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Chapter Eleven

PYTHAGORAS AND PRE-DIALECTICAL

SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY

IN: HEGEL, HIS LOGIC, AND HIS METHOD
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Chapters One and Two identified Sophocles and Zeno as two historical sources of the concept of dialectic, while Pythagoras was cited as a principal source of speculative philosophy. Having now analyzed the dialectic and defined the dialectical-hermeneutic method of reconstructing the dialectic, in the present chapter the and next we shall examine Hegel's use of the method in development his system of philosophy. Speculative philosophy, by using the dialectical method, becomes systematic. The next chapter examines the dialectic of the "master triad" of the logic and hence of the entire system (being, essence, concept). The present chapter goes back to Pythagoras, the pre-dialectical source of speculative philosophy. The chapter explores a substantive Pythagorean presupposition that Hegelian system develops by the dialectical-hermeneutic method.

I will specifically argue that the idea of absolute knowledge, of oneness between consciousness and its object, historically presupposed the Pythagorean idea of oneness between the individual soul and the cosmic spirit or world soul. In content if not in the methodological, dialectical form which his thought assumes, Hegel is a Pythagorean. The Pythagorean concept of oneness between the microcosm and the macrocosm is, I hold, both the point of departure for the dialectic of definitions of the absolute and the point of arrival to which this dialectic in the end returns on the level of pure thought, as speculative philosophy becomes not only dialectical but systematic. I shall generally talk of Pythagoreans, though I shall also invoke distinctions between earlier and later members of the school, and on occasion shall speak of the historical Pythagoras.

In both the history of natural science and in the Hegelian dialectic of categories, Pythagoras is associated with the discovery of the various quantitative proportions or "measures" on which distinct qualitative determinations depend. In the logic of measure in the *Science of Logic* Hegel himself focuses on this side of Pythagoreanism (*Encyc* §104 Add). What will primarily concern me here, however, is the other side of Pythagoras thought, the often dismissed the religious-speculative side. This is the side that needs attention as we attempt to bring to light more clearly than Hegel himself did the tradition in which his own philosophy stands.

Note first that to invoke the "cosmos" in the Pythagorean sense, immediately connoting a distinction between macrocosmic whole and microcosmic internalizations of the whole, is quite the opposite of opting for materialism. For a Pythagorean, description of the absolute as a cosmos is, fundamentally "panpsychist." It liberates the individual soul from the cave of its own subcosmic sleep and subjectivity and opens it to microcosmic participation in the absolute's unbounded intersubjectivity. This view of

nature, affirmed by Schelling's philosophy of nature, was preserved by Hegel. Spirit for Hegel is the truth of nature (*Encyc* §381). The achievements of world history and culture are no mere human achievements, but extend the achievements of the initially slumbering spirit of nature.

Note secondly that Pythagoras was not a Platonist. The Platonic contemplation of form directly unites the soul with the divine. Yet the Pythagorean contemplation of form, of an eternal law of nature expressing one variable as a ratio between two others, is not by itself the union with the immortal cosmos for which Pythagoreans strive. Yet it is a step on the way to that end. It is a way of not privileging objects in the immediate range of one's experience out of proportion to their objective significance in the cosmos: knowing that any two perfectly harmonious notes an octave apart are distinguished by doubling the length of the string brings us to contemplate the universal range of all such pairs of notes, not merely those actually heard due to environment or the accidental range of one's hearing.

To speak of the "music of the spheres" is to model all harmony in the cosmos on musical harmony. "Music" here is usually understood as a metaphor. Yet it may also be understood as the concept of a quantitatively identified aesthetic harmony of qualities generalized from the ordinary concept of music. The original model for the harmony of ordinary musical notes produced by musical instruments, and thus of all other harmony if Pythagoreans are right, is the harmony of voices. "A good intellect is the choir of divinity" (Sextus, 267). There was no doubt song before musical instruments. Yet singing in harmony requires a sympathetic identification between singers. And since sympathy, feeling with, occurs only between feeling individuals, cosmic harmony—the Chorus of the spheres, presupposes some type of panpsychism. Historically informed reference to the "cosmos" ultimately places one in the Pythagorean speculative tradition of the universal sympathetic kinship of things, though not necessarily at the most primitive stage of this legendary tradition. That is where Hegel in his early Keplerian philosophy of nature and in his early geometrical approach to the philosophy of spirit placed himself (Harris, 92, 93, 184, 88).

Though Hegel went beyond Pythagorean representations in terms of ratios and figures, he retained and developed a Pythagorean concept of philosophy and the cosmos. Hegelianism Pythagoreanism freed itself from the view that quantitative representation can capture the essence of a qualitative determination. Though musical harmony can be identified by quantitative criteria, the essence of music is musical form, not quantitative form. H. S. Harris gives evidence of "Hegel's main line of connection with Pythagorean speculation" in his Jena years, and has shown it to lie in "the Platonic theory of stable ratios as the bond of identity" (Harris, 92). In the perennial philosophy, the use of ratios and figures in natural science implies a theory of the soul's assimilation to the divine.

Hegel himself never spoke of absolute knowledge as "cosmic self-consciousness." I do so to show how the mature Hegel goes beyond ancient Pythagoreans while remaining within a Pythagorean tradition. The absolute knowledge which emerges from the *Phenomenology* turns out to be regulated and marked off by a graded scale of definitions of the absolute. Hegel's originality with respect to Pythagoras lies in seeing that a scale of ratios demarcates a developmental ladder in history as well as the cyclical phenomena of nature. Natural science in original Pythagoreanism is inseparable from Pythagorean speculation. A measure consists in a proportion of units of one qualitative

kind to units of another. Water is two units of hydrogen to one unit of oxygen.

