

⁴⁶ See Yovel 1994 for a discussion of reason in relation to imagination and intellect and the crucial role reason plays in the correction of error.

⁴⁷ *TdIE*, 40, “To be called perfect, a definition will have to explain the inmost essence of the thing, and to take care not to use certain *propria* in its place.” (*TdIE*, 40).

determine the fourth proportional without having adequate knowledge of the numbers – ratios – that constitute the proportion. As Alexandre Matheron puts, “we do not see in what the proportionality of *these very numbers precisely* consist. This amounts to saying that the essence of *their* singular proportion ‘had not been adequately concluded’: all that we know of it is that it *has to be such* that we can deduce from it what in fact we deduced adequately from something else” (Matheron 1986: 134). Nonetheless, to the extent that reason has intrinsic knowledge of the common properties, it has adequate knowledge, albeit in a qualified sense.

The third kind of knowledge, intellect, comes into view:

Given the numbers 1, 2, and 3, no one fails to see that the fourth proportional number is 6 – and we see this much more clearly because we infer the fourth number from the *ratio* which, in one glance, we see the first number to have to the second (EIP40S[emphasis mine])

Unlike reason, that comprehends common properties, intellect apprehends singular things and has adequate knowledge in an absolute sense. Differently put, the object of an idea, insofar as the mind is intellecting⁴⁸ is the essence of a singular thing, defined by its “proximate cause” (TdIE: 49) rather than its properties. To see the significance of the fourth proportional, beyond being a convenient example, it is imperative to see how Spinoza uses cause.

Throughout the *Ethics* Spinoza repeatedly brings cause and reason together with an inclusive *or*, e.g., “For each thing there must be assigned a *cause, or reason*, as much for its existence

⁴⁸ I insist on this strange term insofar as Spinoza denies faculty psychology. Such that there is no entity that is mind that consist of the intellect, reason, and imagination that perform their respective roles. Rather mind as the idea of the body intellects, reasons, or imagines. Intellecting becomes the activity of mind insofar as it is perceiving adequate ideas of singular things.

as for its nonexistence” (EIP11D⁴⁹[emphasis mine]). This being the case, a singular thing is defined by its proximate cause *or* reason. But is it the case that reason here means the second mode of knowing? In other words, can a single thing be defined by a common property? The answer to that question has already been clearly stated: common properties cannot define a singular thing. How, then, are we to read reason? A promising way is to turn to Latin. Doing so we see that reason can also be rendered as *ratio*, and in that respect, bring it close to the ratios of the fourth proportion. The essence of a singular thing is thus defined by its proximate cause or its ratio. The significance of the fourth proportion is that the intellect sees the fourth by grasping the ratio or the numbers that necessarily determines or generates a fourth (insofar as every determinate cause has an effect). In this respect, intellect apprehends “the adequate knowledge of the essence of things” (EIIP40).

What is all the more significant is the relationship between the ratio or the cause of a thing and the so-called physical digressions.⁵⁰ Bodies, Spinoza writes, “are distinguished from one another by reason of motion and rest” (EIIL1) and, “If the parts composing an Individual become greater or less, but in such a *proportion* that they all keep the same *ratio* of motion and rest to each other as before, then the Individual will likewise retain its nature, as before, without any change in form” (EIIL5 [emphasis mine]). Notice that reason and ratio are used interchangeably by Curley’s translation to distinguish the movement of motion and rest. Seeing that bodies are defined with respect to the ratio of motion and rest, we can suppose that the example of the

⁴⁹ See Marion 1991 for a discussion of the order of demonstration of God and specially the late occurrence of EIP11.

⁵⁰ See Lachterman 1977 for a discussion of the importance of the physical digression as grounding Spinoza’s ethical and political project. See Garrett 1994 for a defense of the physical digression as a coherent stance on the metaphysics of individuation.

fourth proportional is not only convenient but, insofar as it uses the language of ratio and proportion, indicates how to understand real, physical things. If the language of causality leads to thinking that Spinoza is concerned with logical relationships between modes, the languages of ratios, understood as the essence of a body, leads us to understand intellection with relation to physical things. And let us remember that

above all it is necessary for us always to deduce all our ideas from Physical things, *or* from the real beings, proceeding, as far as possible, according to the series of causes, from one real being to another real being, in such a way that we do not pass over to abstractions and universals, neither inferring something real from them, nor inferring them from something real (TdIE, 41)

Mind, insofar as it is intellecting, apprehends the knowledge of God or substance in “its unlimited, infinitely or indefinitely many causal connections as immanently involved, i.e., as flux or flow” (Klein 2002: 311). By focusing on the language of ratios, we are able to see that to grasp God is to know bodies in their immanent involvement or necessary intrinsic determination.

This section had two aims: 1) to establish the status of error and 2) to show imagination, reason, and intellect as epistemologically, not ontologically distinct. The two aims are intrinsically related since examining error requires that we examine imagination. What we have found is that Spinoza radically transforms error insofar as he rids error of privation and instead renders it in terms of confusion caused by an extrinsic determination. Error is not falsity in relation to truth. Instead, imaginations indicate how the body is affected by external bodies. Error is only the function of affirming these ideas as true representation. In that respect, the image of sovereign subjectivity who poses a self-determining free will is produced when the human body encounters external bodies and not being aware of the cause of things, feels itself to be a free cause, is not

error but is precisely how the body experiences itself. In other words, perceiving oneself as a free cause is a necessary condition of experience. This is not an error in itself insofar as it merely expresses how the body is affected by other bodies. The error consists in affirming the free will as an adequate concept of the individual.

The second aim of this section was to show that imagination, reason, and intellect are not ontologically distinct faculties, but three epistemologically distinct perspectives on the same things: bodies. Imaginations perceive bodies, or actual existing things, from the perspective of a single human body. In that respect, its knowledge is confused and mutilated, beholden to a fortuitous encounter with external bodies. Mind, insofar as it reasons, perceives the common properties that allow bodies to affect one another. With respect to common properties, reason is said to have adequate knowledge. Mind, insofar as it intellect, perceives essences of singular beings and thus has knowledge of God. Intellect has adequate knowledge in an unqualified sense.

The relationship between the three modes of knowing is non-derivative. Differently put, we cannot tell a story of epistemic development that culminates in the intellect apprehending God. There is no teleology to knowledge. Imagination and reason take two different perspectives on common properties that allow bodies to affect one another. Even if universals are confused version of common properties, insofar as they are generated from the limited perspective of a human body, reason cannot preclude the mind from imagining. In fact, insofar as reason and imagination perceive the same thing from different perspectives, their ideas are different in kind. In that respect, we cannot say that common notions are derived from imaginations.

Reason, writes Spinoza, helps “more easily *retain, explain, and imagine* the things we have understood” (CM: 300). This formulation suggests to us that reason is able to infer common properties once mind has intellected, understood, a singular thing. This follows from what we

have said above: properties are derived from essences; essences cannot be defined by properties. Thus, in order to reason, mind has to have already intellected. This displaces imagination as the first mode of knowing and the origin of common notions since to have common notions one has to have intellected a single thing.

Intellection, however, is also not the first in the order of knowing. Spinoza writes, “what gives knowledge of an eternal and infinite essence of God is common to all, and is equally in the part and in the whole” (EIIIP46D). God, from this perspective, is a common property. Furthermore, “From this we see that God’s infinite essence and his eternity are known to all. And since all things are in God and are conceived through God, it follows that we can deduce from this knowledge a great many things which we know adequately, and so can form that third kind of knowledge” (EIIIP47D). In other words, the knowledge of God that is common to all is what allows for the intellect to know singular things. The order of knowledge is once again subverted. Is this to say that Spinoza contradicted himself? Or, that Spinoza worked actively to displace a linear and teleological trajectory of knowledge that began in error and culminated in the intellect? I believe that the above reading suggests the latter: Spinoza’s epistemology is perspectival and non-derivative.

How are we to understand Spinoza’s distinction between substance and modes if intellect, reason, and imagination are epistemologically rather than ontologically distinct modes of knowing? Substance and modes, it follows, are not ontologically distinct. Rather, they express two perspectives on the same thing. Substance designates bodies as perceived by the intellect; modes designate bodies as perceived by the imagination or reason if common properties are under discussion. And with this we are able to arrive at the conclusion we established earlier — Nature and its expressions are the same thing grasped from two different perspectives.

The Illusion of a Free Will and Passions

Now given that we showed that imagination, reason, and intellect are three perspectives on the same thing, what does that mean for the illusion of a free will or what I am calling abstract independence? From the perspective of the imagination — when guided by the intellect — it is how an individual experiences itself. From the perspectives of reason and intellect, the same thing is perceived a transindividual individual that experiences itself as a free cause, but that actually requires external causes to give it the capacity to become a determinate and adequate cause that can produce effects.

It is vital for us to see that when the individual experiences itself as a free cause, it is not erring *per se*. The condition of experience is experiencing oneself as a discrete free cause. Rather, the error consists in affirming oneself as a free cause. This error comes from not having formed the right connections such that it is not able to increase its power and act, i.e., form adequate ideas. The power to perceive nature from the perspective of reason and the intellect⁵¹ rests on the individual coming into powerful connections — individuals who are guided by reason — and being acted on by causes that bring it joy thus increasing its power to act. After all, as Spinoza argues, the greater our capacity to be affected, the greater is our capacity to act.⁵²

If we connect this back to Balibar's concept of transindividuation, the more powerful the connections the individual makes, the more of an individual or a powerful cause it becomes. However, if the individual forms weak connections, i.e., become effected by individuals who are

⁵¹ In EIV Spinoza suggests that imagination is more powerful than reason and intellect, thus having adequate ideas is not enough to overcome sad passions. See Lin 2009 for an account that suggests that Spinoza offers an overly optimistic view of reason and challenges the presuppositions that lead Spinoza to hold this view.

⁵² EIIP14: "The human Mind is capable of perceiving a great many things, and is the more capable, the more its body can be disposed in a great many ways."

not guided by reason, that individual is overcome by passions of joy and sadness. Such an individual “is under the control, not of himself, but of fortune, in whose power he so greatly is that often, though he sees the better for himself, he is still forced to follow the worse” (EIVPreface). For Spinoza, this is the condition of human bondage, “Man’s lack of power to operate and restrain the affects I call Bondage” (Ibid.). Forming weak connections, i.e., being effected by individuals who are not guided by reason, diminishes the individual’s power to perceive nature from the perspective of reason and intellect.

Thus, an individual who is in community with other individuals who are guided by reason experience empowerment i.e. gain the power to form adequate ideas and understand that they are a concrete and determinate cause who experiences itself as a free cause, because as I have argued, the condition of experience is a body that is capable of being affected. Yet, an individual who is not capable of forming connections with other individuals who are guided by reason experience a decrease in power. Such an individual is torn by passions and is less capable of forming adequate ideas, thus unable to see itself any other way than as an a-historical and indeterminate cause.

As such, I suggest that it is vital to see that the affirmation of a free will is an expression of a weak community or weak connections that constitutes individuals all of whom are torn by passions. More to the point, the affirmation of oneself as an a-historical free cause or what I am calling abstract independence is an expression of social alienation.

Spinoza is explicit that

there is no singular thing in Nature that is more useful to man than a man who lives according to the guidance of reason. For what is most useful to man is what most agrees with his nature...But a man acts entirely from the laws of his own nature

when he lives according to the guidance of reason...and only to that extent must he always agree with the nature of the other men...Therefore, among singular things there is nothing more useful to man than a man (EIVP35C1).

Here Spinoza is making the point I addressed earlier that an individual who forms connections, i.e., becomes a part of another individual, with other individuals guided by reason, attains a greater degree of perfection. But human beings only agree in nature insofar as they are guided by reason (EIVP35) for “insofar as men are torn by affects which are passions, they are contrary to one another” (EIVP34). As such, that which is most helpful for one’s perseverance in existence also becomes most harmful. When human beings are torn by passions⁵³ they literally are not able to form powerful connections, thus affirming the experience of oneself as a free cause — because while ontologically they are not free causes, these individuals are formed by processes of individuation that are alienating and disempowering. It is in this way that I understand Spinoza’s suggestion that human beings are subject to passions strive to weaken themselves. Thus, the per-

⁵³ See Schrijvers 1999 for an account of the complicated relationship between passive and active affects; specifically, how to understand passive joy and the possibility of the passive increase in power. See Rice 1999 for a criticism of Schrijvers’ position and an alternate account of the relationship between actions and passions. See LeBuffe 2010 for a systematic reconstruction of passive and active affects in the service of analyzing the movement to freedom from bondage; LeBuffe offers a provocative account that Spinoza’s enigmatic suggestion in EV that a part of the mind is eternal should be understood as an account of lived human excellence. Additionally, see LeBuffe 2009 for the discussion of Spinoza’s dictionary of affects appended to EIII where LeBuffe argues that this is not an exhaustive emotional taxonomy but rather a summary of the affects necessary for Spinoza’s political and ethical project. See James 2009 for a discussion of the relationship between bondage, freedom, and passions in the context of 17th-century political theory and specifically the meaning of political liberty in early modern philosophy. See Duffy 2011 for a discussion of joyful passions as the link between active and passive affects as well as the production of adequate ideas via a discussion of Deleuze and Macherey. See Renz 2015 for a discussion of activity and passivity in the *Short Treatise*.

verse inversion of alienation: when the individual is least free, i.e., subject to passions, it perceives itself as most free, i.e., as an abstract indeterminate cause, and is convinced by this freedom no amount of evidence to the contrary.

Further, I suggest that this so-called mechanism leads to a contradiction — and here is where I think we can establish something like Spinoza’s matrix of ideology. The contradiction occurs in the structure of the *conatus*. The essence of an individual is the *conatus* or the striving to persevere in existence⁵⁴, “Each thing, as far as it can by its own power, strives to persevere in its being...The striving by which each thing strives to persevere in its being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing” (EIIIP6-7). As I have established earlier, the essence of an individual is its power, i.e., ability to act and thus to form adequate ideas. The essence of the individual is determined by the connections which the individual makes. Thus, the power of the individual can increase or diminish. As such, the essence of the individual is always undergoing change insofar as it is relational. What does remain constant is that no “thing can be destroyed except through an external cause” (EIIIP4). In other words, only external causes can diminish the power of the individual to act and form adequate ideas. The essence of an individual does not contain anything that is antithetical to the striving of the individual to persevere in existence. As such, the “striving by which each thing strives to preserve in its being involves no finite time but an indefinite time” (EIIIP8). Death, the cessation of the striving for perseverance is an effect of being overpowered by external causes.

The striving to persevere in existence is desiderative, and Spinoza explicitly states that when “this striving is related only to the Mind, it is called Will; but when it is related to the Mind

⁵⁴ See Yovel 1999 for a defense of the *conatus* as transcending the mere striving for survival, but as having multiple levels of which some strive for *summon bonum*.

and Body together, it called Appetite...Between appetite and desire there is no difference, except that desire is generally related to men insofar as they are conscious of their appetite” (EIIIP9S). Desire is determined both externally by other causes and internally when the individual is an adequate cause, i.e., in connection with other individual guided by reason. When the individual is subject to passions, one’s essence, i.e., striving to persevere in existence is determined by externally and strives — as I established above — toward its own disempowerment insofar as it believes in its own fictions and thus contributes to further alienation of all who come into relation with it. The fiction of a free will is thus an expression of alienation and is like an infection that contaminates all whom it touches and requires a great deal of power to contain.

CHAPTER 2 HEGEL'S IDEOLOGICAL FIELDS

Introduction

The overall aim of the previous chapter was to show that Spinoza identifies the fiction of the free will as — to remain with Althusser's language — the matrix of all possible ideology. I sought to show a) why Spinoza understood the free will as a *true and necessary* fiction, b) how the fiction of the free will is produced, and c) how the fiction of the free will operates within the matrix of ideology. In conclusion, I was able to show that the fiction of a free will, or what I am calling abstract independence when affirmed as an adequate cause expresses alienating and disempowering connection. In so doing, the fiction of the free will strives toward the disempowerment of the individual and as such inverts the *conatus*.⁵⁵

In this chapter and for the remainder of the project, I move from Spinoza to Hegel. The reason to make this transition is because Hegel's *Phenomenology*, I argue, is an exploration of the failures of various determinate forms of abstract independence. As such, I see it as a particularly potent source for thinking the concept of ideology. This chapter carries a heavy load insofar as its aim is to establish the general concept of ideology. Ultimately, I argue that ideology should be understood in terms of ideological fields of individuation and suggest that ideological fields are self-contradictory fields of individuation marked by the movement of abstract independence. In the chapters that follow, I concretize the movement of abstract independence as the movement and dynamic of pathological desire.

⁵⁵ See Butler 2015 for a reading of Spinoza's desire as having the power negation. On this topic see also Melamed 2012a.

In order to accomplish the aim of this chapter, I do the following: I) I establish the structure of Self-Consciousness as an active and transgressive material fold. I do so by arguing that the aim of Self-Consciousness is practical unity attained via action and mutual recognition. By discussing the role and structure of mutual recognition, I establish the definition of concrete and abstract independence. Ultimately, I suggest that the practical unity of Self-Consciousness is always a transgressive deferral; II) I seek to concretize the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity via the concept of fields of individuation; III) I conclude with the definition of ideological fields as fields of self-contradictory practices of individuation marked by the movement of abstract independence.

Aim of the Self-Consciousness: Unity

The aim of this section is to argue that the aim of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a struggle for the unity of Self-Consciousness. Understanding this step in the argument is imperative as it will later allow me to show how mutual recognition achieves the unity of Self-Consciousness, and thus, how mutual recognition is the criterion by which we can judge practices of individuation as ideological.

I begin with the notoriously difficult transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness, as has been remarked by the numerous commentators who have written on it,⁵⁶ since it is

⁵⁶ For example, Honneth writes, Hardly any other of Hegel's works has attracted so much attention as the 'Self-Consciousness' chapter in the *Phenomenology*. As difficult and inaccessible as the book may be, on the whole, this chapter, in which Consciousness exits 'the night like void of the supersensible beyond, and steps out into the spiritual daylight of the present' finally seems to give our understanding something to hold on to... In short, this chapter brings together all the elements capable of supplying post-idealistic philosophy's hunger for reality with material for concretization and elaboration" (Honneth 2008: 76). Neuhouser also suggests that the "transition from 'Consciousness' to 'Self-Consciousness' is one of the *Phenomenology's* most important turning

here that Consciousness first learns of its active role in the production of its experience and first thematizes its aim as the unity of itself with its experience. Robert Stern distinguishes two main interpretive approaches to transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness: the first, Robert Pippin's treatment of the transition in Kantian terms as the problem of the unity of appearances and the second, Alexandre Kojève's treatment of the transition as a shift from a theoretical to a practical standpoint. (Stern 2001: 66-67). In the following, I will take up Pippin and Neuhausser as anchors for my interpretation and read the transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness in terms of the problem of unity that, I ultimately argue, has to be achieved practically.

Consciousness opens⁵⁷ the *Phenomenology* and consists of three shapes: Sense-Certainty, Perception, Force and Understanding. In various degrees of complexity, all three share a basic metaphysical commitment that objects are independent from subjects. It is the task of the detached subject to come to know the truth of the object. As such, all three shapes of Consciousness seek to arrive at the theoretical knowledge of the object; to discover the truth of the thing-

points. It is also one of the most perplexing, perhaps because it results in not just a new object for phenomenological consideration — Consciousness itself — but also a new mode of relating to the world, namely, as a practical rather than purely theoretical subject” (Neuhausser 2007: 37). Stern too writes that “having come this far, Hegel is on the threshold of moving into his discussion of Self-Consciousness, where the focus switches from how Consciousness conceives of things the world, to how it conceives of itself qua subject. It is not entirely clear, however, how this transition from the dialectic of the object to the dialectic of the subject is supposed to come about” (Stern 2001: 66)

⁵⁷ Incidentally, the shapes of Consciousness are the antithesis of absolute knowing, “The standpoint of Consciousness which knows objects in their antithesis to itself, and itself in antithesis to them, is for Science the antithesis of its own standpoint. The situation in which Consciousness knows itself to be at home is for Science one marked by the absence of Spirit. Conversely, the element of Science is for Consciousness a remote beyond in which it no longer possesses itself. Each of these two aspects [of self-conscious Spirit] appears to the other as the inversion of truth” (PhG, 26)

in-itself as it were. While Sense-Certainty and Perception take an empirical approach to searching for the truth of the object, Understanding takes a rationalist perspective that seeks to determine the inner structure of the object.

