We have accused Hegel of having injected into perception a cognitive act that pertains to thought and judgment. However, if we turn our attention now to the newly emerging pattern of consciousness, we will see that the injection of conceptualization constitutes an indispensable condition of effecting the transition from perception to understanding. Since clarity in this matter is essential to the proper apprehension of transition we must digress here to deal with it.

As was indicated in the preceding chapters, the subject of sense-certainty had for its object the unmediated and ineffable singular. With the insight that the primary act of taking cognizance ends in an impasse, the subject rose to perception and took for its object universality affected with singleness. What has always been characteristic of perception as an intermediate stage in the coming-to-be of consciousness proper is that it has preserved the distinction between singleness and universality, now concentrating on singleness, now stressing the importance of universality, and finally attempting sophistical reconciliation of the two. Although the issue is not quite so simple, it seems safe to say that from sense experience the perceiving subject inherited its attachment to singleness, while from the universalizing activity of the subject sprang its openness to universality. There is nothing strange, then, that the percipient fluctuates between the sensible and the rational, between pre-reflection and reflection. The difficulty here is that, since the percipient has not effectively reconciled the sensible and the rational, he cannot lay claim to complete intelligibility. And so, the cognitive pattern of perception such as Hegel depicts it calls for radical reconstitution. It hardly needs saying that the principal source of this reconstitution is the subject itself. Which is but another way of saying that the advance to the new position is necessitated by the universalizing action of the subject.

Since the subject is inseparable from its performances, the universalizing agency operative at the level of perception develops the subject, making
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demands that the element of singleness be dropped out altogether. Thus the subject embarks on mentally acute struggle with what it regards as an obstacle to real understanding and rationality. In other words, if subjectivity is to break the bonds of sensibility and be truly rational, the notion of unconditional universality must be introduced into the dialectical discourse. Still, if we consider the conditions which must be fulfilled in order that the subject begin a rational life, we must concede that it is not enough only to contemplate the idea of unconditional universality. The subject must find a general concept that is both distinct and transitional, non-sensuous and universal. According to Hegel, only the concept of force has these qualifications.

We may ask ourselves, first of all, whether the concept on which hinges the dialectic of understanding has any connections with the pre-Hegelian account of force. Hegel himself, of course, offers no clue to the historical roots of his notion, and the interpreters are left to their own surmises. Wilhelm Purpus suggests, for example, that Hegel's concept of force has a direct parentage in the philosophy of Leibniz.¹ This may be true enough when properly established, but the procedure of Purpus is somewhat preliminary. He begins his exposition with a long citation from Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy, which is immediately followed by a series of quotations from two major Leibnizian sources: the New Essays on Human Understanding and the New System of Nature. Purpus assumes that these quotations, more than any rigorous analysis, can reveal the historical roots of Hegel's transitional concept. In the first passage, however, we find merely a general description of Leibniz's monadology. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this passage lies in this that Hegel regards monads as universal entities, insisting that "universality is just simplicity in multiplicity, and therefore a simplicity which is at the same time change and motion of multiplicity".² Hegel then notes the connection between the idea of substance and force, but he does not give any very detailed considerations to this issue.

It can hardly be denied that there exist certain resemblances between Hegelianism and the thoughts of Leibniz. Indeed, Hegel may have brought these ideas into relation with his own phenomenological studies. However, even if one can show how the concept of force is derivable from the monadology of Leibniz, it does not follow that it was actually so derived.

In view of the transitional character of force it might be said that this

¹ Zur Dialektik des Bewusstseins nach Hegel, pp. 169-172.
² Lectures on the History of Philosophy, III, 334.