Yet the one which for Pythagoreans is the principle of all numbers is not a unit of anything (Brumbaugh, 32). It is simply the one. By one early Pythagorean account the one has as its elements the *limited* and the *unlimited*, while by another the one falls under the limited alone (Guthrie, 246, 47). On the second interpretation, the one is the abstraction of pure form, while on the first it concretely exists, inflated through inhaling Anaximenes' airy matter, which it informs. Pure form is the limit, the soul that lives by breathing in, and setting limits to, unlimited matter in the surrounding airy mind stuff. "The general principle applied by the Pythagoreans to the construction of the cosmos is the imposition of limit on the unlimited apeiron to make the limited" (Guthrie, 247-48). The result is a formed, delimited limited whole, the cosmos, the breath of life, a soul, a mind: "of the principles, Pythagoras said that the Monad was God and the good, the true nature of the One, Mind itself" (Aetius, in Guthrie, 248). Inhalation constitutes the one as both the cosmos and as the individual soul. In the cosmos the enlightened individual souls keep harmonious society, each finding in itself a sympathetic reflection of the configuration of all.

Hegel admits what is implied by the fact that Pythagoras upholds a definition of the absolute: in Pythagoras "the speculative makes its appearance as speculative" (*Werke* 17, 269, 70). This tradition—in which thought is its own object (*Werke* 10, 290-292), a mirror, a *specularum*—perpetuates a core of four concepts traceable to the Pythagoreans: 1. the soul as immortal through its knowledge of eternal cosmic regularities. 2. philosophy as a participation in wisdom through a quest for it. 3. wisdom as assimilation to the known divine cosmos, and 4. theory (speculation, spectatorship) as the microcosmic beholding of the macrocosm in which the macrocosm knows itself in and through the microcosm. Theory is not an end in itself, but is found along the path of assimilation to the divine, the divine cosmos as regulated motions sustaining aesthetic harmony, cosmic sympathy as the bond of all souls. W. K. C. Guthrie states the seminal principles of this tradition:

The world is a *cosmos*—that untranslatable word which unites, perhaps as only the Greek Spirit could, the notion of order, arrangement or structural perfection with that of *beauty*. All nature is akin, therefore the soul of man is intimately related to all the living and divine universe. Like is known by like, that is, the better one knows something the more one is assimilated to it. Hence to seek through philosophy for a better understanding of the structure of the divine *cosmos* is to realize and cultivate the divine element in oneself. (Guthrie, 206-07)

Throughout nature, like is known by like through sympathetic understanding. The cosmic scale of notes, the master scale, the scale of scales behind the infinity of ephemeral melodies, is alone eternal. In the sympathetic internalization within oneself of other microcosmic perspectives in the cosmos, one realizes one's likeness to the cosmos, and thereby awakens to immortality. As long as one misidentifies with one's mortal body, it will seem that one is mortal. But true immortality, unattainable by identification with one's mortal earthly city or even by identification with the spirit of humanity, is attainable by identification with the spirit of the cosmos which is one's true home and identity.

Scholars such as Wilhelm Windelband have employed historical criticism to deny Pythagoras's historical authorship of almost all these allegedly later "Pythagorean"

concepts (Windelband, 29). Other scholars more often followed today (Burnet, 97—99; Guthrie, 181) cautiously attribute them to the historical Pythagoras. They argue that none of these ideas would have been called "Pythagorean" after Pythagoras' lifetime if their origin had not in Pythagoras himself. The matter acquires interest in probing the relation between the *Science of Logic* and the empirical history of philosophy (*Encyc*, §86). The *Logic* can bring the history of philosophy to completion only if it preserves the essential intention of its beginning. Windelband brings the Hegelian rational order closer to the historical order, both proceeding from 1. Heraclitus through 2. Parmenides to 3. the Pythagoreans. Pythagoras the man drops out, being replaced by his school. However, if we follow Burnet and Guthrie, the historical order, reversing the order in the *Logic*, becomes: a. Pythagoras, b. Heraclitus, c. Parmenides. On this view, we owe to an actual historical Pythagoras the very concept and tradition of speculative philosophy.

Thales can be assimilated to speculative philosophy in retrospect, but he did not view himself in this way. Insofar as the first Milesians thought about philosophy, they appear to have understood it as disinterested wonder or curiosity, not as a Pythagorean desire for salvation or immortality. For them philosophy was theory for theory's sake, not for religious union with the cosmos. It was a way of escaping ignorance, not of eluding mortality (Guthrie, 204).

In this early equivocation on "philosophy" we already find something of today's distinction between analytic and speculative philosophy. Thales was not a speculative philosopher for himself; rather, in his concept of philosophy as curiosity he anticipates the detached pursuit of knowledge by natural scientists. Pythagoras, much heralded as the discoverer of pure theory, in fact subordinated theory to a religious interest. The concept of theory is intimately connected with the concept of the cosmos, since theoretical wisdom consists in uniting oneself by contemplation with the harmony of the cosmos. Immortality, the goal of philosophy, is assimilation of the soul to the cosmos which is the object of such contemplation. The soul merges with the cosmos through a growing affinity and resemblance with the contemplated object. Thus the law of gravity as known in mind is the same law of gravity realized in the motions of celestial objects. Philosophy as the cultivation of wisdom, of bonds of friendship with the cosmos, originates in the desire for unification with divine harmony.

This unification is most highly achieved in sympathetic identification between the microcosmic self and the macrocosm. The love of wisdom is the wish to know one's own cosmic self in knowing the cosmos. Yet for the philosopher to satisfy this wish fully would be to lose his established selfhood, to surrender his identity as a philosopher in favor of that of a god. Pythagoras' philosophy of the cosmos is not an acosmism. The social nature of the cosmos, which allowed the Stoics to speak of a "cosmopolis", implies that the identity of the individual soul with cosmos is identification, not identity in the logical sense. The individual human is not indiscernibly identical with the absolute (God), but is "in" the absolute sympathetically by being "transposed" into it (Hegel, On Göschel 20, 293).