Each shape of Consciousness presents a more developed object and a more developed subject; however, none let go of their commitment to the independence of the object and thus fail to see that Consciousness is never concerned with the object but rather with itself in each instance. This process reaches its highest development in the Understanding, which realizes that in trying to explain the play of Forces, it is rather explaining itself and its unifying activity,

Infinity, or this absolute unrest of pure self-movement, in which whatever is determined in one way or another, e.g. as being, is rather the opposite of this determinateness, this no doubt has been from the start the soul of all that has gone before; but it is in the inner world that it has first freely and clearly shown itself. Appearance, or the play of Forces, already displays it, but it is as 'explanation' that it first freely stands forth; and in being finally an object for Consciousness, as that which it is, Consciousness is thus Self-Consciousness. The Understanding's 'explanation' is primarily only the description of what Self-Consciousness is... The reason why 'explaining' affords so much self-satisfaction is just because in it Consciousness is, so to speak, communing directly with itself, enjoying only itself; although it seems to be busy with something else, it is in fact occupies only with itself (PhG, 163)

First, it is important to note that infinity as the unity of identity and difference makes its appearance at this stage. The movement of identity and difference, however, takes the Understanding to its limits insofar as it is not able to grasp this movement as a movement but sees it as an opposition and static interplay of two independent concepts. Second, despite its inability to grasp the

infinite movement, Understanding does come to realize that it is contributing this structure to the object rather than discovering this structure in the object. As Neuhouser explains:

Understanding comes on the scene when Consciousness attributes to the objects of experience a unifying ‘force,’ a ‘locus of causal background’ which combines unconnected perceptions into cohesive wholes by positing a necessary relation among a thing’s properties. Since this unity itself is not found within sense experience, Consciousness comes to see it as its own contribution to reality. The realization that Consciousness is not merely a passive, receptive member of the subject-object relationship marks the birth of Self-Consciousness. Having seen that any account of knowledge must consider the subject’s involvement, too, Consciousness shifts the direction of its inquiry away from the external object towards itself (Neuhouser 1986: 246)

Thus, Consciousness learns that in trying to know the object it is actually coming to know itself, and secondly, Consciousness learns that unity is to be sought in itself rather than in the object.

In learning that the object is not a self-standing, independent entity, Consciousness further learns that the object is not an accident that befalls it⁵⁸, or to put it in Spinoza’s terms: expe-

⁵⁸ As Pippin puts, “So the large question to which Hegel thinks we have been brought by his account of Consciousness in the first three chapters is: just what is it for a being to be not just a recorder of the world’s impact on one’s senses, but to be for itself in its engagements with objects? What is it in general for a being to be for itself, for ‘itself to be at issue for it in its relation with what is not it’? (This is the problem that arose with the “Kantian” revelation in the Understanding chapter of the PhG that, in trying to get to the real nature of the essence of appearances, “understanding experiences only itself” (Pippin 2011: 26)

rience is not vagrant, *experientia vaga*. Rather, in initially becoming self-conscious, Consciousness realizes that it is actively implicated in the production of the object.⁵⁹ However, Hegel is explicit that Consciousness has not yet achieved the unity which it now attributes to itself.

The necessary advance from the previous shapes of Consciousness for which their truth was a Thing, an ‘other’ than themselves, express just this, that not only is Consciousness of a thing possible only for a Self-Consciousness, but that Self-Consciousness alone is the truth of those shapes. But it is only for us that this truth exists, not yet for Consciousness. But Self-Consciousness has at first become [simply] for itself, not yet as a unity with Consciousness in general (PhG, 164)

That is to say, it is true that Consciousness has learned that in attributing unity to the object it is actually explaining its own structure as the structure of the object. However, this unity is immediate and in that respect Consciousness has not yet achieved unity or the realization of its self-conception in the world (an achievement that takes the structure of an infinite movement), or “where Notion corresponds to object and object to Notion” (PhG, 80). In other words, whereas the theoretical attitude of Consciousness supposed that truth lies in the object and all Consciousness had to do was find the right way to apprehend the concept so as to attain knowledge of it, or what we might call the unity of concept (Consciousness) and object, Consciousness in becoming Self-Consciousness learns that the object is a result of its activity, thus the unity that it seeks is not the unity of itself with the object, but rather the unity of itself with itself.

⁵⁹ As Honneth puts, “In a certain sense, both the observer and the observed subject have thus advanced to an epistemological standpoint already characterized by Kant in his transcendental philosophy. As a result, both parties are faced with the question as to the nature of the knowledge that subjects can have of themselves as creators of true claims. The ‘self,’ whose awareness of itself forms the object of Hegel’s subsequent considerations, is, therefore, the rational individual, who is already abstractly aware of its constitutive, world-creating cognitive acts” (Honneth 2008: 78).

What we also find in these sections is that the initial formulation of Self-Consciousness in its striving for unity is sovereignty, or what I am calling abstract independence. That is to say, Self-Consciousness seeks to attain unity by itself and thinks of itself as having the ability to do so. This will become an important point in thinking about the structure of Self-Consciousness, the structure of experience, and the structure of ideological fields.

Establishing the Struggle for Unity as a Practical Struggle

The aim of the following section is to argue that the unity of Self-Consciousness is a practical rather than only a theoretical achievement. At stake is the showing that the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself cannot occur at a transcendental level. But this is not to say that the unity of Self-Consciousness is merely a practical endeavor, but instead to get at Hegel's rejection of a one-sided notion of unity. Echoing Pippin, who emphatically suggests, "there is no strict separation between a concept and its 'actualization' or 'fulfillment,'" (Pippin 2008: 221) another way to frame this is to return to what we established as the goal of Self-Consciousness in the previous section: the unity of object and knowledge. Since Consciousness learned that the object is the result of its activity, the unity of object and knowledge is the unity of Consciousness with itself or the unity of Self-Consciousness. Now at this point, it is not yet clear whether the activity of Consciousness is theoretical or practical. This question, as Honneth sees it, comes out of the Kantian problem of trying to understand the exact kind of activity that is involved in apperception. Thus, the aim of this section is to show that the activity of Self-Consciousness is practical and the struggle for the unity of Self-Consciousness is a practical struggle, a struggle which is accomplished through action.

It is important to stress the *practical* component of the striving for unity for three key reasons. First, arguing that the unity of Self-Consciousness is a practical achievement will allow for

the understanding that mutual recognition is practical, suggesting that it requires the right kind of practices to take place. Second, this practical mutual recognition thus leads to *practices* of individuation that allow the individual to act and to identify oneself with one's action, which is precisely the criterion for a non-ideological practice of individuation. And thirdly, understanding the unity of Self-Consciousness as a practical achievement also allows us to see why the path of Spirit's realization has to take place in history and furthermore why Self-Consciousness on this account emerges as an ongoing practical process — a point I will return to later in the chapter.

To begin, the birth of Self-Consciousness is marked by its realization that it is an active rather than a passive receptor and knower of the world. This turn can initially be understood as Consciousness' realization of its active work creating the object. Another way to frame this — and which is important for the aim at hand — is that Consciousness learns that the object is not the independent locus on which Consciousness is dependent upon for knowledge. This turn in Self-Consciousness' understanding of itself asks us to consider what kind of activity is involved in this process. The specific question at stake: Is the unifying activity of Self-Consciousness theoretical or practical? In order to understand how this becomes a practical problem, the relationship between self-conscious Consciousness and the object of experience must be reconsidered in order to understand that the activity of Self-Consciousness is both theoretical and practical: that is to say, Self-Consciousness has to learn that it has to achieve unity through action.

Another way to frame the transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness as a practical problem is to see Consciousness as being “characterized by a basic drive — the drive to be completely self-sufficient, free, or constituted only by its own autonomous activity” (Neuhouser 2007: 38). Put in the language of independence and dependence: whereas Consciousness took

itself to be dependent on the object, Self-Consciousness learns that it is active in creating the object and begins to conceive of itself as independent of the object. Thus, the striving for unity is the striving of Self-Consciousness for unity with itself rather than with the object.

What emerges from this process is a nascent Self-Consciousness that sees itself as a god-like figure whose independence precludes the independence of anything else. In this respect, we can glean something from Spinoza's definition of substance. Insofar as substance is infinite, the existence of another substance is impossible as it would limit the infinite freedom of the initial substance. Analogously, nascent Self-Consciousness, to the extent that it sees and wants to experience itself as independent and sovereign, cannot allow for the existence of another independent being for that would curtail its sovereignty and freedom. Importantly, Self-Consciousness is not, as Neuhausser puts it, "simply an inversion of its predecessor such that now it is the subject, conceived as wholly independent of its object, that appears as 'the true.'" Rather, the subject now construes itself as the essential, law-giving pole of the subject-object pair and at the same time recognizes its relation to an object — its relation to some reality other than itself — as necessary and not merely incidental" (Ibid.: 37-38). In other words, Self-Consciousness does have an object that it must negate⁶⁰ the object's independence in order to maintain its own sovereignty. Or as Hegel writes:

⁶⁰ "The simple 'I' is this genus or the simple universal, for which the differences are not differences only by its being the negative essence of the shaped independent moments; and Self-Consciousness is thus certain of itself only by superseding this other that presents itself to Self-Consciousness as an independent life; Self-Consciousness is Desire. Certain of the nothingness of this other, it explicitly affirms that this nothingness is for it the truth of the other; it destroys the independent object and thereby gives itself the certainty of itself as a true certainty, a certainty which has become explicit for Self-Consciousness itself in an objective manner" (PhG, 174).

otherness is for it in the form of a being, or as a distinct moment; but there is also for Consciousness the unity of itself with this difference as a second distinct moment. With that first moment, Self-Consciousness is in the form of Consciousness, and the whole expanse of the sensuous world is preserved for it, but at the same time only as connected with the second moment, the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself; and hence the sensuous world is for it an enduring existence which, however, is only appearance, or a difference which, in itself, is no difference. This antithesis of its appearance and its truth has, however, for its essence only the truth, viz. the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself; this unity must become essential to Self-Consciousness; i.e., Self-Consciousness is Desire in general. Consciousness, as Self-Consciousness, henceforth has a double object: one is the immediate object, that of sense-certainty and perception, which however for Self-Consciousness has the character of a negative; and the second, viz. itself (which is the true essence, and is resent in the first instance only as opposed to the first object (PhG, 167).

This passage is of vital importance in understanding why the activity of Self-Consciousness is practical and not theoretical, i.e., transcendental. Self-Consciousness still has to deal with the object.⁶¹ This is an important insight that has to be maintained as the structural condition of natural

⁶¹ Hyppolite is helpful on this point: “Self-Consciousness is ‘reflection issuing from the being of the sensuous world and of the perceived world; it is essentially this return into itself starting from being-other...Unlike Fichte, we do not pose the *Ich bin Ich* in the absoluteness of a thematic act in relation to which antithesis and synthesis would be secondary. The reflection of the I, which takes the sensuous world, the being-other, as its turning point, is the essence of Self-Consciousness, which, therefore, exists only through this return, only through this movement...The movement of Self-Consciousness, without which it would not exist, requires otherness, that is, the world of Consciousness that in this way is that preserved for Self-Consciousness. But it is preserved not as a being-in-itself, as an object that Consciousness passively reflects, but as a negative object, as the object that must be negated in order that thought this negation of the being-other Self-Consciousness establishes its own unity with itself” (Hyppolite 1996: 69).

Consciousness. No matter the change in the self-conception of Self-Consciousness, the object, i.e., the world, appears as the object of sense-certainty and perception. But this specific Self-Consciousness — one that sees itself as the sovereign law-giver of experience and thinks that by negating individual objects it can affirm its own activity and achieve unity — is false.

Self-Consciousness cannot merely negate the object theoretically for so long as it treats the object theoretically it remains within itself, i.e., it reproduces the failure of Consciousness that took itself to be engaging with the object theoretically but practically was only engaging with itself. If Self-Consciousness approaches the object theoretically it is not going beyond itself, its object is itself and not the sensuous world. Thus, theoretical negation of the object would be self-defeating. The object must be negated practically.⁶² Self-Consciousness must act. The negation must be embodied. Or to refer to Honneth:

[t]he conception that this subject would need to have of itself in order to truly possess Self-Consciousness consists in its own active role as a creator of reality. Yet as long as it is only aware of itself as the ‘Consciousness’ that, according to Kant, must be able to accompany all ‘ideas,’ it does not experience itself in its own activity of constituting objects. My awareness of the fact that all of reality is ultimately the content of my mental states is not sufficient to assure myself of my synthesizing and determining activity, rather I conceive of my Consciousness just as selectively

⁶² Neuhausser offers a helpful explanation as to why this subjection to the will of Self-Consciousness must occur on a practical level, “Being aware of this otherness, however, is impossible on a merely cognitive level. If I relate merely cognitively to a wild animal, for example, I may perceive it or form some abstract concept of it, but the animal as percept of concept becomes my representation; it is no less ‘for me’ or outside of my Consciousness than my own thoughts or feelings — it is not really an other. It is only when I carry out the same procedure on an experiential level — when I try to make the animal really ‘for me’ by attempting to consume it — that I first encounter the otherness of the animal” (Neuhausser 1986: 250).

(punktuell) and passively as I do the mental attention that I pay to it in that moment
(Honneth 2008: 78)

In actively negating the object, Self-Consciousness must act. In other words, to experience itself as it conceives itself, to be in and for itself, Consciousness must both externalize itself *and* achieve the unity of itself with itself via the unity of itself and the object. In other words, Consciousness must objectify itself in the world, i.e., co-create the world, but the only way for Consciousness to attain this objectification of itself in the world must occur through mutual recognition. This is what I am calling the triangulation of Self-Consciousness and world.

This triangulation of Self-Consciousness and world is the lesson of absolute knowing or what Pippin calls the logic of experience, "...it is only when the 'I' communes with itself in its otherness that the content is comprehended [i.e., in terms of the Notion]" (PhG, 799). The communion with itself has to take shape in terms of the externalization of Self-Consciousness:

Since this Notion holds itself firmly opposed to its realization, it is the one-sided shape which we saw vanish into thin air, but also positively externalize itself and move onward. Through this realization, this objectless Self-Consciousness cease to cling to the determinateness of the Notion as against its fulfillment; its Self-Consciousness gains the form of universality and what remains to it is its true Notion, or the Notion that has attained its realization; it is the Notion in its truth, viz. in unity with its externalization (PhG, 795).

In fact, Hegel is very explicit on this point, "It is only through action that Spirit is in such way that it is really there" (PhG, 796). Spirit can only externalize itself through action and, in that respect, be said to exist. And since the "power of Spirit is only as great as its expression, its depth

only as deep as it dares to spread out and lose itself in its exposition” (PhG, 10) if Self-Consciousness does not act, does not externalize itself practically, it vanishes like the beautiful soul.⁶³ Thus, the activity of Self-Consciousness is action or the practical, embodied objectification of oneself in the world.

In sum, through action Spirit is able to experience itself and achieve the unity of itself with itself. But what this means is that Self-Consciousness can only find unity of itself with itself if it becomes other to itself, i.e., acts and objectifies itself in the world. Thus, by establishing the activity of Self-Consciousness as practical action, the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself is a unity with itself through the other, or “that which relates itself to itself and is determinate, it is other-being and being-for-self, and in this determinateness, or in its self-externality, abides within itself; in other words, it is in and for itself” (PhG, 25).

Action and Mutual Recognition

In the previous section, I established that Self-Consciousness attains the unity of itself with itself through action and thus is practical. The aim of this section is to discuss the structure of action that allows Self-Consciousness to attain this unity, which I am calling practical unity.

⁶³ In this sense, Self-Consciousness is in virtue of acting. On this reading, we might even suppose that there is a primacy of the practical. And furthermore, we can offer a very Wittgensteinian reading of the structure of Self-Consciousness that rejects the privacy and indeterminate *causa-sui* nature of Self-Consciousness insofar as Self-Consciousness is the movement of exteriorization and interiorization. Self-Consciousness is the process of activity unfolding and folding on itself, the folds being more complex the greater the externalization, i.e., action of Consciousness.

Lastly, I will conclude by showing that the only way for Self-Consciousness to find practical unity via action is through mutual recognition⁶⁴.

Beginning with Pippin's account of action⁶⁵ aids in thinking through the practices of the formation of Self-Consciousness. Pippin poses the question well when he states that the most prevalent question that concerns philosopher of action is "what distinguishes naturally occurring events from action (if anything)?" (Pippin 2010: 59). Those who want to distinguish between naturally occurring events and actions suggest that we can make this distinction with reference to the subject's intention. Hegel, according to Pippin, agrees that "without reference to a subject's take on what is happening and why, without reference to an inner realm, or a self-relation, we will not be able to identify the class of events that are actions" (Ibid.) Broadly speaking, there are

⁶⁴ For an interesting account of recognition as resistance to oppression see Anderson 2009, Honneth 1995, Monahan 2006. For critiques of recognition theory see Althusser 2004, Butler 1997, Oliver 2001, and Patchen 2003. See Magri 2016 for a summary of recent views on recognition. See Burke 2005 for a position that holds that mutual recognition undermines the possibility of self-determination. See Siep 2011 for an account of the internal difficulties in Hegel's concept of recognition. See Sembou 2003 for an intersubjective view of recognition. See Ferrarin 2016 for a view that argues that *Phenomenology* does not offer a foundation for intersubjectivity. See Honneth 1995 and Harris 1996 for discussions of how recognition appears in Hegel's Jena period. See Laitinen 2011 for a discussion of interpersonal and group recognition.

⁶⁵ See Bernstein 1994 for an account of the transgressive structure of action as tragic via the movement and reconciliation of the struggle between Antigone and Creon in the dialectic of judging and acting Consciousness es. See Siep 2008 for a discussion of the reconciliation of judging and acting Consciousness as explaining the transition from reason to spirit. See Quante 2004 for an analysis of Hegel's concept of action with reference to analytic philosophy and contemporary theory of action. See Pippin 2006 for the account of the public nature of individuality that emerges following his view of action. See McDowll 2010 for a realist rejection of Pippin's view of action as social construction. See Deligiorgi 2010 for another view that disagrees with Pippin's on the grounds that it does not fully account for structure of intention.

two types of philosophers who argue that action is determined by the intention of the acting subject: compatibilists and incompatibilists.⁶⁶ Whereas the former understands a free action as compatible with determinism as a cause among other causes, incompatibilists argue that the free will of an agent is a distinct kind of cause that is the origin of the action and is thus incompatible with necessity. Pippin points out that in these broad strokes Hegel is neither a compatibilist nor an incompatibilist, “because he does not believe that the relation between inner state and outer deed is a causal one at all, whether natural cause or could-have-done-otherwise cause” (Ibid.: 60). To phrase it as I have in the in the previous section: intention, for Hegel, becomes what it is by virtue of action. As such the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself is not merely the correspondence between act and intention.

Thus, what is at the heart of Hegel’s discussion of action is understanding what is sometimes called “intention” or for Hegel, the structure of the objectification of oneself in the world. As Pippin writes, “[a]ctions are *expressive*, not merely the unique results of an agent’s executive powers[.] Actions [...] disclose what an agent takes herself to be doing...all in a way that raises to prominence an interpretive question in any action, even for the agent: *what* was done and *how* could it have appeared justifiable?” (Ibid.: 63). That is to say, intention is not a discrete self-explicit and self-transparent cause that either is properly matched or is not matched by the action. Rather, the action unfolds the intention. In this respect, we can begin to think of Self-Consciousness as an active fold always unfolding itself.

Pippin suggests that the first sense in which we can understand how Hegel changes the structure of intention is the temporality of the intention,

⁶⁶ See Taylor 2010 for a distinction between causal and expressive views of action. See Knowles 2010 for a challenge to the commonly held position that Hegel holds an expressive view of action.

