

## Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

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### Abstract:

In the first three decades of the nineteenth century, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel attempted to construct an idealist philosophy of breath-taking ambition. With its accounts of nature, society, history, art, religion and philosophy itself, it was meant to provide its audience—subjects of that peculiarly modern form of European life then coming into existence—with a complete account of the universe and its place in it.

Yet how to regard this project is still in dispute. While at first glance it looks like a reversion to the kind of dogmatic metaphysics that Kant had urged his readers to abandon only a few decades before, some argue that Hegel's project is to be understood in the spirit of Kant's own. What philosophy *is* can only be understood in the light of a “phenomenological” examination of consciousness—a project that, like Kant's “critique”, was meant to free readers from illusions pervading their own initial assumptions about reason and knowledge.

### Life and Times:

Born in 1770 in Stuttgart, and coming to philosophical maturity in the first years of the 19th century, Hegel went on to become perhaps the major figure of “German idealism”—a movement that dominated German philosophy in the first third of that century. Hegel's formal introduction to philosophy was as a student at the seminary (*Stift*) at Tübingen from 1788 to 1793, where he studied philosophy for two years and then theology for three, and formed close relationships with fellow seminarians Friedrich Schelling and Friedrich Hölderlin. After the *Stift*, the three kept in touch and collaborated, and among the philosophies that inspired them was a version of the “transcendental” idealism of Immanuel Kant, particularly as it appeared in J. G. Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* in 1794. However, enthusiasm for such a philosophy that promised to restore human freedom to a generation feeling the threat of the scientific deterministic worldview of modernity was tempered by the concern that it did this at the expense of an unwanted experiential and epistemic “alienation” from the natural and social world, an alienation perceived as reflecting something peculiar about life in modernity. It was this that was partially responsible for the revived interest in the life and thought of the ancient Greek polis, which was conceived as exhibiting a type of immediacy and identity of the self's relation to the world that had since become lost.

These issues had been brought to a head by the experience of the course of the French Revolution, which the three had enthusiastically observed from the distance of Tübingen. Eventually, however, they came to feel the force of Friedrich Schiller's diagnostic linking of the revolution's descent into terror with the abstractions of Kant's philosophy (Schiller 1967).

In the early 1790s a Kantian movement in philosophy had emerged in the university town of Jena owing to the influence there of K. L. Reinhold, who had aimed to render Kant's doctrines more systematic. This gave rise to two distinct forms of "post-Kantianism". On the one hand, "Jena romantics" such as brothers Friedrich and August Schlegel, Friedrich von Hardenberg (Novalis) and others accepted Kant's claim that the knowledge to which traditional metaphysics aspired was beyond the powers of humans (Frank, 2004). But for them, this demotion of systematic philosophy meant the promotion of more direct forms of awareness and consciousness of the world, such as those of literature and religion. In contrast, Reinhold's successor in Jena, Fichte, aimed at a restoration of systematic philosophical science in terms of a more general form of idealism that remained true to the "spirit" if not the "letter" of Kant. Both Hölderlin and Schelling had been attracted to Jena in the mid 1790s, with Schelling establishing himself there as philosophical presence. Hegel, having found employment as a tutor in households in Bern and then Frankfurt after leaving the *Stift*, eventually joined Schelling in Jena in 1801.<sup>1</sup>

At Jena between 1801 to 1806 Hegel taught, first as a unsalaried "Privatdozent", and experimented with ways of constructing his philosophical system. By the end of 1806 he had completed the first mature expression of his distinctive philosophy, the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, but by the time of its publication in 1807, he had been left jobless by the closing of the university after Napoleon's troops had occupied the town. For the next nine years Hegel worked outside the university context, first as a newspaper editor at Bamberg, and then as headmaster of a "gymnasium" at Nuremberg, but this did not prevent him from publishing the two volumes of his *Science of Logic* ("Volume One, The Objective Logic" made up of books 1 and 2 published separately in 1812, 1813, and "Volume Two, The Subjective Logic" published in 1816). In 1816 an appointment at the University of Heidelberg marked his return of academic philosophy and two years later he accepted the chair of philosophy at the University of Berlin. While in Heidelberg he published the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, a systematic work prepared for teaching in which an abbreviated version of the earlier *Science of Logic* (the "Encyclopedia Logic" or "Lesser Logic") led into a *Philosophy of Nature* and the *Philosophy of Spirit*. In 1821 in Berlin Hegel published his major work in political philosophy, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, based on lectures given at Heidelberg and ultimately grounded in the section of the *Encyclopedia Philosophy of Spirit* dealing with "objective spirit."

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed account of Hegel's life and times, see Pinkard 2000.