Yet since the absolute is an intersubjective spirit including distinct individual subjective spirits, to "transpose" oneself into the absolute is to awaken to one's own latent intersubjectivity. Through discovering one's microcosmic intersubjectivity, one achieves a likeness to the cosmos. Yet the distinction between the imitated cosmic community and the individual soul which, as one of its microcosmic members, imitates it is never

eliminated. Philosophy, the cultivation of divine wisdom, falls short of the total wisdom of which it partakes. Otherwise the intersubjectivity of the absolute would collapse into solitary subjectivity of an omniscient subject.

Hegel tried to "bring philosophy closer to the form of Science—to the goal where it can lay aside the title love of knowing and be actual knowing" (*Phänom* 11). But this is the love of neediness, which even Pythagoras at the onset of philosophy had in part overcome. His reputed modesty in disclaiming wisdom clashes with his reputed actual discovery of mathematical harmonies in the world. Pythagoras already shared in speculative wisdom, which is why Hegel compares Pythagoras' love of wisdom to the love of good wine (*Werke* 17, 243). Philosophy becomes more connoisseurship than deprivation. The Pythagorean philosopher, seeking to discover immortality has educated his palate, gaining a taste of wisdom. Philosophers, as Plato notes, seek wisdom only because they already have some part of it. Yet what makes a philosopher is not sharing in wisdom or even pursuing a greater share of it. If wisdom is contemplation of the lawful ratios of nature, even the least speculative of natural scientists share in wisdom and seek more. But this is surely false. What makes a philosopher is the reflective cultivation of one's part of wisdom.

Yet even Hegel, despite the apparent bravado of his science of wisdom, remained a philosopher caught in the "bad infinite" of bringing philosophy ever "nearer" to its goal. The science of wisdom expressed in Hegel's works partakes of a science of wisdom never explicitly expressed by Hegel or anyone in all its particulars. In going through this science as expressed in the limited form of one or another edition of the *Encyclopaedia*, we partake of the whole of science, and we understand the rules of dialectical logic by which we can continue constructing or reconstructing the whole where Hegel left off. For the whole is immanent in the part as part. Still, in thus partaking of the whole we never attain the whole as a whole. To partake of the whole is to take the whole by one part, not by all its parts. The parts "have this whole in themselves, as their moment: it contains their relation, there being no parts without a whole. But since they are the independent element, this relation is only an external moment, and against it they, in and for themselves, remain indifferent" (*Encyc* 00). It is possible to reach a true definition of the whole as self-knowing absolute spirit, and this self-definition, if true, includes everything as an expression of it. Yet it is not possible to take the concept of self-knowing absolute spirit, which is determinable rather than fully determinate, and deduce from it every one of its determinate expressions. If we take the absolute solely by that concept we still merely partake of the total circle of its particular determinations.

As Hegel comments on the part-whole relation we see the restless situation of the speculative thinker poised between wisdom and philosophy, the finite as it expresses the infinite and the infinite as it escapes the finite, between repose in an already constructed conceptual grasp and an ever renewed call for further construction. For "the content of such a [scientifically developed] philosophy—i.e., what is universal in spiritual and natural conditions—immediately leads by itself to the positive sciences which manifest it in concrete form, in its further development and application, to such an extent that their study proves necessary for a thorough penetration of philosophy" (Letter no. 278). *Guthrie on Pythagoras*.

It is of course to Plato that we owe much of what we know of Pythagoras, although the cult of cosmic community falls to the wayside in the classical Platonic

doctrine of forms. Guthrie, whom we, have followed so far, prefers to see this gap between the two thinkers closed somewhat. On his view Pythagoras held that "by living the best and highest possible type of life it [the soul] might ultimately shake off the body altogether, escape from the wheel of rebirth, and attain the final bliss of losing itself in the universal, eternal, and divine soul..." (Guthrie, 202-03). This is an unjustifiedly Platonizing interpretation of Pythagoras. God is the divine cosmos. Therefore, shaking off a mortal body is not to shake off the body altogether. The music of the immortal soul is the music of the spheres. Bodily spheres.

Another point where Plato's devaluation of the body is questionably attributed to Pythagoras occurs is Guthrie's denial that Simmias in the *Phaedo* is faithful to Pythagoras:

It is a general principle of early Greek thought, common to both the Ionian and Italian traditions, that the primary nature, the *arche* of things, stands in the same relation to the world of experience as soul does to body.... As [A. E.] Taylor said (Comm. on Tim. 136), 'the cosmic soul is not (as it would be according to those Pythagoreans who are refuted in *Phaedo*) an harmonia of the corresponding body, but, being wise and good, it of course exhibits a harmonia of its own structure, has music in itself.... On this view the soul is a harmony of its own parts, not of the parts of the body.... The genius of Pythagoras... lay in his concentration on the formal element as real and permanent, and dismissal of the physical and individual as accidental. We are approaching Plato's view of the soul as he expounds it the *Republic* and can see how much he owes to his Pythagorean friends.'" (Guthrie, 316,

Simmias holds that the soul is a harmony of bodily parts, while on Guthrie's account Pythagoras held that the soul is a harmony of non-physical parts. The virtue of a just and harmonious soul is not the health of a harmonious body. Since I diverge from Guthrie here, and since the point is important in demarcating the Pythagorean tradition to which, I claim, modern speculative philosophy belongs, it must occupy our attention.

Guthrie holds that according to Ionian and Italian traditions the principle of things "stands in the same relation to the world of experience as soul does to body." He then applies this insight to Pythagoras. This implies that the Pythagorean view of the relationship of the soul to the body should be the model for understanding the relationship of the world soul to the body of the cosmos, and not the other way around. But the relation of the individual soul to the body according to the Pythagoreans is one of imprisonment. Imprisonment is a metaphor for the intersubjective microcosmic soul's self-forgetful fall into merely individual subjectivity. By its imprisonment in the body the individual soul is detached from the world soul (Guthrie, 202). The body to which the soul is attached detaches it from the world soul. But does the "body of the cosmos" (Guthrie, 316) detach the world soul in a manner in any way analogous?