In the first place, it is clear that Hegel is out to re-conceive how we should understand the *temporality* or temporal extensions of actions, how to understand their beginning and their realization, how to frame properly what is relevant to the beginning and what to the end or completion of actions. That is, he is asking that we in effect widen our focus when considering what a rational and thereby free agent looks like, widening it so as to include in the picture of agency itself a contextual and temporal field stretching out backwards from our prior to, one might say, the familiar resolving and acting subject, and stretching forward, one might also say, such that unfolding of the deed and the reception and reaction of the deed are considered a constitutive element of the deed, of what fixes ultimately what was done and what turned out to be a subject's intention. (The ultimate goal is to break the hold altogether of the notion of a moment of resolve or a moment of causal efficacy) (Ibid.: 62-63)

What is so important to see is that Hegel's concept of action transforms the structure of concrete freedom such that agency cannot possibly be understood as the free determination of the agent to act on her intention and carry out this intention to completion. For how the action *unfolds* changes the intention, which constantly generates a new structure of Self-Consciousness. On this account "an individual cannot know what he is until he has made himself a reality through action" (PhG, 401). As such, Hegel's notion of intention denies the possibility of self-transparency or the ability to say that the individual who is acting has prior knowledge of the deed via the intention.

This account of action and agency makes it impossible to separate the action as merely outer from intention as an inner, self-transparent, efficient cause. Rather, for Hegel, we have to

think of the inner-outer as a constant unfolding and folding back. “Only as manifested or expressed can one (*even* the subject herself) retrospectively determine what must have been intended. Of course, it seems a bit paradoxical to claim that we can only know what we intended to do after we have actuated acted” (Pippin 2010: 66). However, action always goes beyond oneself and learns retrospectively only to go beyond oneself again. This is the transgressive structure of action.

Thus, any concept of self that Self-Consciousness may be acting on so as to find the unity of itself with itself is actually transgressive insofar as by acting — which it must do — Self-Consciousness already changes the concept of itself and makes the intention other to itself. Or as Hegel phrases it, “[c]onsciousness, however, is explicitly the Notion of itself. Hence it is something that goes beyond limits, and since these limits are its own, it is something that goes beyond itself. [...] Thus, Consciousness suffers this violence as its own hands: it spoils its own limited satisfaction” (PhG, 80). Here, Pippin suggests “that the actual deed ‘negates’ and transcends that aspect of the intention understood as separable subjective cause, understood as the mere occurrence of a somatic desire or passion or inclination to act, as well as the idea that one’s real intent can only ever be partly expressed in a deed, and so remains in itself inexpressible, ‘*unaussprechlich*’” (Pippin 2010: 68). This inexpressibility is important because it shows that the experience of action has the structure of self-negation: in order to find unity of itself with itself, Self-Consciousness has to go beyond itself and negate itself.

What is more, this transgressive action of Self-Consciousness occurs along the spectrum of satisfaction and suffering⁶⁷, or joy and suffering in Spinozist terms. As Pippin explains this

⁶⁷ See Pippin 1989 and Bubbio 2012 for an account of sacrifice in relation to satisfaction and suffering in the *Phenomenology*.

spectrum in Hegel is “the ‘engine’ that drives all of this forward is, stated most broadly, ‘negation’; more specifically, a kind of self-negation. Natural Consciousness is said to suffer a kind of ‘violence; as its own hands. The image is of a subject embodying a point of view or world-orientation or self-understanding or practice, which is born in such way that such a subject comes (apparently, for some reason, unavoidably or inevitably) to create a dissatisfaction with its own deepest principles and commitments” (Pippin 2008: 212). This spectrum is important later for understanding the structure of ideological fields because Unity — whether actual or merely illusory — brings Self-Consciousness satisfaction. However, to achieve unity, Self-Consciousness must experience suffering at its own hand. When Consciousness feels this suffering, “its anxiety may well make it retreat from the truth, and strive to hold on to what it is in danger of losing. But it can find no peace. If it wishes to remain in a state of unthinking inertia, then thought troubles its thoughtlessness, and its own unrest disturbs its inertia” (PhG, 80), which leads to the opening of ideological fields. In conclusion, the structure of action explains that the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself is not a static utopia. Rather, insofar as action is always transgressive, any static utopian understanding of unity is impossible.

Thus, the question still remains: Why does action require mutual recognition? If Self-Consciousness is characterized by the striving for a practical unity of itself with itself, then Self-Consciousness is also struggling to find the right conception of freedom and independence. Initially, Self-Consciousness thought that the right grasp of the object would result in its independence. But, having learned that it is active in the production of experience, Self-Consciousness reformulated its conception of independence and began to see itself as the sovereign law giver, a self-conception that taught it that it must act to realize this self-conception, i.e., to find unity of itself with itself. However, through action, Self-Consciousness learns that this sovereign unity of

itself with itself is impossible and thus Self-Consciousness must reformulate the conception of independence. The structure of this action shows that the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself has to be transgressive.

Given the transgressive structure of action and experience, the aim of Hegel's model, as Pippin puts it, is "to shift attention from the causal power of the doer as critical in my ownership of the act to what he refers to as 'making the act my own,' that is a recovery of it as one's own" (Pippin 2010: 63). The aim is to make the transgressive act one's own in its otherness. In other words, how to find oneself in the act that goes beyond oneself and return to itself as the new inner fold? The act of recovery of the action in making it my own, in finding oneself in otherness is a social endeavor. That is to say, to be able to make the action one's own, Self-Consciousness requires the recognition of the other Self-Consciousness. Thus, Self-Consciousness' striving for unity of itself with itself is mutually dependent on the other Self-Consciousness.

Furthermore, it is important *not* to understand action as a set of discrete moments wherein the action finally becomes something open to the public. That is to say, action is something that is always already public. The very inner intention is a product of previous experience or of active folding, so to speak. In this respect, I think Pippin puts the point well that "[i]n Hegel's view [...] actually to have an intention is to struggle to express that intention in a public and publicly contestable deed, subject to get temporal fluidity and to appropriations and interpretations by other that can greatly alter one's own sense of what one is about. It is, to use Hegel's term, to 'sacrifice' the purity and certainty (and so security) of one's self-understanding and to subject oneself to the reactions, counterclaims, and challenges of others" (Pippin 2008: 221). Or to take an example from Wittgenstein: There is no private language; private language is a result of expression that has been made one's own. If we understand what Hegel is trying to do along these lines, the

striving for practical unity is public: “Actualization is, on the contrary, a display of what is one’s own in the element of universality whereby it becomes, and should become, the affair of everyone” (PhG, 417). Or as Pippin explains, “[i]n such an account I don’t exercise any kind of proprietary ownership of the deed, cannot unilaterally determine ‘what was done’[...]. My intent is thus doubly ‘real’: it is out there ‘in’ the deed, and the deed is essentially out there ‘for others’” (Pippin 2010: 68).

In sum, because the unity of Self-Consciousness requires expression, which leads Self-Consciousness to become an object in the world equally for everyone, the unity of Self-Consciousness with itself also requires recognition because, in the most immediate sense, Self-Consciousness requires an Other to confer unity on itself with itself: “Self-Consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged” (PhG, 178). In other words, because other Self-Consciousnesses can contest the unity, and thus disrupt the certainty of self, unity of Self-Consciousness requires recognition. With this understanding, the question still remains: why does the act of making my action my own with all of its transgressive aspects require mutual recognition? Why does it require recognition? And why can’t recognition be one-sided?

Only through the recognition of another Self-Consciousness does Self-Consciousness really stop being dependent upon the object and move away from the initial abstract opposition between subject and object.⁶⁸ Going further, if unity is to be established between Self-Consciousness and its expression via action (i.e., its own objectification), Self-Consciousness must remain

⁶⁸ “...In this satisfaction, however, experience makes it aware that the object has its own independence. Desire and the self-certainty obtained in its gratification, are contained by the object, for self-certainty comes from superseding this other: in order that this supersession can take place, there must be this other. Thus Self-Consciousness, by its negative relation to the object is unable

dependent on the object for the unity of itself with itself. The only way to break that is to find recognition in another Self-Consciousness because recognition does not require Self-Consciousness to continually negate the object. Thus, through recognition, Self-Consciousness no longer remains dependent on the object of its negation, rather it negates itself, “On the account of the independence of the object, therefore, it can achieve satisfaction only when the object itself effects the negation within itself...But this universal independent nature in which negation is present as absolute negation, is the genus as such, or the genus as Self-Consciousness. Self-Consciousness achieves its satisfaction in another Self-Consciousness” (PhG, 127). Finally, the meaning of finding oneself in another is a triangulation between Self-Consciousness, action, and another Self-Consciousness insofar as through action, one is always already public. Only this has the real meaning of finding oneself in another.

Part of the fact that makes action transgressive is its publicity. That action, and therefore Self-Consciousness, is always public means that it is always contestable and up for debate, which further removes Self-Consciousness from its initial sovereign self-understanding. As Pippin further explains, “[a]ction must be understood as a self-negation in this sense, a negation of the subject’s pretension to complete ownership of the nature and import for the deed, and therewith the sharing of such authority with others” (Pippin 2008: 221). As Hegel continues, “The action is thus only the translation of its individual content into the objective element, in which it is universal and recognizable, and it is just the fact that it is recognized that make the deed a reality” (PhG, 640).

to supersede it; it is really because of that relation that it produced the object again, and the desire as well. It is in fact something other than Self-Consciousness that is the essence of Desire” (PhG, 175).

The problem with action is that it breaks with the purity of the practical unity of Self-Consciousness. This breaking of the purity of practical unity happens on two levels: 1) action breaks with the sovereignty and certainty of the concept, 2) the public has a claim upon the relationship between practical unity and action. In both cases, Self-Consciousness has to struggle with the natural form of Consciousness that maintains the certainty and purity of the Self-Consciousness. In order to attain the unity of itself with itself, Self-Consciousness must attain the recognition that it is as it says it is. However, we already know that this is impossible since action is always already beyond the concept and one-sided recognition does not establish unity of Self-Consciousness with itself (PhG, 182). So, the question still remains: How can the unity between Self-Consciousness and concrete independence be possible?

The answer to this question comes through mutual recognition, which changes the problem of unity and frames it in concrete terms. Whereas one-sided recognition fails to acknowledge the transgressive structure of action, mutual recognition is precisely the recognition of this transgressive but necessary structure.

Relationship Between the Structure of Mutual Recognition and Independence

While the previous section concluded that mutual recognition has the potential to unite Self-Consciousness with itself and suggested that this unity should be understood as a dynamic transgression, this section aims to show that the structure of mutual recognition is a transgressive, temporal, and ongoing process. Mutual recognition could be said to take the shape of an achievement that is never statically achieved due to the fact that action is necessarily transgressive. Thus, the reason for evaluating the structure of mutual recognition is to see how it achieves concrete independence.

Here, it is helpful to turn to Hegel's only example of mutual recognition in the *Phenomenology*: the dialectic of beautiful souls. To begin, it is important to note that the instance of mutual recognition is not the recognition of abstract sameness of difference. Rather, after confession, conversion, and forgiveness, both Self-Consciousnesses come to understand their mutual dependence on one another to be who they are. But this being who they are is historically determinate and different. The actions they carry out are not the same because they are concretely carried out with respect to different actions and from different determinate standpoints. In fact, what we see is that the mutual recognition is only of the fact that all action is a transgression and as such, the dependence on each other's transgression.

In conclusion, this leaves mutual recognition *far* from a mere recognition of our sameness in difference. On the contrary, mutual recognition is an infinite process of simultaneously striving for practical unity with the understanding that practical unity is a dynamic transgression. Or put differently, mutual recognition is the identification with the disruptive structure of unity. This stance abandons the immediate desire for certainty and static unity of oneself with oneself. By this account, mutual recognition is not a single act that guarantees for all time the mutual recognition of mutual dependence. Rather, it is a mutual act that must always be repeated⁶⁹ in its different and concrete circumstances in order to strive for moments of concrete independence and freedom. Concrete independence emerges as a complete redefinition of independence and denial of sovereignty and indeterminate causation, "...Spirit is — this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent Self-Consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence" (PhG, 177).

⁶⁹ See Cortella 2016 for an account of the fragile nature of recognition.

What we have to see is that the ultimate instance of mutual recognition is the recognition between the I and the We, between the individual and the community, subject and substance. What we learn from the movement of confession and forgiveness, the only moment of mutual recognition we encounter in the *Phenomenology*, is that mutual recognition has to do with the ability of Self-Consciousness to act, to identify itself with its action, which it is only able to do if it is so recognized by another and is in return recognizing the other's ability to recognize its deed. In so doing, the Self-Consciousness is able to come to find itself reconciled with the world and with another Self-Consciousness.

As such, Hegel radically makes us rethink what we understand as independence. Just like the opposition between subject and object is the antithesis of science, so is abstract independence the antithesis of concrete independence: whereas the former is immediate and certain of itself, the latter is mediated and where certainty meets truth. This notion of concrete independence forces us to think independence as a dependent and determined cause. Unity on this account is a determinate transgression. Thus, the attainment of practical unity is the mutual recognition of the negative structure of unity.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Here I want to briefly mention how my account of ideology differs from Honneth's since we both take recognition to be a criterion for judging forms of life, i.e., practices of individuation as ideological. While we share this position, my reading of recognition departs from Honneth's. I suggest that Honneth's view of recognition does not stress mutuality and intros respect is closer to the liberal political tradition. In this respect, for Honneth recognition is an ethical imperative placed on certain groups to recognize those who demand recognition. As such, Honneth takes recognition to be an ethical action. Whereas I first stress the asymmetrical mutuality of mutual recognition and suggest that mutual recognition is the condition of the possibility of ethics, i.e., the criterion for judging ethical behaviour. Honneth further understands ideology as presenting itself as rational practice, i.e., that takes hold precisely because it appears rational but that one is unable to realize in practice. I, however, want to stress that ideological practices of individuation are self-contradictory in themselves and as such their self-contradiction lies not only in their being unable to be realized in practice. Thus, I suggest that it is not merely a matter of finding the right practice to realize the goal but to change the practice such that we are not faced with self-

Fields of Individuation

The previous sections established that the aim of Self-Consciousness is unity through action or practical unity. I argued that attaining unity is learning that unity is a transgression. Put differently, attaining practical unity is identifying with the self-negating structure of action. In the previous section, I have suggested that individuation is a practice of externalization via action and internalization, i.e., practices of individuation are as active material folds. Hegel suggests that when Consciousness is unable to find unity

it would seem that Consciousness must alter its knowledge to make it conform to the object. But in fact, in the alteration of the knowledge, the object itself alters for it too, for the knowledge that was present was essentially a knowledge of the object [...] in other words, the criterion for testing is altered when that for which it was to have been the criterion fails to pass the test; and the testing is not only a testing of what we know but also a testing of the criterion of what knowing is (PhG, 85).

With each formulation of the shape of Self-Consciousness, a new concept of self comes into being, which is a complex practice of individuation. Through externalization, which Self-Consciousness must do if it does not want to vanish into thin air, the individual is always in the process of becoming, of actively unfolding and creating a new fold. Although “known” action never occurs, that was never the point in the first place. The criterion for judging a practice of individuation is mutual recognition: the doubled recognition of the transgressive structure of action and

contradictory goals. With respect to this, I agree with Jaeggi’s distinction between internal and immanent critique. See Honneth 2012 for Honneth’s account of ideology and recognition. See Honneth 2016 for a fleshed out account of recognition as the criterion for judging ethical forms of life.

mutual dependence. Where the structural possibility of mutual recognition is lacking, the practices of individuation are self-contradictory and as I will argue ideological. Lastly, that mutual recognition is the criterion for judging practices of individuation shows that practices of individuation are always already doubled and occur in fields rather than independent processes of subject formation. Thus, rather than focusing on practices of individuation, I focus instead on fields of individuation wherein doubled practices of individuation occur.

Furthermore, in this field of individuation, concrete independence is achieved if both Self-Consciousnesses through mutual recognition realize their mutual dependence. Or in other words, the true condition of independence is the doubled recognition of mutual dependence. To be clear, all practices of individuation presuppose a public process. Thus, when practices of individuation result in mis-recognition, a field of misrecognition occurs. In other words, practices of individuation that do not allow for mutual recognition are still doubled and occur in a field but fail to see the relationality and the mutual interdependence of the field. The reason we can suggest that mutual recognition is not mere recognition of sameness in difference is precisely because each field of individuation creates its own specific doubled field with specific practices that transgress the field. Thus, mutual recognition has to be specific to the historical and material practice of individuation.

So how do these fields of individuation relate to one another? Here, I want to suggest that fields of individuation are nested, multilayered, and intersecting. As such, there is not a single totalizing field of individuation, but rather localized and potentially spreading practices of individuation. This precludes the possibility of identifying one sole essential field of individuation that determines and dominates all the others, which ultimately precludes the possibility of identi-

fyng one main ideology that drives and undermines the structure of society. There is no dominant structure of logic that drives society. This is however not to say that fields of individuation are not systematic or structural. In a further elaboration of this concept, thinking the intersecting, localized, and systematic relation between infinitely differentiating fields of individuation would be greatly aided by Spinoza's materialist ontology. This, however, is beyond the scope of the chapter.

The intersection of the various fields of individuation in an infinitely differentiating totality⁷¹ create their own distinct spaces and temporalities, or what Spinoza might call singularities. As such, an analysis of a field of individuation has to study the singular expression, i.e., its determinate cause rather than the generality which only ever allows us to think about common features. While the analysis of fields of individuation would require another project, I can only provisionally suggest that fields of individuation may or may not congeal into dominant social institutions or occur as resistance to dominant social institutions. What is more, they may fail to become institutionalized altogether or even if fields of individuation do become institutionalized⁷², they are bound to overcome and transgress themselves.

Concrete Freedom and Concrete Independence

The aim of this section is to tie all of the above pieces together into a coherent stance on non-ideological fields of individuation. Then, in the next section, I will be in a position to articulate what an ideological field is and how it follows from a non-ideological field of individuation. First, a brief summary of what I have established so far. Self-Consciousness is characterized by

⁷¹ Totality here is only meant to convey the idea that all fields of individuation are relational and determined.

⁷² See Stahl 2011 for a discussion of institutions of recognition.

the striving for practical unity which it can attain by expressing itself, i.e., acting. Action, however, is always already transgressive and retroactive thus suggesting that Self-Consciousness cannot attain a static notion of unity or identify of itself with itself. Rather, Self-Consciousness, just by virtue of action, is always already beyond itself and public. Thus unity must be understood as a dynamic, public, transgression. I suggest that this mechanism is the practice of individuation that is always ongoing. As such the individual is always in the process of becoming thus being itself and not itself. In conclusion, the goal is to make this movement one's own and to come to know that this is the structure of individuation.

I have suggested that given their public structure, practices of individuation should be thought of in terms of fields of individuation. This is the lesson we learn from mutual recognition insofar as mutual recognition shows that practices of individuation are always already at the very least doubled. Furthermore, I suggested that mutual recognition is the criterion by which we can judge whether fields of individuation are or are not ideological. I have also argued that practices of individuation that allow for mutual recognition result in the Self-Consciousness' concrete independence and thus concrete freedom in the field of individuation. While further elaboration of concrete freedom has already been offered by such thinkers as Honneth and Neuhouser — for whom concrete freedom is social freedom⁷³ — it is important to note here that concrete independence emerges as mediated or self-negating relationship to action and to another Self-Consciousness, which is established via the mutual recognition of mutual dependence. This will become important in discussing the movement of ideological and non-ideological fields of individuation.

⁷³ I take what I am calling concrete independence and concrete freedom to be in agreement with Neuhouser's concept of social freedom that he developed out of the *Philosophy of Right*, see Neuhouser 2000. See Pinkard 2010 for a discussion of what Hegel meant by social freedom.

As such, Hegel forces us — like Spinoza — to radically rethink what we understand by freedom. For Hegel, the position of abstract individuation in its various determined historical forms and permutation via fields of individuation is marked by the position of certainty and immediacy, a position that refuses to recognize the self-negating and public nature of action and thus, of practical unity. It is a position that refuses to acknowledge the active folding nature of individuation and as such refuses to acknowledge Self-Consciousness' independence as derivative of a greater dependence. In the following chapter, I will offer an analysis of self-negation and argue that a non-ideological field of individuation is one that is marked but the doubled presence of *other and self*-negation. I suggest that the position of other-negation is the position of abstract independence that wants to hold on to its certainty. As such, concrete independence is one that refuses sovereignty.

In its most developed⁷⁴ form, concrete independence, and concrete freedom are realized Spirit, “the absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent Self-Consciousness which, in their opposition enjoy perfect freedom and independence: ‘I’ that is ‘We’ and ‘We’ that is ‘I’” (PhG, 177). The unity of the We and the I⁷⁵ suggests to us that the most developed, i.e., determined fields of individuation are those that deny sovereignty to both the individual and

⁷⁴ In speaking of most developed fields of individuation, we return to the question of the relationship between various fields of individuation. I want to emphasize that by development we do not mean achieving the greatest degree of perfection or the ultimate static end point of unity. Hegel's view on action and experience rejects this position. Rather, development suggests to us the greatest degree of determination and as such negation, i.e., self-negation. Thus a greater degree of development also suggests to an infinite explosion of difference and transgression. Thus, a most developed form of Spirit, according to my view of the relationship between fields of individuation, is one where the various infinitely determining and emerging fields of individuation are themselves determined and have come to recognize their instability, the process of always already becoming other to itself and finding oneself in this otherness.

⁷⁵ See Chiereghin 2016 for a view that suggests that this intersubjective unity is not supported by the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. See Menegoni 2016 for a discussion of action as irreducible to intersubjectivity insofar as it requires personal conviction.

the community. In a free society, neither dominates nor determines the other. Rather — in a Spinozist sense — the freer the individual, the freer the community and vice versa: the freer the community and the freer the individual — something that for Hegel is achieved through the mutual recognition of their mutual dependence. I suggest that a commitment to this view supports the position that if one is unfree, all are unfree. In sum, neither is complete without the other; neither the individual nor the community is ontologically prior. This position — as Balibar noted and I have already mentioned — is a position that denies abstract opposites. Freedom is only ever achieved through the concrete self-negating of certainty, sovereignty, or abstract independence.

Structure of Ideological Fields

Since the criterion for judging a practice of individuation is mutual recognition, practices of individuation that do not allow for mutual recognition are practices of individuation that insist on abstract independence. Thus, ideological fields occur when practices of individuation are self-contradictory and are marked by the presence of abstract independence. Although ideological fields preclude the possibility of mutual recognition, it is possible to offer a logic or a structure of ideological fields that follows from the structure of mutual recognition.

First, ideological fields are self-contradictory fields of individuation. As I argued, all practices of individuation aim at practical unity. However, practices of individuation that result in abstract independence lack mutual recognition and thus preclude practical unity, i.e., insist on immediate and static unity of itself with itself. Thus, they are self-contradictory to their very aim. This self-contradiction can occur at various points during the practice of individuation, namely when recognizing the dependence on the other and when acting. Here, it is important to keep in mind that Self-Consciousness is moved by the striving toward practical unity wherein unity is

not a static state that is ever something to be achieved due to the transgressive structure of action.

As such, when suggesting that ideological fields are self-contradictory, it is important to see that what this means is that these fields do not preclude the possibility of unity; rather, it is precisely the case that ideological fields conceive of unity as something that is achievable, stable, and static. In this respect, I want to suggest that the language of achievement is not appropriate once we gain a proper understanding of practical unity is dynamic negation. The striving for a static kind of unity is what precludes Self-Consciousness from attaining freedom through mutual recognition.

What Hegel explicitly tells us is that the movement of the *Phenomenology* is one of a story of failures of mutual recognition. That is to say that mutual recognition is something that always has to be performed and renewed; it is not something that can be agreed upon once as a signing of a social contract. Therefore, in order to consider what constitutes an ideological field, the focus shifts towards the sets of self-contradictory practices and norms that preclude the possibility of mutual recognition as a principle. In other words, I want to tentatively suggest that it is not a single instance of failed mutual recognition that constitutes an ideological field but rather the structural incapacity for mutual recognition to occur. But this position only holds if we discuss ideological fields in the abstract, i.e., in isolation.

Additionally, we have to consider how the failure of mutual recognition occurs as a result of the nested, multi-layered, and intersecting nature of all fields of individuation. To put it differently, ideological fields of individuation can infect what might otherwise structurally be a non-ideological field of individuation. It is important to consider both how infections can compromise fields of individuation and how infections can work as vaccines. This raises two further important questions to which I do currently lack an answer: is possibility a condition of the nature

of action and thus located within a field of individuation? Or is possibility a condition of the intersection between various fields of individuation? By possibility, I am referring to the opening for resistance and change.

This ability to infect means that all social domination and injustice occur within ideological fields of individuation. This holds because there is nothing beyond fields of individuation. There is no sociality that occurs outside of fields of individuation that can somehow escape the infinitely differentiating totality. One cannot be without being individuated by social practices. Furthermore, if fields of individuation that allow for mutual recognition are fields of concrete freedom, it is left to suppose that social inequality and domination have to occur within an ideological field. As such, on my account ideology is no longer a specific form of social ill or phenomenon, but rather is a self-contradictory practice of individuation that acts as the necessary but not sufficient condition of social oppression. That is to say, social domination or oppression cannot occur outside of a field of individuation that is not self-contradictory.

But since fields of individuation are not closed totalities, what makes fields of individuation ideological is not a failure of mutual recognition per se but a contradiction in the practice and norm that govern fields such that they structurally preclude mutual recognition from occurring. In other words, the contradiction is *not* between the concept and its execution such that the norms and practices that open up the field of individuation are sound and the contradiction is located in the relation between practices and norms. Rather, the very norms and practices that open up the field of individuation are self-contradictory. As such, just as I argued is the case for Spinoza, abstract independence is a true fiction: it is a fiction that accurately represents the contradiction in the very practices and norm that make that expression of abstract independence possible.

To conclude, ideological fields are localized, multilayered, and contemporaneous sets of practices of individuation. By this, I mean that a form of life can consist of multiple simultaneous practices of individuation wherein there is no one single practice that forms the root or underlying cause of an ideological field.⁷⁶ However, given the intersecting and complex nature of ideological fields, the question of ideology becomes very general. All it can offer us is the supposition that ideology is a set of self-contradictory practices of individuation, which is marked by the presence of historically determinate form of abstract freedom or certainty that refuses to spoil its own momentary satisfaction. Whereas in a non-ideological field, the transgressive structure of action suffers or loses its satisfaction at its own hands, ideological fields of individuation, on the other hand, want to resist the movement of suffering. This moment is the desire to remain in one's certainty, and an important component of the one-sided other-negating movement of desire, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was two-fold: first, to establish a definition and aim of a field of individuation; second, to establish a definition of an ideological field of individuation as self-contradictory to its aim. I argued that a field of individuation is aimed at attaining practical unity or the identity of Self-Consciousness with itself in action. Individuation I argued is the always already doubled active folding and re-folding of Self-Consciousness via action. As such, individuation always necessary occurs in a field of doubles. The aim of Self-Consciousness is practical unity, which I have suggested is the doubled mutual recognition of the transgressive nature of

⁷⁶ My argument precisely rejects theories of ideology that ground ideology in economic practice, e.g., orthodox Marxism.

unity. As such, absolute knowing is a re-definition of unity as transgression. Further, I argued that *mutual* recognition — as the historically determinate doubled asymmetrical affirmation of action and recognition of transgression — is the criterion by which to judge practices of individuation such that the structural possibility of mutual recognition suggests that a field of individuation is non-ideological. I have suggested that fields of individuation are multilayer, interlocking and most importantly co-constituting such that they are not discrete abstract fields that nest or meet others.

I suggested that an ideological field of individuation is one that is self-contradictory to the aim of Self-Consciousness. As such, an ideological field of individuation is one that aims at freedom in a historically determinate way but is unable to attain it insofar as it takes unity to be a static identity. While aiming at freedom is a structural necessity of Self-Consciousness, it is its historically determinate form that makes it pathological. Thus, its ideological aspect is not only that it is unable to attain it in practice but that the very determinate form of the aim is itself self-contradictory. I have suggested that the movement of ideological fields is the movement of abstract independence or the movement of Self-Consciousness that sticks to its own immediacy and purity.

Ideological fields are not co-extensive with oppression but are the necessary not sufficient condition for social oppression and domination. As such, my concept of ideology departs greatly from how ideology has hitherto been conceived of. Given that the structure of action is transgressive, ideological fields are always already working to go beyond themselves as Hegel shows us with the structure of experience. It is precisely its ideological character that works to prevent the possibility of transgression. As such, a field of individuation that is marked by mu-

tual recognition — which by the way on my account is not an ethical action but merely the criterion that has to be fulfilled for ethical action to be possible — is one that allows itself to be overcome. It writes transgression into itself as a virtue.

CHAPTER 3
DESIRE: STRIVING OF SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS TOWARD PRACTICAL UNITY

Introduction

“...authors ranging from Lukács and Brecht to Kojève have unceasingly sought to uncover in the succession of Desire, recognition, and struggle the outlines of a historically suitable, political course of events.”⁷⁷

In the previous chapter, I argued that Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* allows us to conceive of ideology in terms of ideological fields, which are sets of practices of individuation that block Self-Consciousness from achieving practical unity. Such practices of individuation are marked by their incapacity to generate mutual recognition. Put differently, mutual recognition is the criterion by which we can judge whether a field of individuation is ideological or not. Importantly, I argued that practical unity is not an achievement; rather — given the transgressive and retroactive structure of action — practical unity is the identification, i.e., finding oneself in the negative structure of action and publicity via *mutual* recognition.

Instead of using the terminology of ideology, I argued for thinking about ideology in terms of ideological fields. The language of fields emerges from the structure of individuation which by virtue of taking the shape of determinate negation is always at least doubled. As such, practices of individuation always occur in multifocal fields. I suggest that ideological fields, unlike non-ideological fields of individuation, are opened up by self-contradictory processes of individuation that block the possibility of achieving practical unity understood as a transgression of unity. Here again, it is worth noting that Hegel radically rethinks such common and static terms

⁷⁷ Honneth 2008: 76

as unity and independence. Importantly, I argued that ideological fields are marked by the presence of abstract independence or a determinate historical form of independence that fails to see that its capacity to be and to act is dependent on another. A Self-Consciousness marked by abstract independence is one that does indeed strive for a static unity.

It is worth reiterating that the striving for unity is *not* ideological and is the essential characteristic of Self-Consciousness. In fact, I want to suggest that without the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity, experience itself would be impossible. This striving only becomes ideological when it occurs within historically determinate fields of individuation that preclude the possibility of mutual recognition.

The specific formulation of ideology in terms of ideological fields allows us to think practices of individuation as dynamic sets of practices that have multiple foci rather than a form of Consciousness and set of practices that belong to a single social subject or group. As such, it becomes impossible to identify a single social agent who is the bearer of ideological Consciousness. Rather, ideology understood as an ideological field, consists of multiple subjects all of whom are caught in a self-contradictory practice of actualizing their concept, i.e., attaining practical unity of its concept and action. Thinking ideology in terms of ideological fields allows us to think about both the different subject positions each subject occupies while at the same time understanding their relation as a dialectic struggle in which all agents are caught in a self-contradictory striving for recognition.

Furthermore, I suggested that ideological fields make oppression, domination, or social injustice possible. In other words, I want to claim that all forms of social oppression exist within ideological fields. But — importantly — the ideological field or fields that make a certain histor-

ically determinate form of domination possible does not explain the essence, structure, or function of the form of domination. Rather, it points to its concrete material condition of the possibility. Another way to frame the concept of ideological fields is to suggest that all social domination and oppression takes place within or is undergirded by ideological fields opened up by self-contradictory practices of individuation.

Putting the problem of ideology this way, I argue, allows us to understand all ideological field as historically and materially specific. As such it is impossible to identify an essential feature of ideology. Rather, following Spinoza's materialist epistemology, we can identify the general or common features of ideological fields. However, to analyze the essential feature of specific ideological fields, we must study each specific and concrete field of individuation. Thus, on the one hand, ideology becomes a weak concept for it is not able to explain any specific form of social injustice and on the other hand, gains strength by becoming the condition of possibility of any form of social oppression. Such concrete distinctness precludes us from being able to reify relations into a dominant universal such as for example 'capitalism.'

Additionally, given this framework, we can also begin to think ideological fields as non-totalizing for at least two reasons. First, insofar as action is transgressive, a field of individuation is always already going beyond itself. Second, fields of individuation are multilayered and nested. This suggests that fields of individuation cannot be closed insofar as they are constantly coming into contact, i.e., intersecting with other fields of individuation. With respect to this, we have to consider how the relationship between various fields of individuation impacts each other. And more to the point, how do ideological fields of individuation impact non-ideological fields of individuation, and vice versa. That is to say, we have to consider not only how non-ideological fields might potentially intersect, or ideological fields might intersect, but also consider how

ideological fields might infect non-ideological fields, or non-ideological fields might offer the means of fighting the infection of pathological desire.

The aim of this chapter is to delve deeper into the structure of ideological fields of individuation and suggest that pathological desire is the mechanism that drives ideological fields. Importantly, non-pathological desire emerges as the mechanism of non-ideological fields of individuation. In order to show that desire plays a pivotal role in both ideological and non-ideological fields of individuation, I first argue that desire *is* the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity that finds its satisfaction in mutual recognition. Thus, I argue that desire is not a specific form of Self-Consciousness that appears in the *Phenomenology* and is eventually overcome; rather, desire is essential to the structure of Self-Consciousness and its capacity to attain practical unity. I further argue that desire not only finds its satisfaction in mutual recognition, but that desire is the central feature of mutual recognition. Given that mutual recognition is the criterion by which we can judge practices of individuation and mutual recognition is the satisfaction of desire, a non-ideological field of individuation is one marked by the right, i.e., non-pathological form of desire.

Once I establish that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity, I argue that ideological fields of individuation are moved by pathological desire. I define pathological desire as one-sided desire that is either self or other negating. Whereas non-pathological desire is both other-and-self negating, pathological desire splits up the movement of other and self-negation, rejecting the doubled movement of self-negation. Importantly, I suggest that it is the movement of other-negating desire that constitutes the striving to maintain one's concept of self and as such is the mechanism of ideology. In other words, I suggest that pathological desire as other rather than self-negating is the movement of abstract independence. That is not to say that

self-negating desire is not pathological, rather, it is not *the* dynamic of ideological fields. Thus, the overall aim of this chapter is to argue that pathological desire is the self-contradictory striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity and to show that other-negating desire is the movement of ideological fields. In the following chapter, I will concretize this movement and offer an example of pathological desire via the dialectic of lord and bondsman as well as an example of non-pathological desire via the dialectic of confession and forgiveness.

In order to arrive at the defense and concept of desire, I engage with Honneth, Pippin, and Scott Jenkins. I argue against Honneth's reading of desire and set him up as a foil for my argument. I focus on Honneth as a foil because I take him to represent the common and most popular reading of desire. I find Pippin's position regarding desire more promising but suggest that he nonetheless falls into the same problem as Honneth insofar as he posits a distinction between properly human and animal desire. I look to Pippin because like Honneth, he represents the other dominant interpretation of desire in the *Phenomenology*. I conclude that Scott Jenkins has the most interesting and provocative reading of desire and align my argument with his: that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. I offer two additional reasons that support the conclusion that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity.

Desire, Self-Consciousness, and Recognition

"It is in Self-Consciousness, in the Notion of Spirit, that Consciousness first finds its turning point, where it leaves behind it the colorful show of the sensuous here-and-now and the night like the void of the supersensible beyond, and steps out into the spiritual daylight of the present." PhG 177

The aim of this section is to argue that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. Additionally, I show that 1) desire is the central aspect of recognition and 2) desire is the movement of negation. Insofar as practical unity is measured by the presence of mutual recognition, or put differently, practical unity requires mutual recognition, and mutual recognition can occur only when practical unity has become a possibility, it follows that desire is central to both the striving and criterion of the realization of the striving.

The relationship between desire and Self-Consciousness requires establishing because it is not straightforwardly given in the *Phenomenology*. Given the structure of the text, it is not clear if desire is a momentary appearance of Self-Consciousness or whether it is a structural feature of Self-Consciousness: if Self-Consciousness is indeed desire in general? Axel Honneth argues that desire is the shape that Self-Consciousness takes in its transition from Consciousness to the Self-Consciousness and that desire is overcome with the appearance of recognition. Robert Pippin, on the other hand, suggests that desire is the most immediate appearance of the striving of Self-Consciousness toward the unity of apperception. Lastly, Scott Jenkins argues that desire is the condition of the possibility of Self-Consciousness and as such is not something that can be overcome. All three thinkers⁷⁸ view desire in relation to the problem of the unity of apperception left over from Kant.

Having situated the appearance of desire on the scene and having explained the aim and subsequent failure of desire, I will give a brief summary of each position which I do in order to situate my argument and also build off of both Pippin's and Jenkins' work. I will conclude with my own argument that suggests that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity.

⁷⁸ For another influential reading of desire see Brandom 2007.

Desire comes on the scene in light of the previous experience Consciousness had undergone, namely Sense-Certainty, Perception, Force and Understanding. As I have explained earlier, through this experience Self-Consciousness comes to understand its as actively involved in the production of experience. The transition is spurred on by the failure of Understanding to find unity with its object. Understanding learns that in trying to grasp the object, it only learns about itself. While a failure for Understanding, for the observer this is a monumental moment of becoming a proto-idealist who knows that the object is not something out there, independent of the activity of the subject.

Through the stance of desire, Self-Consciousness, however, comes to experience itself as another failure for it learns that experience is not merely its own doing. In this experience Self-Consciousness as desire learns that the object — what was previously the object of sense-certainty and perception — pushes back, thus challenging Consciousness conception of itself as the sole cause and determining pole of experience. According to Neuhaus,

desire attempts to satisfy itself, then, by enacting the attitude: ‘I am the only self-sufficient being; every other being exists only ‘for me.’’ Although Hegel describes Desire as seeking the destruction of its object, this is potentially misleading. What Desire seems, more precisely, is the complete negation of every claim to self-sufficiency other than its own; it seems to show that everything other ‘counts as nothing,’ ‘has no true reality,’ and ‘does not deserve to exist for itself’... Desire’s aim in other words, is to show not that nothing else exists, but that nothing else has the kind of being that imposes constraints on it (on its will and belief) (Neuhaus 2007: 42-43)

Thus, the new goal of Self-Consciousness in the shape of desire is to realize the concept it has of itself, namely that it is — as Neuhouser puts — the law-giver of the object.⁷⁹ In this moment a new form of Consciousness arises that is self-conscious, but that does not mean that it has lost the sight of the object. Its law giving status must be realized in seeing itself as a lawgiver and in realizing its law giving status on or upon the object. In other words, the only way this new knowledge of itself can be realized is if Consciousness sees that the object as a passive construction of its activity. To further turn to Neuhouser, “In contrast to his predecessor, Hegel sees a self-conscious subject as characterized by a *goal* — that of demonstrating its sovereignty and self-identify by overcoming the opposition between itself and its other — and the subject’s drive to realize this goal accounts for its practical nature” (Ibid.: 38). This is the point I sought to establish in the previous chapter — that Self-Consciousness is characterized by the striving toward practical unity, i.e., negation of the independence of everything but itself. This I argued amounts to abstract independence. The aim of desire is to realize its self-conception of itself as the active and sovereign cause of experience by negating the sensual object. But in so doing, desire only learns that it is dependent on the object, and thus it is the object that is the independent pole of the relationship rather than desire. In this movement, Self-Consciousness learns that the only way it can satisfy desire is if it negates something that can negate itself, i.e., Self-Consciousness can only find its satisfaction in another Self-Consciousness.