My question is: in understanding Pythagoras, should not the relation of the externalized harmony of the body of the cosmos to the inner harmony of the world soul rather be the model for correcting our understanding the relation of the original non-fallen individual body to the individual soul? Should not the cosmic body-soul relation revealed in the science of wisdom serve to correct the imprisoned, fallen soul's failure to recognize its microcosmic function of internalizing the world soul (the cosmic body-soul)? If the individual body detaches the individual soul from the world soul, what

could the world soul possibly be detached from?

If the world soul is the soul of the whole outer world, there is no more vast world from which it can be detached. Guthrie's and Taylor's analogy of the world soul to an imprisoned individual soul thus breaks down. An analogy of between the cosmic soul and an individual soul can be revived only if the individual body does not limit but rather expresses the microcosmic individual soul. The cosmic soul must be manifested inwardly in the individual soul. And, outwardly, the body of the individual must be a microcosmic bodily recapitulation of the body of the whole cosmos. The body which expresses a microcosmic individual soul must also express the macrocosmic world soul-world body.

Our body, being as it were, strung together by the warm and the cold, the dry and the moist, and things of that sort, our soul is a sort of temperament and attunement of these.... If, then, our soul is an attunement, it is clear that, when the body has been relaxed or strung out of measure by diseases and other ills, the soul must necessarily perish at once. (*Phaedo*)

But for Pythagoreans the harmonious individual soul is not just an attunement of the elements of the individual body. For the soul is an individual realization of cosmic attunement. The cosmos has both inner psychic and outer physical aspects. The attunement of cosmic of microcosmic ones is reproduced inwardly in the individual soul only if it is reproduced outwardly in the individual body. It is sometimes said that the macrocosm-microcosm relationship is based on an analogy between the world and a human being, but it is really based on an analogy between the world and every monad or substantial unit in the world. But the human body, unlike other bodies in the universe, has detached the human soul from the world soul. It has imprisoned it in isolation from the world soul. Just as non-human bodies are outer expressions of non-human microcosmic souls, the human body must now become the outer sensory manifestation of the microcosmic human soul, and no longer its cage.

For Plato the body is a prison, and the soul is essentially separate from it. But Plato is not quite a Pythagorean. For Pythagoreans the soul, acting in harmony with its individual body, essentially depends on the concurrent external cosmic harmony of a morally healthy individual body reared in a certain "way of life." Purification, release from the cycle of births and deaths, does not mean for Pythagoras disembodiment as it does for Plato. Rather, it means the exchange of a mortal individual body for the immortal body of the cosmos as that immortal body is reproduced in individual behaviour by the discipline of a way of life and demeanour. The rule of life which set members of the original Pythagorean school apart was meant to reproduce this harmonic cosmic body in individual behaviour.

Just as the human soul can partake of the cosmic harmony of the world soul through its knowledge of cosmic law, so the human body shares in greater harmony with the cosmic body through rites such as abstention from eating kindred flesh. Increased wisdom goes hand in hand with increased fellowship with the world of surrounding bodies. Vegetarian habits help liberate a human soul from imprisonment by a purely individual body toward participation in a more inclusive, more nearly universal soul-body. There is no complete wisdom without healthy habits which lead to a bodily realization of wisdom. However, since the doctrine that all things are kindred applies to vegetable life as well as animal souls, an individual body's full attunement to the cosmos would mean starvation rather than vegetarianism. The only attainable bodily attunement

to the cosmos is a progressive assimilation to it, an activity of partaking of it which falls short of an identity of indiscernibles with it. But starvation or, more generally, the death of the individual human organism is in fact the Pythagorean goal. The acceptance of such death is a precondition of attaining immortal life in the cosmos. Life should be a meditation on individual death but cosmic life.

To speak dialectically, the self-abstraction and self-absolutization of the individual soul as a false absolute in negation of the abstracted external world ends in that soul's self-negation and negation of its negation of the external world, so that it now finds itself in the world. This dialectic is present and often very near the surface in Pythagorean writings. When we say that Pythagoreanism is a pre-dialectical speculative philosophy, we mean that it precedes the dialectical history of philosophy which make the dialectic not only present in content but also formally present. In content Pythagoreanism was dialectical from the beginning, but it is pre-dialectical because its development in the hands of the ancient Pythagoreans lacked systematic dialectical form.

The world soul is a harmony between elements that constitute the cosmos, between *the limited* and *the unlimited*, and between different limited beings along the scale of the various limits which set limits to the unlimited. The individual soul released from imprisonment is a microcosmic internalization of the harmony of the cosmic body-soul. The harmony of the world soul begins with a non-quantitative *aesthetic harmony* between the limit and the unlimited, form and matter, the soul of the cosmos and the body of the cosmos. The cosmos cannot be a fully harmonious unity if there is unresolved conflict between the cosmic body and cosmic soul—just as Hegelian coherence or freedom from contradiction cannot be fully realized as long as contradictions stubbornly hold out in the real world of institutional presuppositions.

The harmony of the individual soul, we see, does not imply harmony between the individual soul and a body detached as a fragment from the cosmic body. Such a detached fragment is detached only because the individual soul, functioning as the understanding (*Verstand*), has abstracted and term absolutized it in negation of the remainder of the world. This bodily fragment, constituted by the individual soul, in turn reacts on that soul and detaches it from the world soul. If one's finite body is an absolute by itself, it is not a vehicle of one's communication and communion with other finite bodies, and if there is an individual soul in the body it is lock up within itself. This is the Pythagorean fall. But the individual soul then detaches itself from the detached body that has in turn detached it, and this is the beginning of wisdom.