⁷⁹ As Neuhouser puts, “The subject now construes itself as the essential, law-giving pole of the subject-object pair and at the same time recognizes its relation to an object — its relation to some reality other than itself — as necessary and not merely incidental to it...If at the end of ‘Consciousness’ the subject regards itself as the true (as the sole source of the norms that bind it in its knowing the world) but at the same time recognizes its necessary relation to something other, then the subject must find a way of maintaining its relation to its other that is consistent with its conception of itself as self-sufficient” (Neuhouser 2007: 38).

In the following section, I discuss Honneth's, Pippin's, and Jenkins' readings of the desire section of the *Phenomenology*. Whereas I aim to set up Honneth's reading of desire as the foil to my argument, I aim to build my argument off of both Pippin's and Jenkins' reading of desire and argue that desire is the very striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity.

Honneth's goal is to reconstruct and explain the transition Self-Consciousness makes from desire to recognition. Honneth argues that the section on desire and recognition is Hegel's attempt to establish the transcendental condition of human sociality. The movement from desire to recognition is thus a move from "transition from a natural to a spiritual being, from the human animal to the rational subject" (Honneth 2008: 77). The stance of desire, for Honneth, is the stance of an animal⁸⁰ and the transition from desire to recognition is thus a transition to the realm of humanity proper.

⁸⁰ Butler also thinks it is rather clear that desire is a kind of animal hunger, "the German word for desire, *Begierde*, suggests animal appetite rather than the anthropocentric sense conveyed by the French *le desire* and the English *desire*. Introduced at this juncture in the text, the term *clearly* (italics mine) acquires the meaning of animal hunger; the sensuous and perceptual world is desired in the sense that it is required for consumption and so the means for the reproduction of life. As we follow the textual development of desire, we learn that human desire is distinguished from animal desire in virtue of its reflexivity, its tacit philosophical project, and its rhetorical possibility" (Butler 1987: 33). Kojève is also influential in supporting this reading of desire, "Animal desire — hunger, for example — and the action that flows from it, negate, destroy the natural given. By negating it, modifying it, making it its own, the animal raises itself above this given. According to Hegel, the animal realizes and reveals its superiority to plants by eating them. But by feeding on plants, the animal depends on them and hence does not manage truly to go beyond them. Generally speaking, the greedy emptiness — or the I — which is revealed by biological desire is filled — by the biological action that flows from it — only with a natural, biological content. Therefore, the I, or the pseudo-I, realized by the action satisfaction of this desire, is just as natural, biological, material, as that toward which the desire and action are directed. The animal raises itself above the nature that is negated in its animal desire only to fall back into it immediately by the satisfaction of desire. Within the framework of desire, the subject can grasp neither its reality-producing activity nor its own genus-character, because reality in its living totality remains untouched by the activity through which the subject merely satisfies its individual needs" (Kojève 1996: 49-50).

Honneth argues that in the transition from Consciousness to Self-Consciousness, “both the observer and the observed subject have thus advanced to an epistemological standpoint already characterized by Kant in his transcendental philosophy” (Honneth 2008: 78). The epistemological standpoint characterized by Kant is one of the apperceptive unity of Consciousness where the I is said to accompany all of my representations. In other words, on this view Consciousness’ activity is the cause of experience. In learning that its activity is responsible for the structure of experience, Consciousness becomes Self-Consciousness.

However, the mere awareness of the fact that Consciousness is actively involved in the construction of its experience is not enough to assure Consciousness that it is indeed actively synthesizing and determining the object. According to Honneth, Hegel’s critique of Kant consists in suggest that it is not enough to suppose that Consciousness takes up the position of a passive observer of mental content, or as Honneth puts it, “a mere duplication of Consciousness” (Ibid.:78). There is, in other words, a difference between the kind of Consciousness that has an awareness of the activity and the activity itself, which according to Honneth is not yet present to Consciousness that has just experienced its own failure in the shape of the Understanding (Ibid.: 79). Desire emerges as the initial step by which Self-Consciousness can become aware of its determining and synthesizing activity.

Desire, according to Honneth, allows Hegel to discuss the activity of Consciousness as one of an embodied living being. I have echoed this point in the previous chapter by stressing the practical nature of Self-Consciousness. In the process of its development as desire, Self-Consciousness learns that “its self is not a placeless, selective Consciousness but that it instead related to organic reality in active praxis, for it can no longer behave actively, i.e., as a naturally self-reproducing being, towards a world full of liveliness” (Ibid.: 80). Self-Consciousness is not a

dead heap of bones, but like its object in the shape of desire — Life — is an organic self-differentiating totality. This point is important insofar as by showing that Self-Consciousness is a living activity, Hegel is arguing against the dominant philosophy of Consciousness of his time that argued that Consciousness is removed from the natural determination of ‘any kind of organic liveliness.’

In so doing Hegel works to undermine the idea that nature is mechanical, and as such operates in the realm of necessity and determination, while Consciousness is the cause of itself, i.e., free and undetermined: thus, rending Consciousness and nature apart insofar as such view makes freedom incompatible with necessity. Hegel, like Spinoza, works to understand freedom and necessity together.

Desire allows Hegel to argue that Consciousness must itself be part of nature if its activity is to have any synthetic or determining effect, or as Honneth puts it,

For Hegel, the confirmation of desires, i.e., the satisfaction of elementary, organic needs, plays a double role with regard to Self-Consciousness. The subject experiences itself both as a part of nature, because it is involved in the determining and heteronomous ‘movement of Life,’ and as the active organizing center of this life, because it can make essential differentiation’s in life by virtue of its Consciousness (Ibid.: 80)

Honneth continues that insofar as desire has learned that it can determine the object practically, it also becomes convinced of the nothingness of the object. In this respect, it begins to see itself as superior to the rest of nature. The human animal, continues Honneth, is able to realize this superiority by simply consuming the object. But upon doing so, desire learns that by consuming its

object it has not in fact satisfied and has not attained unity of itself with itself, i.e., has not experienced itself as a sovereign law-giver. Honneth says, “it is clear, therefore, that Hegel convinced of having uncovered an element of self-deception in the stance of desire. The subject deceived itself about itself; one could say that it operates with false conceptions about its relation to the world in believing itself capable of destroying its object through the satisfaction of its needs, through the fulfillment of its desires” (Ibid.: 84). Rather, it experiences itself as depending on the object since only by negating the object can it take *falsely* conceive of itself as sovereign. In other words, without the object Self-Consciousness would not be able to take itself to be superior in virtue of its conscious determining activity.

Ultimately, Honneth concludes that desire is overcome “due to the fact that it creates a false conception of an omnipotent self” (Ibid.: 85). Perhaps more importantly than the dependence on the object, the false omnipotent self is rejected because it fails to allow Self-Consciousness to experience its sociality. It is precisely this omnipotence that marks the stance of desire, for Honneth, as the stance of a human and not rational, i.e., social subject. Desire’s omnipotence begins to be overcome as soon as Consciousness realizes that desire is to be realized in recognition and thus in sociality. The transition from desire as an a-social but embodied stance of Self-Consciousness to the rational, i.e., social stance of recognition for Honneth marks the failure and the end of the story of desire.

In sum, for Honneth the stance of desire is important insofar as it teaches Consciousness that it is an embodied and situated living being which practically determines the objects of its experience and thus constitutes its experience. Desire thus performs the synthetic function of uniting nature and Consciousness, necessity, and freedom. But despite its importance, Honneth insists that desire is nonetheless a false form of Consciousness insofar as it is ultimately a limited

stance of an asocial human animal. Thus, for Honneth desire is but a particular moment of *Phenomenology* that Self-Consciousness surpasses on its way to Absolute Knowing as soon as it *recognizes* its sociality. Put differently, according to Honneth's reading, desire poses the problem of practical unity for Self-Consciousness but is unable to offer an adequate response to this problem; thus, it is overcome.

Ultimately, I find Honneth's reading problematic because it reads desire as a dividing line between what is animal and what is properly human. Insofar as I argue desire is not a momentary stage of Self-Consciousness, I aim to reject this divide in the *Phenomenology*. Furthermore, I want to suggest that insisting on the divide between human and animal via desire and recognition is itself a form of sovereign or abstract independence. Or, what a view of Self-Consciousness that Spinoza might call 'a dominion with in a dominion.'

Unlike Honneth's reading of desire, which I suggest reduced desire to animality, both Pippin and Jenkins read desire through Hegel's claim that Self-Consciousness is desire in general. Doing so allows both — in different ways — to argue that desire is a structural feature of Self-Consciousness and as such, is not a stage that can be overcome or fail.

Like Honneth, the problem that motivates Pippin's inquiry into desire is the issue of apperception: How do we understand the Self-Consciousness of Consciousness, i.e., How do we understand Consciousness' awareness of its determining activity? Like Honneth, Pippin also suggests that "Hegel's position is that we misunderstand all dimensions of Self-Consciousness, from apperception in Consciousness itself to simple explicit reflection about myself, to practical self-knowledge of my own so-called identity, by considering any form of it as in any way observational or inferential or immediate or any sort of two-place intention relation" (Pippin 2011: 15).

Put differently, yet again we see that at stake is the activity that allows Consciousness to determine experience. Furthermore, as Pippin puts, “what is it for a being to be not just a recorder of the world’s impact on one’s senses, but to be for itself in its engagement with objects? What is it in general for a being to be for itself, for ‘itself to be at issue for it in its relation with what is not it?’” (Ibid.: 26) What is it for Consciousness to be for oneself — to be Self-Consciousness and to be actively involved in constituting itself as its own object? The question is: What is it for Self-Consciousness to be Consciousness of itself? How is Self-Consciousness not a two-place relation? What does Hegel mean by saying that Consciousness always goes beyond itself?

But unlike Honneth, who Pippin sees as offering up a transcendental argument for the structure of Consciousness, Pippin argues that Self-Consciousness cannot have a transcendental structure for it is always provisional. Pippin’s view follows from his argument for the structure of action that I explored in the previous chapter. As such, Self-Consciousness is an achievement that goes beyond itself thus resisting the possibility of a stable and in Hegel language *dead* structure. Put differently, Pippin argues that Self-Consciousness is an achievement since it can posit what it takes itself to be and in so doing already overcomes its positing of itself; Self-Consciousness is necessarily a movement forward. Thus, according to Pippin, in order to consider the apperceive nature of Self-Consciousness, it is vital to ask: What is the nature of a self-overcoming structure of apperception? What is the nature of apperception when the relation of Consciousness to itself is a lively achievement?

Pippin argues that if Self-Consciousness is an achievement, then it must be characterized by a striving. Its most immediate striving would take the shape of a living being that strives to maintain itself in existence. To borrow Spinoza’s language — to persevere in existence. “As we have seen, if a self-conscious Consciousness is to be understood as striving in some way, then

the most immediate embodiment of such a striving would be a self's attention to itself as a living being" (Ibid.: 34). Having posited this conditional, Pippin is able to make his argument for desire. Pippin argues that desire is the initial self-estrangement between Self-Consciousness and life: Life becomes something that one has to strive for and maintain. Self-Consciousness conceives of itself as a living being and has to strive to maintain itself as a living being. If the striving ceases, so does its liveliness. Desire, thus, is the initial striving to overcome the gap, the distance, between what is in itself and what is for itself. In this respect, desire for Pippin is the most immediate stance of Self-Consciousness; it is the first awareness of one's active striving for unity. Desire is the awareness of oneself as a living being.

Thus, like Honneth, Pippin suggests that desire is a form of Consciousness that is overcome. And while Pippin sees the importance of desire in relation to the overall aim and structure of Self-Consciousness, I suggest that his view of desire closely resembles Honneth's as an animal rather than human striving. Nonetheless, Pippin's reading is important insofar as he explicitly thinks desire in relation to the prospectual movement of Self-Consciousness. But while for Pippin desire is only the momentary and most immediate expression of the striving of Self-Consciousness, I will suggest that desire is the very striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity, not only its most immediate expression. In other words, I reject both Honneth's and Pippin's readings of desire insofar as both insist that desire is something that Self-Consciousness overcomes when it becomes properly social. Instead, I argue that desire is the very essence of Self-Consciousness that itself appears in various determinate forms.

I now turn to Jenkins' argument that desire is the essential feature of Self-Consciousness. I find Jenkins' argument most compelling and use it to build my argument that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. Jenkins suggests that we should understand "Hegel's identification of Self-Consciousness and desire as the claim that desiring plays an important role in an apperceptive subject's relation to itself" (Jenkins 2009: 103). As I mentioned earlier, like Honneth and Pippin, Jenkins too understand the problem of desire in terms of the problem of apperception. However, Jenkins' greatly departs from Honneth's understanding of desire.

Jenkins suggests that desire is a key feature of apperception. In doing so, not only does Jenkins combine features of Consciousness that are typically considered essential with those that are typically dismissed as inessential, but foregrounds desire as *the* essential feature of Consciousness. As such, desire is never something to be overcome or seen as the least developed feature of Consciousness.

At first glance, Jenkins' argument appears similar to Pippin's. However, Jenkins explicitly criticizes Pippin's argument for being contextualist. By this Jenkins means that Pippin attempts to interpret desire as a particular stage of Self-Consciousness. Jenkins argues that this reading faces issues. One of the major issues that Jenkins identifies with the contextual reading is that it is not able to explain why the work of the bondsman is desire held in check. That is to say, if Self-Consciousness has indeed gone beyond desire by the time recognition comes on the scene, why would desire held in check be constitutive of the bondsman coming to be for itself?⁸¹

⁸¹ Jenkins notes that one plausible response to this is that the latter form of desire is a species of the genus of desire introduced earlier as Self-Consciousness in general. But Jenkins maintains that there is no textual support for this reading, i.e., for the reading of the genus-species relationship of desire.

That is to say, how can we explain the presence of desire later in the text? Furthermore, Jenkins suggests that Pippin takes

Hegel to presuppose apperception and to focus on its various conceptual moments.

While I agree with Pippin that Hegel has no interest in explaining the emergence of apperception from the mere matter of life, I believe we must also conclude that Hegel does aim to provide some kind of explanation of apperception itself through the elucidation of conditions under which the capacity for reflection presupposed throughout the *Phenomenology* is possible. On this reading, Desire serves as one feature of the context in which the apperceptive ‘I’ can exist (Ibid.: 115)

Jenkins’ aim is to show that desire is the condition of the possibility of Self-Consciousness and in this respect to show that desire, which is typically considered as an inessential feature of Consciousness, is essential to Consciousness capacity to be self-conscious. In sum, Jenkins agrees with Pippin’s move to connect desire and Self-Consciousness. But whereas Pippin — according to Jenkins — assumes Self-Consciousness and posits desire as its immediate expression, Jenkins argues that desire is the very capacity of Self-Conscious activity. Vied as such, desire is not something that can ever be surpassed or seen as undeveloped, i.e., immediate expression.

In order to make this argument, Jenkins draws on Fichte⁸² to discuss desire’s role in Consciousness attaining the capacity to become self-conscious, “Effecting appears as a condition of Self-Consciousness which is itself a condition of objective experience... ‘the practical faculty is the innermost root of the I; everything else is placed upon and attached to this faculty...all other attempts to deduce the I in Self-Consciousness have been unsuccessful’” (Fichte in Jenkins 2009:

⁸² See Williams 1992 and Clarke 2009 for a discussion of how Hegel transforms Fichte’s concept of recognition.

116). With respect to Hegel, desire — as Honneth and Pippin both argued — manifests the practical turn: desire in this context is the practical faculty ‘which is the innermost root of the I.’ Jenkins suggests that it the feeling of being driven that comprises the beginning of Self-Consciousness. As Jenkins puts:

If we understand the claim that Self-Consciousness is desire in general as an articulation of the Fichtean claim that Self-Consciousness begins with a feeling of a drive, then...Hegel’s desire, like Fichte’s drive, would appear as one condition of finding oneself in relation to an object in general, and thus would partially constitute the general context in which the apperception ‘I’ can exist (Jenkins 2009: 119-120).

Thus, if as I argued in the previous chapter, Self-Consciousness is the striving to attain practical unity of itself with itself via the other, desire explains how Self-Consciousness gains the capacity to posit itself, externalize itself, and return into itself. In other words, desire is the striving that makes practical activity possible. Given that practical activity is the condition of Self-Consciousness, it follows that desire is the condition of Self-Consciousness. In sum, “The view is not that all self-conscious stages are states of desire, but that desiring is (in the proper circumstances) a Self-Consciousness state without which there be no ‘I’ at all” (Ibid.: 121).

I began with Honneth who argues that desire as but a mere moment of the *Phenomenology*. Pippin occupies an intermediary position between Honneth and Jenkins and argues that desire is the most immediate expression of the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. I concluded with Jenkins who argues that desire is not the most immediate expression of Self-Consciousness but the drive that makes Self-Consciousness possible.

I agree with Jenkins and argue that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward

practical unity and as such it is the drive that makes Self-Consciousness possible. In the following, I will first offer a few brief remarks on why I understand desire as the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity and second conclude by arguing that desire is essential to mutual recognition, thus offering another reason to suppose that desire is not a momentary stage in the development of Self-Consciousness. In other words, I argue that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity and as such is one of the essential features that makes Self-Consciousness possible. As such, I reject the position that holds that desire is but a determinate and immediate form of Self-Consciousness.

My argument unfolds along two points. First, I argue that desire is goal oriented striving without which action, i.e., externalization on the part of Consciousness, is impossible. This argument clearly echoes Jenkins' argument outlined above. But rather than looking to Fichte to make this claim, I draw on Aristotle's argument that action is the result of intellect and desire. The second — more original — step of my argument is to show that desire is the central feature of both mis- and mutual recognition, thus showing that desire is preserved rather than overcome with the advance of recognition. As a brief reminder, the reason to show that desire is a particular form of Consciousness but is the very striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity is to ultimately show that pathological desire is the movement of ideological fields.

As an introductory aside, I want to note that Hegel never actually states that desire is superseded. This is not trivial. When it comes to other forms of Consciousness, Hegel explicitly states that those forms of Consciousness have been superseded and have resulted in new forms of Consciousness. What Hegel does say is that desire is not able to find its satisfaction in its current self-conception; rather, Hegel suggests that desire will find its satisfaction in mutual recognition.

This presumes that desire is present even when there is mis-recognition. Furthermore, given that we know that mutual recognition does not actually take place until the reconciliation of the evil Consciousness with the judging Consciousness, it would suggest that desire only comes to satisfy itself at the very end of the *Phenomenology*. This is all to say that there is no textual evidence to support the conclusion that desire is done away or that it remains at the introductory and immediate level of Self-Consciousness. Or put differently, there is not enough textual evidence to suggest that desire is only the immediate and embodied expression of Self-Consciousness as argued by Pippin. I will return to these points later in this section.

What I find most interesting — in terms of introductory asides — is that neither satisfaction nor suffering is possible without desire. As I argued in the previous chapter, the movement of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity occurs as a movement of satisfaction and self-imposed suffering. Ideological fields are those that attempt to refuse this movement and work to maintain certainty. As such, I suggested that satisfaction and suffering are the key affective dimension of Spirit. If I am correct that neither satisfaction nor suffering is possible without desire, i.e., a Self-Consciousness that is not desiderative can hardly suffer or be satisfied, and both affects are the axis of the logic of experience, then it follows that desire is essential and not a determinate form of Consciousness.

I begin with a version of Jenkins' argument that desire is what gives Consciousness to capacity for Self-Consciousness. In order to make this argument, I draw on Aristotle rather than Fichte. I further suggest that desire helps explain the goal-oriented nature of Self-Consciousness. I take this argument to be a fusion of Pippin's and Jenkins' positions wherein I agree that Self-Consciousness is a goal-oriented achievement explain and made possible by desire. Other than

desire there is nothing at this point in the *Phenomenology* that is able to explain the turn from formal Understanding to the practical and goal-oriented stance of Self-Consciousness. How else can Consciousness propel itself beyond itself? In this respect Hegel is most Aristotelian⁸³, for whom “what causes motion is the appetitive [soul], and it is through this that thought causes motion, for the starting-point of [this] thought is the appetitive [soul]” (DA, 433a20). Appetite — which of course for Spinoza is unconscious desire — is the principle of motion. And to our point specifically, the principle that moves Consciousness to externalize itself and thus become itself. Or as Aristotle puts it:

Now the principle of action is intention, but as a source of and not as purpose, whereas that of intention is desire and reason for the sake of something; hence intention cannot exist without intuition and thought...It is not thought as such that can move anything but thought which is for the sake of something and is practical...Hence intention is either a desiring intellect or thinking desire, and such a principle is a man (NE 1139b1-5).