An individual soul that is in harmony with its individual mortal body is out of harmony with itself, with its true cosmic body. The acquired harmony of the individual soul requires that it first live in disharmony with its individual mortal body in order eventually to live in harmony with its cosmic body. The enlightened individual soul takes the cosmic body as its true body. Assimilation to the divine is assimilation of the cosmic body as one's true body. The soul detached by a dissonant body from the whole reattaches itself by self-knowledge based on knowledge of the cosmos, and, as we noted, by habits which attune the body to its cosmic environment.

Even supposing an eternal return of all events, the progress of the individual soul through different incarnations in one complete cosmic cycle is spiral-like, from octave to octave, not circular. Throughout these incarnations, the scale on which the individual soul plays out its melody remains constant. As the soul progresses it actualizes the

different eternal possibilities of this scale. The goal which the soul approaches is the conversion of its share of wisdom into a larger share, and at death as an exclusive individual into wisdom itself. Insofar as the individual is actually assimilated to the divine cosmos, the history of its assimilation appears in a new guise as the history of the cosmos' self-division and self-reunification.

Under this redescription, the history of the Pythagorean soul as it partakes in divine wisdom is preserved in Hegel's science of wisdom. The individual soul that (in a movement from *subject* to *substance*) discovers its identity with the cosmos comes to realize that it already possessed this identity even in its subjective separation from the cosmos. The quest for wisdom presupposes that a portion of the cosmos has in body and spirit detached itself from the whole. Division, Hegel tells us, constitutes the need for philosophy (Difference, I,44). If the individual soul of the philosopher is participatively one with the cosmic soul even without knowing so, it follows logically, (in a movement from *substance* to *subject*) that the individual soul's quest is the quest of the cosmic soul in alienation from itself.

If such an interpretation of Pythagoreanism correct, Guthrie's attempt to bring Pythagoras closer to Plato cannot be fully successful. Plato agrees with the Pythagoreans that knowledge alone, along with the right action which it entails, confers immortality. But for the Pythagoreans the cosmos is immortal. The soul awakens to immortal life by conscious assimilation to what is immortal. Immortality is always true identification with what actually is immortal, and knowing one's immortality is always knowledge of this identity. The subjective act is an objective act of the substantial whole. What the soul is and does, the cosmos itself is and does in and through the soul. Where the soul acts speculatively, the cosmos itself so acts. When the soul thinks the cosmos, the cosmos thinks itself in the soul, and the soul is thus raised above its apparent finitude. The soul is the cosmos become conscious of itself.

Pythagoras and the Origin of Speculative Philosophy

We find in the Pythagorean concept of participatory immortality, in this assimilative identity of the soul to the cosmos, the oldest self-conscious expression in the West of what Hegel calls speculative philosophy (17, 269). No philosopher enjoys the totality of divine wisdom. Yet through his share in it the speculative philosopher plays his part in the cosmic tragi-comedy by bringing the laws of cosmic harmony to consciousness. For the early Pythagoreans the cosmos included 1. the harmonious movements of those who compete for honor in life's games, 2. the occupations of those who supply their material needs, and 3. the spectators who watch and take part in these games and occupations vicariously (Iamblichus 70).

Philosophers are classed with these latter; they see the proportionalities by which others are governed in their motions as by an invisible hand. More than mere spectator, a philosopher is a connoisseur cultivates spectatorship. Natural science at its most unspeculative, purged of Keplerian "excesses," already contemplates these proportionalities, albeit unreflectively, without meditating the position of natural science itself in the cosmos. The speculative philosopher—assimilated to the cosmos and yet distinct from it as one microcosmic member beholding an exploded mirror image of itself in the motions of all the other members—reflectively brings to act a power of self-knowledge proper to the cosmos itself. The action of the part is that of the whole wherever the part furthers an implicit purpose or function of the whole. The purpose for

which games are played is in part the applause of on-watchers. As absolute spirit the cosmos exhibits the determination of being for self (self-thinking) which in itself it always has had. The progress of assimilation to the divine cosmos is appropriated by wisdom when it reviews the parade of its own self-genesis, in self-consciously celebrating itself in contrast to the relative darkness over which it has triumphed. The self-definition of the absolute, the cosmos itself completing its development in self-congratulatory spectatorship, is the Pythagorean project. A philosopher after Pythagoras is one who identifies with this project, seeking to bring it closer to realization. Hegel's achievement is that he, exploiting his far greater opportunity of his position in the nineteenth century for historical retrospection, reveals the more developed dialectical potential of the position Pythagorean. Pythagoras founded a tradition of inquiry, a research program, which every successor reincarnates the Pythagorean project. Those who do not pursue this project are not *philosophers* as defined in this tradition.

A thinker like Pythagoras, who founds a tradition of inquiry, identifies beforehand with insightful successors, giving prior endorsement to their discoveries, which thus may be attributed to the legendary founder himself. The Pythagorean theory refers to the same cosmos, the same absolute, referred to by the successors. The act of Pythagorean reference to the cosmos is more fundamental than any particular description of it. The Pythagorean's position in a tradition of inquiry implies prior approval of any redescription necessary to maintain the success in our own time of reference to the cosmos.

Hegelian identification of soul and cosmos in fact differs from Pythagoras' construal of the same identification. Hegel views Pythagoras' "cosmos" not merely as an unchanging scale of measures governing transformations of the ones, but as spirit developing in an historical dialectic. The cosmos knows itself as a scale of dialectically self-constructed *proportions of self and other*. Every new completion of the dialectical cycle at a higher level expands the portion of selfhood relative to otherness. For Pythagoras the soul strives to unite itself with the cosmos by knowing the unchanging scale of its measures in which, as we play different notes, the scale does not change but merely manifests its permanent possibilities. Pythagoras already sees that the cosmos works to actualize itself as systematic self-knowledge.