Without desire it is impossible to conceive of a subject that is moved to activity, i.e., externalization via action and thus practical unity. But perhaps what is just as interesting is Aristotle's instance of the synthesis of desire and intellect as desiring intellect or thinking desire. As I mentioned earlier, Honneth argues that desire allows Hegel to bridge the gap between the realm of thought, i.e., freedom and the realm of nature, i.e., determinism. In thinking intellect as desiring

⁸³ In an Aristotelian manner, it also makes sense that the initial sections of the *Phenomenology* concern themselves with sense perception insofar as the possession of the senses leads to an appetitive nature, according to Aristotle, “and all animals have at least one power of sensation, that of touch; but that which has sensation has also pleasure and pain and is affected by pleasurable and painful objects, and, if so, it has desire also” (DA 414b5) It thus makes sense for Hegel to begin the *Phenomenology* with a discussion of sense-certainty and perception in order to arrive at desire as the condition of Self-Consciousness .

or desire as thinking, Aristotle is avoiding ever positing such a distinction via desire as the root of intention. It thus makes all the more sense for Hegel to see desire as the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. Self-Consciousness *is* desire in general.

Furthermore, I want to suggest that desire as the drive toward externalization is the movement of negation, i.e., determination. Prior to desire, Consciousness had not yet gained the capacity to negate, i.e., to act. It is only with desire that Consciousness seeks to negate the object — Self-Consciousness gains the capacity to be a *determinate* striving, i.e., a goal-oriented striving. Given that determinate negation is the mechanism of the *Phenomenology* or the logic of experience, this would suggest yet again that desire is the motor of the movement of Self-Consciousness. Thinking about desire in terms of negation will become important when thinking about the function of desire with respect to ideological fields.

What these points establish is that desire is a structural feature of Self-Consciousness that cannot be relegated to one specific instantiation of Self-Consciousness. Desire is the structural feature of Self-Consciousness that both allows it to have the capacity for Self-Consciousness and additionally that which gives Self-Consciousness its prospectival and goal oriented structure.

I now move onto my second argument wherein I suggest that desire is the movement of mutual recognition. The aim of this argument is to offer another reason to suppose that desire is not overcome when recognition comes on the scene; rather, recognition makes desire's realization apparent to it. Given that mutual recognition is the activity of practical unity showing that desire is realized in mutual recognition further supports the point that desire is essential to Self-Consciousness' striving toward practical unity.

As a brief reminder, desire is not able to find satisfaction in the concept of the sovereign law-giver who sees itself as solely determining the object and thus experience. At his point Self-Consciousness learns that rather than essential law-giving pole of experience, it is not only inessential but in fact dependent on the object of experience it sought to negate. In the course of its experience, desire finds that it is not the sovereign it took itself to be. In attempting to negate the object for the sake of self-satisfaction, desire finds that it is in fact fully dependent on the object. Due to this failure, desire learns that it can only find its satisfaction in another Self-Consciousness because Self-Consciousness is the only object capable of both self-negation and of sustaining its self-negation, “On account of the independence of the object, therefore, it can achieve satisfaction only when the object itself affects the negation within itself; and it must carry out this negation of itself in itself, for it is in itself the negative, and must be for the other what it is” (PhG, 175). If Self-Consciousness seeks to continue to negate the object in order to reaffirm itself, it will only ever continue to encounter the same failure: reproduce its dependence on the object. Such a repetitive movement is not madness — as the saying goes — but an ideological field.

The only object that is capable of effecting and sustaining the negation of itself is another Self-Consciousness, thus, “Self-Consciousness achieves its satisfaction only in another Self-Consciousness” (PhG, 175). Meaning that if the goal of Self-Consciousness is practical unity — and I have repeatedly argued that it is — Self-Consciousness can only achieve practical unity via the doubled self-negation by another Self-Consciousness, i.e., mutual recognition. While I established this in the previous section, in the following, I will discuss mutual recognition from the perspective of desire.

As I argued, Self-Consciousness seeks to establish a unity of itself with itself via action — a unity that is never quite achieved but always already deferred due to the transgressive nature of action. The problem that desire encounters is that while it takes itself to be the creator of experience and tries to actualize this self-conception by acting and negating the object, the object resists Self-Consciousness. If however, the object self-negates, if it abides by Self-Consciousness' will, it of its own volition releases the initial Self-Consciousness from certainty. Put differently, in sustaining a self-negation, the second Self-Consciousness acknowledges the first Self-Consciousness' transgressive striving toward practical unity, "Self-Consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only being acknowledged" (PhG, 178). In sustaining the self-negation, i.e., releasing oneself from certainty, the object (the other Self-Consciousness) does not create the need for the first Self-Consciousness to recreate the object.

However, one-sided recognition still reproduces the initial problem of desire. Even though the other Self-Consciousness negates itself, the initial Self-Consciousness that wants to perceive itself as sovereign — and in this respect, hold on to the certainty of itself, i.e., its abstract independence — still depends on the self-negation of the other. In order to satisfy desire, the initial Self-Consciousness must change its self-conception and root out all immediacy. In so doing, it must recognize the other Self-Consciousness. Both Self-Consciousness must recognize the condition of their mutual dependence. Thus, the movement of recognition must be doubled. To reiterate, this does not release Self-Consciousness from dependence but rather makes it acknowledge its dependence.

Self-Consciousness can only attain practical unity — by which I mean to come to be at home with one's own deferral of itself — if and only if recognition is mutual, both recognize

each other as recognizing the other, “Each sees the other do the same as it does; each does itself what it demands of the other, and therefore also does what it does only insofar as the other does the same. Action by one side only would be useless because what is to happen can only be brought about by both” (PhG, 182). In other words, for Self-Consciousness to find practical unity via mutual recognition both Self-Consciousness must posit themselves, i.e., act, and sustain their respective self-negation. As I have argued in the previous chapter this doubled movement of self-positing and self-negating is not the abstract recognition of sameness of difference. Rather, it is an asymmetrical movement insofar as each Self-Consciousness act from its concrete historically determined position.

So, how does this connect to desire? Or, put differently, how does Self-Consciousness’ ability to find satisfaction⁸⁴ in mutual recognition suggest that desire is the structural feature of recognition rather than something overcome by recognition? In order to see that that is the case, I look to the movement of mutual recognition:

The notion of Self-Consciousness is only completed in these three moments: (a) the pure undifferentiated ‘I’ is its first immediate object. (b) But this immediacy is itself an absolute mediation, it is only as a supersession of the immediate object, in other words, it is Desire. The satisfaction of Desire is, it is true, the reflection of Self-Consciousness into itself, or the certainty that has become truth. (c) But the truth of this certainty is really a double reflection, the duplication of Self-Consciousness. Consciousness has for its object one which, of its own self posits its otherness or difference as nothingness, and in so doing is independent (PhG, 176).

⁸⁴ I commented earlier on the language of satisfaction and that it is impossible to understand the satisfaction of Self-Consciousness without understanding it as desiderative.

The structure of mutual recognition requires that Self-Consciousness externalizes itself via action and thus act as a determining cause. The Self-Consciousness that externalizes itself is initially certain of itself. If it remains in this position, it is bound by abstract independence. The movement of externalization via action is the movement of desire, negation or the ‘supersession of the immediate object.’ The satisfaction of desire is the return of desire into the self. Or put differently, the satisfaction of Self-Consciousness is not the self-negation of the other Self-Consciousness, but their mutual self-negation. Hegel explicitly states that the attainment of concrete independence is the mutual satisfaction of desire or mutual self-negation.

Desire is thus not just a part of recognition but is the integral movement of recognition. The going outside of itself and finding its satisfaction in another Self-Consciousness — that is to say the disruption of immediacy — is determined by desire.⁸⁵ The movement of other and self-negation, or satisfied desire, is the movement that roots out all the immediacy of Self-Consciousness. In doing so, Self-Consciousness abandons the concept of itself as sovereign or abstractly independent and realizes that concrete independence is possible via the dependence on the other. Or as Hyppolite says:

The end point of desire is not, as one might think superficially, the sensuous object — that is only a means — but the unity of the I with itself. Self-Consciousness is desire, but what it desires, although it does not yet know this explicitly, is itself: it desires its own desire. And that is why it will be able to attain itself only through finding another desire, another Self-Consciousness. The teleological dialectic of the *Phenomenology* gradually unfolds all the horizons of this desire,

⁸⁵ This reading of desire problematizes the reading of desire as satisfaction of basic bodily needs such as hunger.

which is the essence of Self-Consciousness. Desire bears first on the objects of the world, then on life, an object already closer to itself, and, finally, on another Self-Consciousness. Desire seeks itself in the other: man desires recognition from man (Hyppolite 1996: 71).

By showing that desire only finds its satisfaction in mutual recognition — which I insist on reminding is not a static end, but rather an on-going practice that must be repeated for action always transgresses itself — I aim to show that desire is an integral structure of Self-Consciousness. Insofar as mutual recognition is the realization of the aim of Self-Consciousness, desire is not a moment of Self-Consciousness that Self-Consciousness surpasses but is a structural feature of Self-Consciousness. And more importantly, desire is the very striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. As such, is it not merely *a* structural feature of Self-Consciousness but is an essential structural feature of Self-Consciousness. Furthermore, given that I have established that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity which is another way of saying that Self-Consciousness finds its realization in mutual recognition, and the “detailed exposition of the Notion of this spiritual unity in its duplication will present us with the process of Recognition,” (PhG, 178) the *Phenomenology* is the exposition of desire.

Desire: Movement of Ideological Fields

Having argued that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity, I aim to show why pathological desire is the movement of ideological fields. As a reminder, in the previous chapter, I argued that ideological fields of individuation are constituted via self-contradictory practices of individuation that are marked by abstract independence. This is a stance of Self-Consciousness that refuses to spoil its own satisfaction: a stance that refuses to accept the

logic of experience and stubbornly clings to itself. Experience that does not conform to its essence counts for Self-Consciousness as a loss of itself. In this case, Self-Consciousness rather than letting go of itself, self-negating itself, clings to its self-conception and insists on negating the other so as to prove its self-conception. As such, an ideological field is one that structurally precludes mutual recognition. Given that the aim of Self-Consciousness is practical unity, in clinging to its self-concept and thus to the stance of abstract independence, Self-Consciousness is self-contradictory.

Whereas a non-ideological field of individuation sets up a relationship between the individual and the community wherein the individual is not dominated by the community and the community is not a collection of independent wills, an ideological field of individuation is structurally incapable of creating an ethical unity wherein the I is the We and the We is an I. I suggest that this is the spectrum along with we can understand historically determined ideological practices of individuation, i.e., ideological fields.

The aim of the following section is to state clearly why desire is the dynamic of fields of individuation and pathological desire is the dynamic of ideological fields of individuation. In the next chapter, I will go on to discuss the lord and bondsman dialectic as an example of an ideological field of individuation and pathological desire as well as the dialectic of confession and forgiveness as the example of mutual recognition and satisfied desire.

First, a note on terminology, I suggest that the language of dynamics is helpful for thinking the structure of ideological fields as a field of power, capacity, and possibility. To make this connection, we can turn to the Greek origins of dynamic as *dynamis*. Given that I understand ideological fields as fields of self-contradictory practices of individuation, it becomes interesting to

think not only the power structures that function within an ideological field but also the possibilities that appear possible but are impossible, i.e., contradictory. Furthermore, understanding desire as a dynamic of an ideological field helps us think both Spinoza — for whom power is a key concept — and Hegel as thinkers of power.

To see that pathological desire is the dynamic of an ideological field we follow these steps: First, I have established that Self-Consciousness is the striving for practical unity of itself with itself via the other. The practical unity of Self-Consciousness is a historical and materially specific practice that refuses an absolute end point. On this reading, it is impossible to conceive of something like the end of history.⁸⁶ Self-Consciousness' striving for practical unity is desiderative and practical. Or put differently, desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward freedom. It is the striving that makes the externalization via action possible. Desire is negation, and as the satisfied striving of Self-Consciousness, it takes the double movement of other-negation and self-negation. This doubled movement is the movement of concrete independence.

Second, in the previous chapter, I established that ideological fields are fields of self-contradictory striving, i.e., striving that aims at the practical unity of Self-Consciousness but structurally precludes practical unity from taking shape insofar as the field individuation is marked by abstract independence. This is not to say that the striving for the practical unity is impossible but that the very achievement or satisfaction of this striving is impossible. This is precisely the pathological nature of ideological fields, making something seem possible and desirable but ultimately self-defeating. We might add that this is the very feature that makes ideological fields of

⁸⁶ We have to suppose that even if Self-Consciousness finds practical unity of itself with itself, this can be undone given the historical nature of Self-Consciousness. This also begs the question whether ideological fields are the necessary components of experience for Hegel.

voluntary servitude: for it commits Self-Consciousness to an aim that is contrary to the overall aim of Self-Consciousness, i.e., freedom.

Given that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity, it follows that the dynamic of ideological fields is a self-contradictory striving or self-contradictory desire, what I am calling pathological desire. While non-pathological desire finds its satisfaction in the movement of mutual recognition wherein both Self-Consciousnesses come to achieve Self-Consciousness in a double movement of other negation that doubles back to self-negation — a double movement we will investigate when we look at the dialectic of the beautiful souls — pathological desire fails to complete this double movement culminating in a lack of self and other negation. Put differently, at least one Self-Consciousness fails to see that it depends on the other in order to attain practical unity of itself with itself. The result is a splitting up of the double movement, i.e., dynamic of desire such that desire is either self-negating or other negating but not both.

I suggest that an instance of Self-Consciousness that sticks to its self-conception in the state of ‘anxiety’ and ‘unthinking inertia’ is an instance of Self-Consciousness that refuses to recognize the other while insisting that it be recognized. First, it is important that some form of recognition happen, even mis-recognition and any instance of recognition that is not mutual is mis-recognition. Here I want to emphasize that recognition is the condition of sociality, neither the goal nor the ideal. Mutual recognition, on the other hand, is the goal insofar as it is the criterion for practical unity. However, mutual recognition is itself not an ethical action but the opening up for ethics.

Second, this is the stance of abstract independence. The movement of Self-Consciousness that is in the state of anxiety and unthinking inertia is the movement of desire that seeks to negate

the other but refuses to self-negate. It is important to note that action — as Pippin suggests — is also a moment of self-negation. The other-negating stance of Self-Consciousness can take the stance of either the refusal to act and self-negate via action, or to act but to insist on negating the other Self-Consciousness. Thus, while the moment of ideology is located in the Self-Consciousness that demands recognition without wanting to give it, desire explain how this mechanism works by showing that this moment is the moment of other-negation. Desire that is other-negating is pathological desire and is the mechanism of ideology. This dynamic as I suggested earlier is the condition of the possibility of social oppression, domination, inequality, or injustice. I will explore one version of this dynamic by looking at the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman in the next chapter.

While overall pathological desire is the splitting up of self and other negating movements of desire, I specifically want to focus on the other-negating movement of desire as the expression of abstract independence. However, I do not want to suggest that self-negating desire is inherently non-pathological or somehow superior. Insofar as it is split up, the stance of self-negating desire is mediated but is unable to attain freedom. In this respect, it occurs in an ideological field and finds its striving self-contradictory. I would, however, want to suggest that the stance of self-negating desire is perhaps implicitly epistemically superior given the right kind of effort on the part self-negating subject. As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, this structure of pathological desire allows us to consider the different concrete social positions while at the same time understand their relation as a dialectic struggle in which all agents are caught in a self-contradictory striving for recognition.

By focusing on desire, I aim to show that the social pathology is practical rather than conceptual, i.e., the locus of the production of the ideological field and its dynamic is practical.

Thus, the critique of an ideological fields consists not in alleging the wrong concept to the right practice but of identifying the practices and ensuing concepts that are self-contradictory.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to argue that desire is not a momentary and most immediate stance of Self-Consciousness that Self-Consciousness surpasses on its path to Absolute Knowing. Rather, I argued that desire is the very striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity. Desire, I argued, is the movement of negation that finds its satisfaction in *mutual* recognition. I again stress the mutuality or the doubled and doubling movement of recognition insofar as one-sided recognition no matter how politically or ethically well motivated is part of a movement that is marked by abstract independence.

I have suggested that the movement of desire when it is satisfied is the double movement of self and other negation (doubling) on the part of both Self-Consciousnesses who move in their historically determined asymmetrical position. From this perspective, we can also conclude that action always only makes sense with respect to the two opposing and co-constituting Self-Consciousnesses. As such, mutual recognition only makes sense among individuals who are constituted and are constituted by the field. Thus, mutual recognition is not something that occurs among inner group members.

By showing that desire is the movement of Self-Consciousness or the movement of a field of individuation, I concluded that other-negating desire or pathological desire is the movement of ideological fields. The stance of other negation, I suggested, is the stance of abstract independence. Whereas self-negating desire takes the shape of mediation, other negating desire takes the shape of certainty and purity. However, it is important to note that self-negating desire,

if it is one sided is not outside of the ideological field. Rather in so far as it is constituted by its one-sidedness, it is still occurring within a self-contradictory field.

CHAPTER IV PATHOLOGICAL DESIRE: TWO EXAMPLES

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I argued that ideological fields are self-contradictory practices of individuation. The criterion for judging ideological fields is the structural possibility of mutual recognition. If the field of individuation is structurally incapable of mutual recognition, it is an ideological field and is self-contradictory to the aim of Self-Consciousness, i.e., practical unity. Desire, I argue, is the striving for practical unity and as such is the driving force — the dynamic — of Self-Consciousness. Whereas double other- and self-negating desire is the movement of mutual recognition, pathological desire fails to complete the return into itself and is the dynamic of an ideological field. Put differently, whereas non-pathological desire finds satisfaction in mutual recognition and thus Self-Consciousness attains practical unity, pathological desire is unable to find satisfaction and is barred from completing the movement of self and other negation. Given that desire is the striving of Self-Consciousness toward practical unity, the self-contradictory striving of Self-Consciousness that constitutes an ideological field is the movement of pathological desire.

The aim of this chapter is to concretize the movement of pathological desire: to consider how the movement of other- and self-negation splits up where mutual recognition is lacking. Here, I want to note again that insofar as ideological fields are historically and materially specific, it is not possible to identify a specific movement of desire that always necessarily moves the ideological field. Rather, I can point a general feature of pathological desire: it is the splitting up of recognition and the guarantee of at least one Self-Consciousness that takes a historically specific stance of abstract independence. Thus, instead of positing a universal definition of

pathological desire, it is vital to look at various historical moments of pathological desire and study their determinate movements and the determinate possibilities that emerge from these movements.

Furthermore, the aim of this chapter is to look at three instances of desire found in the *Phenomenology*, two pathological and one non-pathological. Specifically, I will look to the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman as the most abstract, i.e., immediate expression of pathological desire. Later, I look to the dialectic of the beautiful souls as the most developed forms of pathological desire and their reconciliation via concession and forgiveness, the only instance of mutual recognition and thus satisfied desire in the text. The aim of the discussion of each dialectic is also to show the relationship between Self-Consciousness and action, for as I have previously argued the refusal to self-negate can occur with relation to both another Self-Consciousness and action.

Individuation and Desire of the Lord and the Bondsman

Before getting on the way with the first aim of the chapter, I would like to address one question: Why focus on the lord and bondsman dialectic as the starting point of the investigating into the structure of pathological desire as the dynamic of ideological fields? The reason is *not* that the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman is somehow paradigmatic of pathological desire. In fact, I would strongly argue against that. Nor would I suggest that the relationship between the lord and the bondsman is somehow foundational to the logic of Spirit, thus rejecting the attempt to ground the formation of ideological fields in economic modes of production. In fact, as I have suggested earlier and do so here again, there is no paradigmatic form of ideological fields as each

ideological field is historically and materially specific. Why then begin with the lord and the bondsman?

The reason to begin with the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman in order to understand the dynamic of pathological desire — to begin to think about how pathological desire moves within ideological fields — is that the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman is a clear-cut oppositional movement of recognition wherein one Self-Consciousness is recognized while the other is recognizing. In that respect, it is the simplest expression of pathological desire insofar as it clearly splits up the other negating and self-negating desire. However, while this clear-cut separation makes the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman a good analytic starting point, it is also the feature that makes it abstract insofar as if we consider the nested and multilayered nature of ideological fields, no concrete movement of desire ever exists in such an immediate state. This is not to say that an ideological field where other- and self-negating desire is clearly split up between two social subjects. Rather, this is to suggest that even if such a field exists, it exists in relation to other fields of indication that makes its concrete historical expression more complicated.

Prior to discussing the movement of pathological desire in the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman, I want to briefly look at some relevant literature so as to both situate my discussion of the dialectic as well as establish helpful terms for treating this section. This section also explains why I insist on using the terms of the lord and the bondsman⁸⁷ rather than the more

⁸⁷ See Bodei 2007 for a discussion of relationship between Hegel and Aristotle on the subject of servitude in relation to the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman.

common master and slave, as has become the accepted and standard practice in contemporary literature.

Primarily, I am focusing on Andre Cole's reading of the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman. Andrew Cole has advanced what I consider to be a rather important reading of this section of the *Phenomenology*. Cole argues that we must understand the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman as Hegel's analysis of feudalism. In so doing, Cole situates and treats this section as a concrete historical intervention rather than a universal form of misrecognition.⁸⁸ This is in contrast⁸⁹ to such commentators⁹⁰ as McDowell (McDowell 2006), Pippin (Pippin 2011), or Honneth (Honneth 2008) who — in their different ways — treat this section as Hegel's attempt to deal with the problem of the unity of apperception. While I argued in a previous chapter that dealing with the problem of unity of Self-Consciousness is indeed Hegel's aim, I think it is possible to both understand Hegel's methodological moves as both advancing the overall project of the *Phenomenology*, i.e., justifying Science and at the same time understand each form of Consciousness and shape of Spirit as a distinction of a specific historical moment.

In fact, the reading of the *Phenomenology* I offered in the previous chapter that suggests that ideological fields are multilayered, nested, and intersecting argues for precisely this position.

⁸⁸ See Bernstein 1984 for a reconstruction of Self-Consciousness via a discussion of the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman that responds to materialist critiques.

⁸⁹ See Cobben 2012 for a reading of the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman as the initial stance that allows for the unity of theoretical and practical reason.

⁹⁰ See also Kelly 1996 for a discussion of the lord and the bondsman as a tri-fold dialectic of the social, the inner, and the unity of the two, "On the overly social plane there are, at a given point in history, slaves and masters. In the interior of Consciousness, each man possesses faculties of slavery and mastery in his own regard that he struggles to bring harmony; the questions arise whenever the will encounters a resistant 'otherness' that goes beyond mere physical opposition to its activity. In turn, the social and personal oppositions are mediated by the fact that man has the capacity to enslave others and to be enslaved by them. because of the omnipresence of spirit the continuum is not broken by the distinction between world and self" (Kelly 1996: 257).

The dialectic of the lord and the bondsman, following Jon Stewart's (Stewart 1995) reading of the structure of the *Phenomenology*, is a field of individuation that occurs in the Enlightenment period of the Culture Shape of Spirit. This supports Cole's argument insofar as for Hegel German Enlightenment was confronting feudalism and its modes of power. After all, that is how Marx understood Germany,

If we wanted to start with the German *status quo* itself, the result would still be an anachronism [...] Even the denial of our political present is already a dusty fact in the historical lumber-room of modern peoples. Even if I deny powdered wigs, I still have unpowdered wigs. If I deny the situation in the Germany of 1843, I am according to French reckoning, scarcely in the year 1789, still less at focal point of the present (Marx 1977c, 72).

Furthermore, insofar as Hegel is explicitly working to understand his present moment, it is not outrageous to consider that he is moving through determinate stages of Spirit in order to arrive at such an understanding. Viewing the *Phenomenology* and its moment in such a light is helpful in further understanding Self-Consciousness' practical striving as a historical rather than a transcendental endeavor.

Cole argues against the common name for the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman: master and slave. This, according to Cole, is on the one hand meant to emphasize the feudalism out of which and about which Hegel is writing. On the other hand, Cole shows that Hegel did not use the terminology of the master and the slave in the *Phenomenology*. This is an important observation that changes how the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman is to be understood and how it fits within the overall aim and structure of the text.

Specifically, Cole focuses on the fact that Hegel never actually uses the terms master and slave in the *Phenomenology*. Cole writes, “Hegel is relatively consistent in his use of terms. In texts such as the *System of Ethical Life*, *Philosophy of Right*, the *Philosophy of History*, the *Phenomenology of Mind*, and the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel uses *Herr* and *Knecht* with purpose and distinction. That he means these to be feudal terms is indicated by the fact that whenever he examples slavery in Greek and Roman society, he prefers a different word, *Sklave*, for ‘slave.’” (Cole 2004: 581). In other words, there is a distinction for Hegel between *Sklave* and *Knecht*, slave and, what Miller correctly translates, bondsman.

Cole further argues that while Hegel does suggest that there is a set of common properties among all forms of slavery, serfdom⁹¹ is a specific and concrete form of slavery with its own specific institutions of domination. Thus, in insisting that Hegel is specifically analyzing the institution of feudalism, Cole is not merely playing a word game. Rather, his effort to understand the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman as a dialectic of feudalism changes the role of the dialectic in the overall structure of the text. For example, Cole’s reading rejects such views as Kojève’s, for whom the dialectic of the *master* and the *slave* explained the motor of history, and such views as Siep’s (Siep 1996; Siep 2014), for whom Hegel is merely continuing within the

⁹¹ See Buck-Morss 2004 for an account which argues that in writing of the lord and bondsman dialectic Hegel is indirectly addressing the rebellion in Saint-Domingue. Cole suggests that Buck-Morss does realize that Hegel does not use the terminology of slavery when discussing the lord and bondsman dialectic but does to follow through on this realization. Nonetheless, Buck-Morss points out that there are good reasons to suppose that Hegel was aware of the revolution in Haiti and thus could have also grounded his discussion of the dialectic in that historical event. Of course, one could ask how the structure of feudalism in Germany and the French colonial practices are related such that we cannot discuss the one without the other in a concrete historical manner. I want to suggest that while Buck-Morss makes a good case that the rebellion in Saint Domingue was on Hegel’s mind as he was writing the *Phenomenology*, the case for the language that Hegel uses made by Cole is a more convincing argument insofar as it is closer to the text.

philosophical lineage of thinkers stretching from Aristotle to Locke who use slavery as an allegory.

Drawing on the *System of Ethical Life*, the *Philosophy is Right*, and the *Philosophy of History*, Cole argues that the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman is specifically concerned with the question of possession.⁹² As Cole suggests, “Hegel [...] came to a crowing theoretical statement about feudalism itself: that the struggle between possession and ownership of land ultimately characterized the personal relations of domination in *Herrschaft*” (Cole 2004: 578). It is precisely with respect to this that Cole shows that the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman is not an abstract idealist allegory of the coming to be of Self-Consciousness in its first struggle for recognition, or for some the paradigmatic allegory of the struggle for recognition. Rather, for Hegel — according to Cole — is the determinate material condition that makes possible the development of Self-Consciousness and is grounded in the concrete practices of labour, possession, and ownership. Or as Cole writes, “Possession is indeed the glaring missing term in many analyses of this portion of the *Phenomenology*, including Kojève’s. This critical omission is egregious because, for Hegel, possession, be it possession of self (as Self-Consciousness) or of things (as in the mastery of equipment as totalities), is achieved through Labour and is expressed phenomenally or socially by one’s relationship to labor” (Cole 2004: 581).

In other words, Cole points out that for Hegel feudalism spurs on the historical development of Self-Consciousness. This is a highly controversial position for *at least* three reasons. First, because it suggests that Self-Consciousness only becomes a concrete possibility in moder-

⁹² See Renault 2016 for a discussion of work as integral to recognition thus rendering recognition as a material practice.

nity. This also suggests that the concept of ideology and the critique of ideology is also only possible in modernity. In other words, without Self-Consciousness, there is not a possibility of realizing that one is deluded about one's own circumstances in such a way so as to strive toward one's own servitude. Secondly, because it suggests that something like ideology or self-imposed delusion is necessary. And third, because it suggests that Self-Consciousness is dependent upon the existence of institutions of domination, thus justifying oppression in the name of Self-Consciousness. While all of these points need further investigation and testing, Cole's focus on feudalism does have one clear advantage: it works to concretely situate Hegel in his time as Hegel himself wanted to do. Ultimately, I take Cole's position to be a helpful historical and critical starting point for understanding the movement of the dialectical of the lord and the bondsman that precludes us from abstracting the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman as an archetype or a universal.

Furthermore, I want to suggest that having the right historical understanding of the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman — and of any other section of the *Phenomenology* for that matter — has this advantage: it precludes the possibility of universalizing the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman as a standalone critical tool.

The aim of this section is to look at the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman as the most abstract and immediate example of pathological desire that appears in the *Phenomenology*. Having discussed why I am focusing on the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman in the previous section as well as having considered the most promising path for reading this movement of Self-Consciousness, my specific aim is to consider the other-negating stance of the lord and the self-negating stance of the bondsman. In so doing, I want to offer an example of pathological desire. I

will offer another example of pathological desire in the next section when I look at the dialectic of the beautiful souls.

A more interesting and productive account of this section would not only look to the dynamics of pathological desire but would also consider the concrete practices of individuation that open up the ideological field. This, however, is beyond the scope of the chapter and unfortunately beyond the scope of the overall project insofar as it would require a robust treatment of feudal practices of individuation as well as a study of the intersecting fields of individuation. I am however in the position to suggest that the practices of individuation that generate the ideological field of the lord and the bondsman cannot be abstractly applied to all practices of individuation that have the general structure of mastery and servitude.

The dialectic of the lord and the bondsman emerges following the life and death struggle, wherein the bondsman trembled in the face of fear and lost the battle to the lord who fought to maintain its sovereignty.⁹³ In this struggle, both the lord and the bondsman realize their dependence on life. However, while the bondsman accepts its dependence on life and submits, the lord in staking everything and winning shifts the burden of ensuring life onto the bondsman. In so doing, of course, the lord is setting itself up for a tragic failure of its own self-conception, i.e., this practice of individuation opens up a self-contradictory ideological field.

The lord and the bondsman emerge as not mutually recognizing one another. Rather, one is the dominant and recognized Consciousness, while the other is the subservient and recognizing Consciousness, "...one is independent Consciousness whose essential nature is to be for itself,

⁹³ Fear, like suffering, is a crucial affect for Hegel. For only in experience great fear does Self-Consciousness root out all immediacy. It is worth considering the relationship between suffering and fear: whether Hegel sees a similar connection between fear and suffering as does Spinoza between fear and sorrow.

the other is the dependent Consciousness whose essential nature is simply to live or to be for another. The former is lord, the other is bondsman” (PhG, 189). Yet their failure to mutually recognize one another does not constitute a lack of recognition. Without recognition, it is not possible to conceive of sociality. And perhaps more importantly, it is not possible to truly conceive of Self-Consciousness — at least for Hegel (and for that matter also for Spinoza).

Furthermore, while the bondsman is the recognizing party insofar as it submits to the authority of the lord to structure and name the world, this does not mean that the bondsman lacks a concept that makes it cognizable, as it were. Rather, the bondsman is negated by the lord, i.e., the practice of individuation is such that the lord gives to the bondsman a concept that the bondsman accepts and is self-cognized and cognized by others via this concept. As such, the lord enforces its sovereignty and negates the other by virtue of naming it. I suggest that the language of cognition is rather important insofar as the bondsman literally becomes an object for the lord. It is cognized as a thing rather than a being. While the lord posts itself as the sovereign determining cause and strives to experience itself as such, the bondsman accepts the rule of the lord and thus relinquishes its claim to determination. Of course, as Hegel is keen to point out the lord is incapable of experiencing itself as it sees itself. Rather, in the course of its experience the lord emerges as the dependent object:

the object in which the lord has achieved his lordship has, in reality, turned out to be something quite different from an independent Consciousness. What now really confronts him is not an independent Consciousness, but a dependent one. He is, therefore, not certain of being-for-self as the truth of himself. On the contrary, his truth is, in reality, the unessential Consciousness and its unessential action (PhG,192)

The lord as the sole sovereign — the feature that makes the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman the most abstract expression of an ideological field — opens up a field of individuation that directly contradicts its striving toward practical unity. The bondsman, on the other hand, occupies the position of pure self-negation and mediation. At the risk of sounding redundant, this is an abstract position insofar with respect to its purity. Importantly, insofar as the lord is the determining cause, it is *the* Self-Consciousness that suffers the self-contradiction of the ideological field. The bondsman does not suffer the self-contradiction but welcomes the contradiction as an advance and a realization of its active and essential role. The bondsman benefits from self-contradiction of the lord. In this respect, the position of self-negation is potentially epistemically superior.

Now, I return to the language of pathological desire. Whereas satisfied desire is both doubly other- and self-negating, pathological desire splits up the doubled return of desire into itself and is marked by at least one Self-Consciousness that is other- rather than self-negating. Importantly, I want to suggest that if both Self-Consciousnesses are self-negating, then they are performing the movement of satisfied desire, i.e., mutual recognition. This position suggests that self-negation presupposes other-negation.

The dialectic of the lord and the bondsman performs the abstract splitting up of other-negating and self-negating desire. Insofar as the lord both refuses to act and demands the bondsman's recognition while refusing to recognize in return, the lord is pure other-negation. As I argued earlier, both action and recognition of the other Self-Consciousness count for the initial Self-Consciousness as moments of self-negation: action insofar as it always goes beyond itself and the Self-Consciousness insofar as it limits the abstract independence of the initial Self-Consciousness. The bondsman, the other hand, is double self-negating: itself negates insofar as it acts

thus learning that it becomes itself via action and insofar as it cognizes itself as depending on the lord to be what it is. The lord is the purest manifestation of abstract independence. The bondsman is the purest manifestation of abstract dependence. Neither is really as it sees itself. While both are possible via the practices of indication that open up this ideological field, only the lord experiences a self-contradictory that is detrimental to itself. In this respect, the lord appears as the locus of the ideological field. However, as Cole points out, in terms of feudal forms of production, the lord always also had another lord, thus suggesting that no lord is in a complete position of certainty. Thus, the lord is always a bondsman to another.

Additionally, I want to emphasize and maintain that the entire movement of the lord and the bondsman occurs in an ideological field. This is to say that the bondsman does not exist outside of ideology insofar as it is moved by self-negating desire. The bondsman has the potential to have an epistemic conversion, but it is not necessary. It is only necessary once it has occurred which is not to suggest that it could not have been determinately otherwise.

Furthermore, insofar as the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman is abstract — taken out of its relationship with other fields of individuation — it is easy to identify one Self-Consciousness, one social subject, as the one responsible for the production of the ideological field. Doing so becomes increasingly more difficult the more complex and determinate the analysis of the ideological fields becomes. Put differently, if ideological fields are understood as nested, intersecting, and multilayered, isolating a single ideological, social subject becomes impossible. In fact, isolating a sole ideological subject commits an ideological error insofar as doing so presupposes a version of abstract independence: a social subject who is independently responsible for the production of an ideological field.

Lastly, I want to note that other-negating desire is not ideological in itself. Nor is self-negating desire inherently non-ideological. Rather, both are necessary components of satisfied desire. Other-negating desire becomes pathological when it stakes up the stance of abstract, i.e., one-sided independence. Self-negating desire is not pathological insofar as it is not self-contradictory, but that does not remove it from an ideological field nor does it suggest that self-negating desire is not deluded about itself. For this is precisely the case with the bondsman. The bondsman's concept of itself is both false and true at the same time. It is false insofar as the bondsman is wrong about being the inessential Self-Consciousness *and* true insofar as it accurately described the field of individuation as it conceives of itself. I suggest that self-negating desire requires other tools to be properly understood within the context of an ideological field.

Beautiful Souls

Whereas in the previous section, I have discussed the movement of the most abstract ideological field found in the *Phenomenology*, the aim of this section is to look at the most developed ideological field and its resolution in the only instance of a non-ideological field of indication: the dialectic of the beautiful souls and their resolution via confession and forgiveness. Insofar as the dialectic of confession and forgiveness is the only instance of a non-ideological field in the *Phenomenology*, it is also the only moment of mutual recognition. I argue that confession and forgiveness are necessary components of any practice of individuation that is non-self-contradictory. However, I want to be careful to point out that while confession and forgiveness must be structural components of any non-ideological field of individuation, mutual recognition in its concrete expression is more than the practice of confessing and forgiving. I will consider the last

point with respect to the argument I have advanced earlier that ideological fields exist in a multi-layered relation to other ideological and non-ideological fields.

Non-pathological desire negates, i.e., mediated and roots out, immediacy, or what I am calling abstract independence. The movement of confession and forgiveness is the only relation that does so in the *Phenomenology*. However, I suggest that this movement — rather than opening up the possibility of a utopian society, shows the finite and necessarily striving character of Self-Consciousness. The movement of confession and forgiveness allows us to see the movement of non-pathological desire that is both doubly other and self-negating. This is important in relation to the previous section that identified the presence of one-sided other-negating desire, i.e., abstract independence as the criterion for judging a form of indication as ideological. Other-negation — to further emphasize — is a necessary component of mutual recognition. For without other-negation there is not a concept of self and not a Self-Consciousness that seeks to externalize and actualize itself, i.e., other-negation is the drive to externalization.

Importantly, the only instance of mutual recognition emerges out of the most developed ideological field: the dialectic of the beautiful souls. The first beautiful soul takes pathological desire to its innermost certainty — it is the beautiful soul that pines away in consumption. It rejects action and as such is unable to express itself, i.e., become itself as a protest against becoming other to itself. As such the beautiful soul brings about its own demise. A very important question to consider, which is unfortunately beyond the scope of this project, is: How does mutual recognition emerge from the most developed instance of pathological desire? What does it suggest about the possibility that exists within ideological fields? Does this suggest that ideological fields are necessary (here operating not forward rather than backward-looking) for the development of Self-Consciousness?

After the events of the French Revolution, Spirit enters into the sphere of morality. At this stage, Spirit worked through itself as a shape wherein the community dominates the individual — the ethical order — and shape wherein the individual is alienated from and develops in opposition to the community — self-alienated spirit in the form of culture.⁹⁴ As I mentioned in a previous chapter the most developed form of mutual recognition occurs when the I is We and the We is I: when the individual and the community are able to mutually recognize their mutual dependence. Such a shape of Spirit — where substance is subject — refuses to posit either the individual or the community is ontological prior to the other. Following Balibar, I called this relationship transindividual. Having arrived at Morality, Spirit is in a position to work out a transindividual relationship between the community and the individual.

With each step in the development of the Spirit, the practices of individuation are developing so as to generate individuals who are increasingly more mediated. It is this development that allows the individual of the sphere of morality to finally have the capacity for both other- and self-negation. Such an individual and community completely let go of their respective abstract conception of independence, allowing for transindividual practices of individuation. This development is the appearance of mutual recognition and the first — according to the *Phenomenology* — instance of a field of individuation that realizes the concept of independence, i.e., independence that is not equated with certainty of self or sovereignty. In other words, it certainty that has become truth or abstract independence that has become concrete independence.

⁹⁴ See Moyer 2008 on the discussion of the concept of alienation and the conditions for successful, i.e., non-alienating action. Also see Brownlee 2015 on discussion of the relationship between alienation and recognition, namely a critique of automatic model of recognition, “Hegel argues that overcoming alienation requires the articulation of a conception of the self that can both be affirmed equally everyone (and so satisfied a universality criterion), but, most importantly, which also includes the individual’s particularity (and so satisfied a criterion of what Hegel calls ‘fulfillment’)”(Brownlee 2015: 378).