The circulation of money makes the games possible, but it can exist without the games. The games make the cheers of the onlookers possible, but they can be played—though more gloomily—with no onlookers. Yet the cheers are impossible without the games, and the games are impossible without exchange, and this is why the cheers are what is highest.

For Pythagoras the love of wisdom is both deprivation and a form of Connoisseurship. As deprivation it belongs to the fallen soul, but the fallen soul already participates in its redemption. It already has intimations of divinity: with no share in wisdom it could not desire it. Hegel restates the Western speculative tradition by incorporating the history of deprivation and striving into the history of participation in divinity. The history of philosophy is that of the absolute itself, not merely a history of philosophers. Since there is nothing outside the absolute, philosophical definition of the absolute's own self-definition on the face of this planet through philosophers. For Pythagoreans union with an immovable cosmic scale was the key to immortality. The scale was composed ultimately of the unlimited and the limited, matter and form.

The unlimited and the limited define the one, the principle of the number system. Since each one has a material factor (the unlimited), this is no purely mathematical concept of the one. The cosmos is a system of material ones, of embodied souls. We must understand the claim that "the cosmos was... a harmony not ultimately of physical opposites but of numbers" (Guthrie, 315) with a qualification. In judging the distance between Hegel and the Pythagoreans the key question is whether the Pythagoreans viewed philosophy and wisdom as necessary for the redemption of the cosmos from self-division, and not just for that of the individual.

In Hegel the claim that the cosmos' knowledge of itself in and through the philosopher is necessary for the redemption of the cosmos is very explicit. The philosopher's own quest is incorporated into the true definition of the absolute. Insofar as scientifically-minded "Pythagoreans" define the absolute merely as an unchanging cosmic scale of possibilities, they abstract from the actual historical quest for knowledge of this scale and fall into the realm of Hegel's *objective logic*. Yet the true Pythagorean connoisseur of cosmic spectatorship does not lose himself without remainder in the cosmic spectacle. He self-consciously actualizes and posits the spectacle as a spectacle. Pythagorean speculative philosophy is a philosophy of philosophy in which the philosopher sees himself in the mirror as the cosmos' own self-knowledge.

Is the Cosmos the Absolute?

Some disdain any interpretation of Hegel which would make philosophy culminate in "cosmic self-consciousness" (diGiovanni, 231). The early Pythagoreans did not call the absolute "the cosmos." For their "cosmos" was not that outside which there is nothing. Rather, the cosmos was the ordered portion of the unlimited natural world. Nature which also included chaos. The Pythagorean god, the cosmos, was finite, so the either this god was not the absolute or it was the absolute under a false definition. The real Pythagorean *absolute*, on the other hand, seems to have been a dynamic equilibrium between the living breathing "cosmos" and the surrounding amorphous atmosphere which the cosmos breathes in and to which it breathes out. Thus the early Pythagorean absolute is not the early Pythagorean god. A discrepancy exists between the Pythagorean religion and the Pythagorean science of wisdom. The concept of god implies a definition of the absolute that is less concrete than the definition of the absolute conveyed by the Pythagorean's logical concept of the absolute. But because one's position in the science of logic enjoys higher authority in philosophy than one's opinion in religion, we shall simply say that for the earliest Pythagoreans the absolute was the above dynamic equilibrium.

The harmonious balance between a finite cosmos and the infinity of air is not definable as a ratio of units, since each unit arises out of, and thus presupposes, such a harmony. This pre-quantitative harmony between the ordered world soul and the diffuse soul stuff which it inhales and exhales (Aristotle, *Physics*, 213b, 18), between the infinite and the finite in the infinite, is frankly animistic. Eventually, with Heraclitus and later the Stoics, the term "cosmos" came to mean Hegel's "good infinite," a chaos on which order feeds in lawful cycles of destruction and regeneration. (Hegel's attempt to restrict Heraclitus to the category of abstract becoming—the cyclical alternation between pure indeterminate being and non-being—is questionable.) Chaos, randomness, is incorporated into a now the infinite cosmos, since it is subject to its own peculiar self-ordering and self-measure. This Heraclitean-Stoic revision of the first Pythagorean concept of the "cosmos", so that the cosmos comes to include air and thus excludes only

non-being or the void, is the one invoked in speaking of absolute spirit as "cosmic self-consciousness."

If we extrapolate Pythagoras' generalized concept of music, certain perspectives on the Pythagorean-Hegelian speculative wager arise. First, though on any scale countless melodies may be played, for Hegel the one which historically has been played resolves dissonance into cosmic self-consciousness, being in and for itself. In the science of logic, as in the empirical history of philosophy, the definition of the absolute as cosmic measure is superseded by the Neoplatonic definition of it as the One. But the One for Pythagoreans was the principle of all numbers, which all things are. The One is thus the essence, the potentiality, and the being in itself of all things in the cosmos—including being in and for itself.

Historically Pythagoreanism merged with Neoplatonism. The objective ladder of the logic of being according to Hegel, is at the end of this logic, in the transition to the logic of essence, pulled up into the Neoplatonic One, back into Parmenidean being as the original principle of number. But Parmenidean being is now conceived as potentially containing the whole unfolding dialectic of being. "...Essence is being that has gone [back] into itself [out of its subsequent dialectical development]: that is to say, the simple self-relation (in being) is expressly put [in essence] as... immanent self-mediation" (0000).

This dialectic of being, which can unfold because it is already given as having constructed itself, leads to the Pythagorean cosmic scales in the logic of measure. It therefore leads more concretely and truthfully to the Pythagorean speculative philosophy. In this speculative philosophy the scales lodged in the individual's own science are the very scales of the cosmos itself, so that the knowing self finds, speculatively, a mirror image of itself in the intelligible world. Like knows like. It is perverse abstract thinking to so fixate on the Pythagorean concept measure (*Mass*) that one tears it out of its speculative context. Finding objective self-measures in water or salt, in force or energy among Pythagoreans is speculatively motivated. A long argument would be needed to show that it is not so motivated in current physical science, but that would be beside the point. For we are talking about the Pythagorean speculative context of physical science in its origin.

However, this speculative interpretation of Pythagorean objective self-measures, if correct, take Pythagoras entirely beyond the limits of Hegel's objective logic of being and essence into his subjective logic of the concept. Pythagoras and the early Pythagoreans were far closer to Hegelian speculative philosophy than Hegel's *Science of Logic* allows. It is only Pythagoras' historically inevitable failure to conceptualize and use the dialectical-hermeneutic systematically that distinguishes him from Hegel's own position.

Among all possible melodies for which the scales allow, the one which in fact has occurred has culminated in self-consciousness on the level of pure thought. The absolute as a cosmos of graded measures of ones is more coherently defined as being-in-itself, potentiality, essence, or the Neoplatonic One. Further, since no potentiality (being-in-itself) is determinate until we know what it is a potentiality for, being-in-itself is more coherently defined as being-in-and-for-itself, i.e., cosmic-potentiality for self-consciousness, a self-knowing one. To say that the absolute is "cosmic self-consciousness" means that it is an intersubjective community whose members occupy

possible positions along unchanging scales of different measures.

Each original speculative philosopher is incited by a sympathetic reprise of predecessors to further development of the historical melody played on a dialectical scale. The "melody" (understood as a generalized non-metaphorical concept of musical melody) which has been world-historically played has found resolution in infinite self-awareness. Pythagoras defined the absolute like Hegel as the cosmos from which the individual embodied soul detaches itself and to which it returns in infinite self-consciousness through knowledge of the scales. But for the early Pythagoreans these scales could not yet include the scale of measured definitions of the absolute revealed only in the subsequent history of philosophy. The early Pythagoreans thus could not give a full-blown system of philosophy.

But Hegel distinguishes between *speculative philosophy*, which may exist only in seed, and the developed *system of philosophy* as he presented it. (He makes this distinction, for example, in the case of Solger 20, 163.,64, 167.,68). The following Pythagorean sentences circulating in the second century exemplify the speculative content of Pythagoreanism:

The sage and the despiser of wealth most resemble God... You have in yourself something similar to God, and therefore use yourself as the temple of God, on account of that in you which resembles God.... A good intellect is the choir of divinity... The knowledge and imitation of God are alone sufficient to beatitude.... The wise man participates in God.... Only through ignorance of his soul is a man saddened by fear of death.... Realize that your [cosmic, non-fallen] body is the garment of your soul and then you will preserve it pure.... A true assertion about God is an assertion of God.... Divine wisdom is true science.... A wise intellect is the mirror of God. (Sextus)

These sentences are speculative (not merely subjective) because they assert a relation of the individual soul to God (the divine cosmos) which implies a relation of God to the soul. They imply that God resembles the wise soul, that the choir of the cosmos is present in the soul, that God embraces the wise man, that God makes affirmations about himself in and through the affirmations which the wise soul makes of him, and that God is mirrored in the wise soul. But a Hegelian point which Pythagoreanism does not yet see is that even a false assertion about God is an assertion of (or by) God in the dialectical construction of truth. Yet Pythagoras survives as the principal available original founder the speculative tradition to which Hegel belongs.

Granted, the early Pythagorean definition of the absolute as number fails to rise to the level of pure thought (*Werke* 18, 275): the speculative concept is present in the early Pythagoreans only on the level of quantitative intuition and representation. Hegel shows that quantitative definitions of the absolute pass back into qualitative definitions (*Encyc* §107). Yet it does not appear, as Hegel claims (*Werke* 18, 275), that the early Pythagoreans defined the absolute in purely quantitative terms. Harmony for Pythagoras retained the aesthetic aspect of "beauty" (Guthrie, 206). Such harmony is not reduced to a scale of quantitative ratios but is only regulated by it. The qualitative fairness of the human body is depends on staying within certain arithmetic proportions between the lengths of members but is, but that does not make the fairness quantitative rather than qualitatively. Moreover, the principles of the one, the infinite and the finite, are pre-quantitative principles.

In conclusion, Hegel's claim that Pythagoras founded philosophy in the speculative sense goes deeper than his conflicting claim that Pythagoras defined the absolute merely as number. Yet the primitive ambiguity of "philosophy" means that there is no single tradition of philosophy. There are traditions. Philosophy as the pursuit of, participation in, and cultivation of oneness with the immortal cosmos is not philosophy as the accumulation of various and sundry riddles and their solution. Analytic philosophy followed Thales, Hegel followed Pythagoras. The detached analysis of any and all concepts contrasts with the engaged analysis of one's self-concept in relation to the absolute and to world history.

The Hegelian science of Logic is philosophy in the sense of finite thought redeemed through knowledge, not in the second sense of circumstantial wonder. By culminating in being-in-and-for-itself, Hegel's thought culminates in what a Pythagorean would call cosmic self-consciousness. Such self-consciousness existing on the level of heart and feeling is a microcosm of nature (*Encyc* §391-392). The thought standpoint which arises at the end of dialectical history is a microcosm of such history in all its prior standpoints: "Absolute Knowing, or Spirit that knows itself as Spirit, has for its path the recollection of the Spirits as they are in themselves and as they accomplish the organization of their realm" (*Phenom*).