The dialectic that precedes the dialects of the judging and the evil Consciousnesses is that of conscience. Here it is important to point out that the conscience is the Romantic response to transcendental idealism. Doing so suggests that like the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman, the dialectic of the beautiful souls is a particular historical relation and thus cannot be abstractly applied from without to other historical forms of individuation.

Conscience⁹⁵ is able to arrive at the standpoint of mutual recognition because it explicitly learns that it requires public recognition. Conscience understands itself as the sole arbiter of duty — “Duty is no longer the universal that stands over against the self; on the contrary, it is known to have no validity when thus separated” (PhG, 639) — while at the same time understanding that it requires public recognition that what it holds as duty is indeed duty. In other words, conscience learns something very important about the logic of experience: its publicity. It learns that for it to experience itself as it sees itself, it must acquire the public stamp of approval, “Conscience is the common element of the two Self-Consciousnesses, and this element is the substance in which the deed has an enduring reality, the moment of being recognized and acknowledged by others” (PhG, 640).

So long as the community recognizes conscience as having the right intention, it matters little whether its action fares well or badly because what matters is that conscience truly acted out of duty. Despite learning that recognition is vital to conscience being able to attain practical unity, conscience fails to grasp the importance of action. It refuses to accept the transgressive structure of action and remains other-negating, i.e., pathological insofar as it maintains the purity

⁹⁵ See Speight 2006 on the defense of conscience as integral to ethical forms of life. See Moyar 2011 for a discussion of conscience as the source of practical reason.

of its own intention albeit mediated by public recognition. Of course, it is not surprising that conscience is self-contradictory: it is a determinate form of abstract independence. In the case of conscience, the abstract independence is located in the purity of intention. Thus, conscience fails into a contradiction because it is unable to reconcile the unintended effects of action with the purity of its intention. Its dependence on public recognition also becomes a problem for it:

the difference is established as an enduring difference, and the action as a specific action, not identical with the element of everyone's Self-Consciousness, and therefore not necessarily acknowledged. Both sides, the Consciousness that acts and the universal Consciousness that acknowledges this action as duty, are equally free from the specificity of this action. On account of this freedom, their relationship in the common medium of their connection is really a relation of complete disparity, as a result of which the Consciousness which is explicitly aware of the action finds itself in a state of complete uncertainty about the Spirit which does the action and is certain of itself (PhG, 648)

The triangulation of Self-Consciousness, action, and another Self-Consciousness in the form of conscience was held together via the purity of intention. Once the purity of intention is irrevocably compromised by the transgressive nature of action, the Consciousness that acts and the Universal Consciousness, i.e., community are in 'a relation of complete disparity.'

To overcome this problem conscience turns inward and declares that only its conviction matters. Unlike the previous manifestation of conscience as the Consciousness that acts, this conscience refuses to act. It understands its conviction as an action that does not need externalization. Stating one's own conviction in words is enough. Thus, there is no discrepancy between

conviction and conscience. There is no threat of losing purity. Of being other than one sees oneself to be. No need to self-negate. As such it is impossible for this Self-Consciousness to be wrong. It is a Self-Consciousness whose desire or striving for practical unity refuses any difference. As such, it is the ultimate form of pathological desire.

This response to the initial problem of conscience is the Romantic immediate community (Pinkard 1994; Speight 2004), “In calling itself conscience, it calls itself pure knowledge of itself and pure abstract willing, i.e., it calls itself universal knowing and willing which recognizes and acknowledges others, is the same as them — for they are just this pure self-knowing and willing — and which for that reason is also recognized and acknowledged by them” (PhG, 654). To fix the disparity between itself and the community, conscience and the community must share an immediate connection. Conscience is the immediate expression of the community. Action cannot be part of this relation between conscience and community. As a result, conscience sees only the self as actual and not the deed.

Self-Consciousness in the form of the conscientious individual thus resolves to abstain from acting. The self-contradiction is glaring. Given that action is necessary for Self-Consciousness to achieve practical unity, the desire to abstain from acting proves detrimental for conscience as it takes on the shape of a beautiful soul, “refined into this purity, Consciousness exists in its poorest form, and the poverty which institutes its sole possession is itself a vanishing. This absolute certainty into which substance has resolved itself is the absolute untruth which collapses internally” (PhG, 657). The first appearance of the beautiful soul⁹⁶ as the self of a romantic com-

⁹⁶ See Speight 2004 for a discussion of figures and novels that inspired Hegel’s variations of the beautiful soul.

munity is the most developed form of certainty or abstract independence: it is a Self-Consciousness that literally strives to remove itself from the world. Its self-contradictory striving is the most developed expression of pathological desire. Its striving to negate everything but itself leads to its literal death,

It lives in dead of besmirching the splendor of its inner being by action and an existence; and, in order to preserve the purity of its heart, it flees from contact with the actual world, and persists in its self-willed impotence [...] its activity is a yearning which merely loses itself as Consciousness becomes an object devoid of substance [...] its light dies away within it and it vanishes like a shapeless vapor that dissolves into thin air (PhG, 658)

While the lord might suffer a metaphorical death insofar as it cannot experience itself concept of itself, the beautiful soul experiences literal death. As such it is the most pathological expression of abstract independence, i.e., other-negation. The beautiful soul occurs in a field of individuation that carries pathological desire to its most developed conclusion, death.⁹⁷

Confession and Forgiveness

“the act of forgiving can never be predicted; it is the only reaction that acts in an unexpected way and thus retains, though being a reaction, something of the original character of the action. Forgiving, in other words, is the only reaction which does not merely react [like vengeance does], but acts anew, unexpectedly, unconditioned by the act which provoked it and therefore freeing from its consequences both the one who forgives and

⁹⁷ On this point, Spinoza and Hegel seem to agree, since for Spinoza suicide is the epitome of self-contradictory desire as one that has been overcome by external causes. However, what is particularly interesting is that for Hegel, death — by which I do not mean natural death but specifically the result of self-contradictory striving toward practical unity — potentially appears as a condition for further development of Self-Consciousness, which begs the question: are ideological fields necessary and thus pathological desire necessary features of experience for Hegel?

the one who is forgiven."

"The alternative to forgiveness, but by no means its opposite, is punishment, and both have in common that they attempt to put an end to something that without interference could go on endlessly."

Arendt, *The Human Condition*⁹⁸

Through the failure of the first beautiful soul, conscience realizes it must act otherwise it withers away. The demand for action combined with the realization that recognition is a necessary feature of practical unity of Self-Consciousness sets up a field of individuation that makes mutual recognition possible. As such, satisfied desire, i.e., desire that doubly other- and self-negating becomes a concrete possibility. Given that all fields of individuation are always already doubled, the movement toward mutual recognition is performed by conscience that splits up into two: the evil Consciousness that acts and the judging Consciousness that judges. Importantly, both the acting and the judging Consciousnesses are different permutations of the beautiful soul: both strive to attain practical unity of itself with itself while painting a purity, i.e., certainty of itself. As such, both Consciousnesses are different expressions of abstract independence and as such as other-negating.

The acting Consciousness is a beautiful soul because — as both Pinkard (Pinkard 2004) and Bernstein (Bernstein 1996) point out — it takes an ironic stance toward its action thus refus-

⁹⁸ See Speight 2002 on the relationship between Arendt's and Hegel's views on action and forgiveness: "Hegel, who stresses a retrospectively of intentional action which is less easily freed from its attachment to consequences and motivation that Arendt's is most concerned to find a way to incorporate *revisability* in a full account of judging: forgiveness, on his view, will thus be a recognition of action's retrospectivity" (Speight 2002: 529). See Oliver 2003 for a discussion of forgiveness in Hegel, Derrida, and Kristeva. See also Brinkmann 2003 for a discussion of forgiveness as a transition from personal conviction to a socially mediate ethical stance.

ing to identify itself with its action. By refusing to identify itself with its action, acting Consciousness can maintain the authenticity and purity of itself. The judging Consciousness, on the other hand, remains locked within itself and thus seeks to maintain its purity thus repeating the mistake of the initial beautiful soul. The problem the two beautiful souls seek to work through remains the same: How to reconcile the norms of the community with the action of the individual?

Bernstein argues that whereas the judging Consciousness takes up the position of the universal, i.e. the community, the acting Consciousness learned through the previous experience of conscience that it is not possible to set up a permanent and stable set of rules by which to judge and determine an individual's action, "since any such set, given the real social and historical complexity of the moral universe, would necessarily repress the individual conscientious self's right to judge and legislate for itself what is morally required" (Bernstein, 1996, 37). In this respect, conscience as the locus of duty is still very much *the* problem for both the acting and the judging Consciousness.

The acting and the judging Consciousness take up an other-negating stance toward both action and the other Self-Consciousness. The acting Consciousness rejects the norms of the society and identifies itself as the sole normative locus. However, in doing so, the acting Consciousness also alienates itself from its action insofar as refuses to acknowledge that its actions determine who it is. Identified with its action would undermine the purity of the acting Consciousness and its nature as the sole normative locus. Thus, the acting Consciousness never identifies itself with any of its actions because what it is for it is beyond the purview of action. As Bernstein puts:

It is through the moment of non-identification of itself both with other and with what is realized through its own actions, and thus through the maintenance of the separation of its apperceptive self-relation from the actualized putative universality of its actions that this form of conscience sustains its moral purity, and hence the certainty of its conscience (Ibid.:37)

The judging Consciousness' refusal to act is a striving toward moral purity and is an expression of abstract independence. In this respect, the judging Consciousness - through its failure to act — neither self-negates nor other-negates. Were it not for its judgment, it would cease to exist. By judging the acting Consciousness and claiming that it is an evil hypocrite who acts not out of conviction but for the sake of individual pleasure, the judging Consciousness strives to negate the acting Consciousness. This is the pathology, i.e., other-negating striving of the judging Consciousness. The judging Consciousness thus confronts head on the problem of particularity and universality, individuality and community.

Instead of furthering the dialectical struggle, the acting Consciousness confesses to being the hypocrite the judging Consciousness claims it is. In other words, rather than continuing to rebuff the judging Consciousness and denying it the ability to make a claim upon the acting Consciousness, the latter self-negates and accepts its publicity. It accepts the fact that the judging Consciousness knows something about the acting Consciousness that the acting Consciousness might not know about itself. This moment holds a double significance. First, in confessing, the acting Consciousness moves from the other-negating standpoint of pathological desire toward the one-sided self-negating standpoint of desire. It is one-sided for the acting Consciousness has not yet been recognized in turn, i.e., the recognition is not mutual. In making the confession, the

acting Consciousness truly identifies with its action, i.e., accepts that its actions determine who it is.

Second, in confessing the acting Consciousness in turn makes a claim upon the judging Consciousness for it too is a hypocrite insofar as it fails to see that its judgment is an action born of individual pleasure, “she comes to see through the judge’s eyes her non-identity with her proclaimed universal; because she nonetheless does not doubt her moral claim, she simultaneously sees in her judge’s condemnatory judgement his non-identity with his moral claim” (Ibid.: 43). As such, the acting Consciousness muddies the judging Consciousness’ self-conceived purity. However, were the judging Consciousness to immediately agree to forgive the acting Consciousness, i.e., to recognize the acting Consciousness and self-negate, the moment of mutual recognition would amount to the abstract recognition of sameness in difference. Were this the case, mutual recognition would amount to an abstract exchange of value rather than a genuine ethical bond. Bernstein further suggests that:

perceiving the likeness or equality of our individuality (our unlikeness with one another) suppresses the fact that difference is independence and negativity. Difference is misrecognition if universalized as shared by all...The ethical meaning of individuality is not universality but ungraspable dependence (Ibid.: 48)

In other words, mutual recognition is the doubled recognition of mutual dependence that occurs via the doubled other- and self-negating movement of satisfied desire. The key term is dependence. Had judging Consciousness offered immediate forgiveness, mutual recognition would be reduced to the abstract condition of difference, of never being identical with oneself. Community would once again depend on sameness. The ethical bond that holds the community and the individual together would be reduced to an economic change of difference thus turning difference

into sameness. Were this the case, mutual recognition would itself commit the error of abstract independence.

Rather, the asymmetrical relationship between confession and forgiveness shows that practical unity is always a condition of mutual dependence and contestation. This is just as much shown by the fact that the judging Consciousness does not confess to its difference in return, but rather performs the act of forgiveness. Thus, it is because of the act of forgiveness and not confession that the judging accepts itself as a Consciousness that acts and must act. Importantly, it does not accept itself as the *same* acting Consciousness.

To take the point further, Bernstein argues that it is the very denial to grant the forgiveness — the head heart — that allows the acting Consciousness to understand itself as having learned the lesson of finitude. Has the judging Consciousness confessed and forgave immediately, the acting Consciousness could forget its indiscretion and move on to a new contradiction. In other words, the acting Consciousness could have repeated the forgetfulness of every form of Consciousness that preceded it and in so doing failed to truly learn that action is a necessary transgression.

It is the hard heart of the judging Consciousness that teaches both Consciousnesses that they are dependent on one another. The delay of forgiveness renders the confession of the acting Consciousness a self-basement rather than a mere payment. Put differently, it is because of the very denial to forgive that the acting Consciousness leaves the standpoint of other-negation and becomes self-negating. Furthermore, through by sincerely denying its forgiveness, the judging Consciousness checks and questions the self-negation of the acting Consciousness. The acting Consciousness is exposed to publicity. What this means is that the appearance of self-negation must not be taken for granted as virtuous, as always necessarily being non-pathological.

Through asymmetrical actions of confession and forgiveness, both the acting and the judging Consciousnesses doubly other- and self-negate. The judging Consciousness and the acting Consciousness mutually recognize each other as mutually recognizing. They mutually recognize their mutual dependence — but again, only because of the delay, the sincere rebuff. The moment of mutual recognition is not a claim to abstract identity of identity and difference. Rather, it is an asymmetrical movement that is fully determined by its specific historical practices. As such, mutual recognition is not always the same movement of confession and forgiveness i.e. the dialectic of confession and forgiveness is not a universal paradigm. Rather, this dialectic of the acting Consciousness and the judging Consciousness teaches this specific lesson: all practices of individuation that allow for mutual recognition are undergirded by determinate expressions of confession and forgiveness. This is the case because any non-ideological practice of individuation must find a way to reconcile itself with the transgressive nature of action: to find a concrete way to allow for the transgressions of action. Thus, confession and forgiveness — as the erasure of the transgression — must be a component of any and all non-ideological fields of individuation.

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to look at two examples of pathological desire as well as consider the only example of mutual recognition that occurs in the *Phenomenology*. Specifically, I looked at the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman because it is the most abstract dialectical struggle and thus most immediate expression of pathological or other-negating desire wherein only the lord seems to express the stance of abstract independence. I suggested that inso-

far as this is an abstract expression of an ideological field, we should avoid thinking of self-negating desire as pure or somehow outside of the self-contradictory relationship of the ideological field. Understanding self-negating desire this way amounts to a view of abstract independence and purity insofar as it posits self-negating desire as somehow pure or beyond its social relations. Rather, we have to understand the movement of self-negating desire as mediated and *potentially* epistemically advantageous but itself nonetheless being part of and constituted by a self-contradictory movement. But this is also not to say that other-negating desire does not have the potential to attain a higher, i.e., mediated epistemic standpoint.

Having looked at the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman, I turned to the dialectic of the beautiful souls in order to examine the most developed expression of an ideological field and of pathological desire that occurs in the *Phenomenology*. Both the dialectic of the lord and the bondsman stresses to us that ideological fields are in tension with both publicity and action. However, the dialectic of the beautiful souls raises a very important question posited by Hegel: why does Self-Consciousness have to tremble before death in order to advance to a higher, i.e., mediated standpoint? This specific point must be considered further but I do not take it to be crucial for the account of ideology that I am developing.

Lastly, I looked at the structure of the only account of mutual recognition that occurs in the text: confession and forgiveness. I suggested that confession as the identification with one's action and forgiveness as the specific recognition of the transgressive structure of action is a practice that must undergird any practice of mutual recognition. Importantly, this is of course not to say that any practice that calls itself confession and forgiveness is beyond the pale of ideology. As such, by these terms I mean very specific historically determinate practices that undergird the possibility of ethical action and ethical relations.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this dissertation has been to establish a viable concept of ideology, which I sought to do by beginning with Althusser's insight that Spinoza uncovered the matrix of all ideology in the first Appendix to the *Ethics* and following this insight through Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In so doing, I have concluded that ideology is best understood in terms of self-contradictory fields of individuation or what I am calling ideological fields. I further suggested that ideological fields are moved by pathological desire, which I argued is the movement of other negation *or* abstract independence. Ultimately, I suggested that ideological fields are self-contradictory not only with respect to one's ability to find practical unity but also insofar as the concept one seeks to realize and come to be one with is *itself* self-contradictory. Importantly, I argued that these fields are multiplied, co-constituting, nested, and intersecting.

I focused on practices of individuation coming from Spinoza's insight that practices of individuation that result in weak connections are ones that affirm the necessary fiction of the free will as an adequate idea. Moving from Spinoza to Hegel, I suggested that any practice of individuation that results in the concept and practice of abstract independence is ideological in the relevant sense. Following Hegel, I defined individuation as the active folding and re-folding of concept and practice via externalization, i.e., action.

Further, I suggest that practices of individuation have a weak teleological structure of striving for practical unity of itself with itself. The criterion for judging practices of individuation is mutual recognition or the satisfaction of desire, which I have defined as the doubled, asymmetrical, and historically determinate recognition of the transgressive structure of action and its publicity. Moreover, I suggested that mutual recognition is an ethical practice. Rather, I take mutual

recognition to be the pre-condition for ethical action. As such, practices of individuation that lack mutual recognition and are marked by abstract independence are the necessary but not sufficient condition of any form of social oppression, domination, or inequality.

It is imperative to note that I derive the language of fields of individuation from mutual recognition insofar as mutual recognition suggests to us that individuation is always already doubled. As such, I want to suggest that we can only make sense of mutual recognition among co-constituting opposites. As such the concept of mutual recognition does not apply to inner group dynamics.

The movement of fields of individuation is the movement of desire. Pathological desire is the split movement of other-negating and self-negating desire. Importantly, I suggest that other-negating desire is the stance of abstract independence. Realized desire is the movement of doubly self and other negating desire. As such, satisfied desire occurs in mutual recognition. Insofar as mutual recognition has to be performed anew — given the transgressive structure of action — desire too always goes beyond itself and thus spoils its own satisfaction. Importantly, this is not a rejection of practical unity but rather a stress on a new and dialectical concept of unity.

I began this project by giving a brief overview of how the concept of ideology has been conceived of. Specifically, I have followed Geuss's conceptual taxonomy that broke the concept of ideology into three categories: descriptive, pejorative, and positive. The pejorative concept of ideology is further broken up into three kinds: epistemic, functional, and genetic. I suggested that the concept of ideology that I develop is at least both epistemic and functional. Briefly, the epistemic concept of ideology suggests that domination is reinforced via error in ideas. Functional concepts of ideology suggest that domination is reinforced via the function of ideas irrespective

of their truth or falsity. Genetic concepts of ideology suggest that ideas that work to reinforce dominations are necessarily ideas that derive from a specific social subject.

With that said, the concept of ideology that I developed is at least both epistemic and functional. Ideological fields are epistemically ideological because they are determined by practices and ideas that are false in that they refuse mediation. They are functional insofar as these ideas have effects and are put into practice. While I insist that the concept of ideology is pejorative, this does not mean that ideology is equivalent to maintaining oppression. Rather, it is the necessary but not sufficient condition of social domination. What ideological fields do is open up pathological forms of life that may or may not be socially oppressive.

The concept of ideology I developed helps understand the conditions of the possibility of social oppression and social pathology more broadly. The aim of ideology critique on this account is to judge practices of individuation with respect to their efficacy. That said, the concept I developed does not in itself offer tools to overcome social oppression or fix pathological practices of individuation. I suggest that tools for overcoming social oppression or pathological practices of individuation must be historically specific and cannot be derived from the general concept of ideology. As such, I stress that the concept of ideology I have developed is a useful criterion for judging practice of individuation but is not a practical tool for social liberation. This, however, does not undermine the importance of the concept of ideological fields.

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