Yet absolute knowledge, the highest standpoint of dialectical history, must—in order to be overreachingly absolute—be a microcosm not only of the microcosms of empirical history but also of those of nature. All thought and knowledge begin in abstraction, and all abstraction stands in relation to that from which abstraction is made. No matter how concrete thought becomes, it never fully overcomes this congenital abstraction. This is why the system of speculative thought attains to truth only by stepping outside itself and embracing love, its opposite: philosophical thought without heart is as false as heart without philosophy (*On Goschel* 20, 309). Thus the mind which attains absolute knowledge as the microcosm of all historical thought standpoints is at once a soul which, like all souls, is a microcosm of all microcosmic non-thinking feeling standpoints in nature. The Pythagorean reflection of the cosmos achieved by the individual rational soul is, being internal to the natural cosmos, a Hegelian actualization of the potential self-consciousness of the cosmos. Modern speculative philosophy is the distilled fruit of ancient Pythagorean tradition. To return to speculative thought in its historical birth place in the Pythagorean project of achieving cosmic consciousness can empower such thought for the work of heart beyond (but not in Romantic contradiction to) pure dialectical thinking. If anyone still objects to the term "cosmic", let him or her not be distracted by allergy to "new age" fads from giving historical Pythagoreanism the attention it deserves.

Hegel views the concept and project of the *Logic* as presupposed by the *Logic*. They are presupposed as established in the *Phenomenology*. Thus he does not claim for the *Logic* presuppositionlessness in every sense. It is presuppositionless insofar as no one definition of the absolute is presupposed to be true—not even the true logical definition as the absolute idea, not even its definition by *Realphilosophie* by the concept of spirit as that concept is abstracted from Christian culture. "Thus the beginning... may not presuppose anything, must not be mediated by anything nor have a ground; rather it is to be itself the ground of the entire science.... The beginning therefore is [the abstract definition of the absolute as] pure being" (*Logic*, 1, 54).

Yet the project of defining the absolute is presupposed. The Introduction to the *Logic* indeed denies that the full concept of metaphysical logic is presupposed at the start, since the purpose of the *Logic* define this concept (*Logic* 23). The full concept of dialectical logic is no more presupposed than its eventual result. Indeed, the two are identical. One must, like Hegel himself, begin by abstracting oneself from our contemporary knowledge of the enterprise of dialectical metaphysics and the nature of the absolute. Hegel does claim that the abstract concept of absolute knowledge and its deduction from consciousness are presupposed as having been derived in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. "The notion of pure science and its deduction is therefore presupposed in the present work in so far as the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is nothing other than the deduction of it.... Thus pure science presupposes liberation from the opposition of consciousness" (*Logic* 1, 30). Absolute knowledge is the thinking subject's speculative self-recognition in the cosmic object or "substance" (Phenom 445, 489; Phänom 393), and it is derived in the *Phenomenology* by a gradual transcendence of the opposition of reflective consciousness to the world as its object.

The *Phenomenology* is the *conceptual presupposition* of the concept of absolute knowledge. But the *Logic* also has historical presuppositions. As a construction of absolute knowledge in its developed dialectically systematic form, the *Logic* logically presupposes the undeveloped concept of such knowledge. Yet as the hermeneutic reconstruction of the historical tradition in which the construction of absolute knowledge is embedded, it empirically presupposes that tradition and knowledge. The concept of absolute knowledge constructed in the *Phenomenology* is the undeveloped concept of speculative philosophy at the start of the history of philosophy in the Pythagorean understanding of the relation of the cosmos and the soul (*Werke* 17, 284-289).

To those who say that it is impossible to understand the *Logic* without understanding the *Phenomenology* I reply that what is necessary to understand the *Logic* is transcendence of the opposition of reflective thinking of consciousness to its object, and that such transcendence transpired in the pre-Socratic history of philosophy many before publication of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The *Phenomenology* is not an original construction, but is a reconstruction of the Western speculative tradition and historical experience. That tradition accompanies us independently of *Phenomenology* and is at least non-systematically known independently of it. Further, we see from the discussion on "where science must begin" which follows the Introduction that the *Logic* presupposes not only the Pythagorean concept of speculative philosophy but also the methodological project of returning this philosophy to its most abstract Parmenidean starting point, and then dialectically redeveloping the suppressed concrete content from that beginning (*Logic* 68-, 52-60). Parmenides himself reached his position by tearing himself away from his own earlier Pythagorean pluralism. In the *Logic*, which develops Pythagoreanism out of the dialectically earlier Eleatic position, Parmenides appears as a dialectically regressive philosopher, who made explicit a missing heuristic assumption underlying the dialectic of philosophy at its historical onset—the assumption that the absolute is mere indeterminate being (Butler, 1994). The transition from the undeveloped concept of speculative philosophy to the beginning of the dialectical science of logic appears as an historically regressive from Pythagoras to Parmenides. This is not to say that Parmenides saw himself as initiating dialectical logic in the Hegelian sense, but that in the history of philosophy this is what objectively he did.

The first of these is the fact that the world is not a uniform whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which has its own characteristics and its own laws. This is the principle of diversity, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The second is the fact that the world is not a static whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is constantly changing and developing. This is the principle of change, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The third is the fact that the world is not a simple whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is interconnected with the others. This is the principle of unity, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The fourth is the fact that the world is not a whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is independent of the others. This is the principle of individuality, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The fifth is the fact that the world is not a whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is dependent on the others. This is the principle of interdependence, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The sixth is the fact that the world is not a whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is a part of a larger whole. This is the principle of hierarchy, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The seventh is the fact that the world is not a whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is a part of a larger whole. This is the principle of hierarchy, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The eighth is the fact that the world is not a whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is a part of a larger whole. This is the principle of hierarchy, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The ninth is the fact that the world is not a whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is a part of a larger whole. This is the principle of hierarchy, and it is the basis of all knowledge. The tenth is the fact that the world is not a whole, but a collection of many different parts, each of which is a part of a larger whole. This is the principle of hierarchy, and it is the basis of all knowledge.