During the years up to his death in 1831 Hegel came to enjoy great celebrity at Berlin, and published subsequent versions of the *Encyclopedia* in 1827 and 1830. From 1832 versions of his various lecture courses started to appear in print, with second editions appearing in 1840. Tolstoy's reminiscences of his university days in Russia in the 40s give a sense of the scope of Hegel's influence in that decade: "Hegelianism was the foundation of every thing. It was floating in the air; it was expressed in newspaper and periodical articles, in historical and judicial lectures, in novels, in treatises, in art, in sermons, in conversation" (Tolstoy 1887, p. 170). But already in the 1830s Hegel's followers were starting to fragment over the question of religion, and from 1841 Hegel's philosophy was being attacked from his own lecturn in Berlin by his former friend and colleague, Schelling. The collapse of progressive politics with the failure of the 1848 revolutions is often said to have deprived Hegelianism of its support, but whatever its cause the decline of Hegel's influence was dramatic. As Tolstoy goes on, "all at once the forties passed, and there was nothing left of him. There was not even a hint of him, any more than if he had never existed" (Tolstoy 1887, p. 170–1).

In the second half of the century "Left-Hegelianism" eventually transformed into Marx's claim to invert Hegel's idealism into a form of materialism which nevertheless kept the "dialectical" form of his thought, however Marx's materialism was only one expression of a wide-spread turn against idealism. What exactly had been its perceived problems have by now largely been forgotten, and certain common mis-conceptions of idealism have made it difficult to appreciate what had seemed attractive about such a form of philosophy.

### *What was "Idealismus"?*

Within the analytic tradition, the term "idealism" is typically associated with the philosophy of Bishop George Berkeley, but attempting to understand the German tradition from such a starting point is hopeless. Berkeley had characterized his own position as "immaterialism", not idealism, and immaterialism was not a significant feature of any versions of German idealism. It might be said that the core difference between "idealism" as understood in Anglophone philosophy and the Germans' *Idealismus* resides in the difference between the way each tradition conceived of the nature of the "ideas" referred to by these respective names. Crucially, in the German tradition "*Idee*" (plural, "*Ideen*") did not refer to the sort of subjective mental representations that Berkeley, in common with the British empiricists, called "ideas" (for this notion, the Germans reserved the term "*Vorstellung*", usually translated as "representation"). Rather, the "*Ideen*" of the German tradition had a distinctly Platonic provenance: such "ideas" (or "forms") had not originally been conceived of as entities within any enclosed mental sphere, not even the mind of some world-creating god—such a conception characterizing only the late antique Platonism that had informed early Christian thought. Moreover, Aristotle in particular was significant for Hegel (Ferrarin 2001; Pinkard 2012), and for Aristotle "ideas" had

been rendered as the “forms” that primarily informed the matter of corporeal substances.

In appealing to the speculative categories of the ancient world against those of the early modern world, neither were the idealists advocating some simple affirmation of ancient philosophy: the break of natural science and other features of modernity with the ordered Aristotelian cosmos had eliminated *that* as a possibility. As Hegel was to put it: “once the substantial form of the spirit has inwardly reconstituted itself, all attempts to preserve the forms of an earlier culture are utterly in vain; like withered leaves they are pushed off by the new buds already growing at their roots” (SL, p. 26). Rather, idealists from Leibniz through to Hegel sought somehow to accommodate or incorporate into a form of broadly Aristotelian speculative thought the distinctly un-Aristotelian conceptions of modern life, together with the distinctive role given to individual “subjectivity” within it. Thus German “*Idealismus*” might be better described in terms of the increasing attempts to locate the phenomena associated with the modern “subjective” conception of consciousness and the emerging “mechanical” worldview *within* a more encompassing framework that was seen as in some ways continuous with the outlook of both everyday life and Greek speculative thought. For Hegel, in particular, this came to take an historical dimension in which Greek speculative philosophy could be seen as set on a trajectory in which the modern conception of an atomic subject standing opposed to its “object”—a conception also linked to the rise of Christianity—was somehow generated from the matrix of ancient thought, bringing about both the freedom and alienation that characterized modern life. For Hegel, the task facing moderns was that of somehow bringing about a reconciliation of the alienated modern subject with the world without sacrificing its unique form of freedom.

### The Method of a “Phenomenology of Spirit” and the Role of “Consciousness” in Philosophical Thought

Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* has since become one of the major works of the western philosophical canon—many readers, especially since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, finding in it a more acceptable philosophy than that contained in Hegel’s systematic works, but that is not how Hegel or his contemporaries saw its significance. The term “phenomenology” predated Hegel, having been coined by the 18th century mathematician J. H. Lambert, and having been used by Kant, in a letter to Lambert, to suggest a type of methodological “propaedeutic” to the actual doing of scientific philosophy. With this Kant seems to have meant by “phenomenology” what he later characterized as “critique” in the *Critique of Pure Reason*—a work which Kant regarded as enabling *further* properly scientific approaches to both theoretical and practical philosophy.

Such a sense of a propaedeutic to philosophy was central to Hegel’s use of the term, and while we find in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* many philosophical ideas that are clearly Hegel’s own and that recur in other works, the text itself was not meant to be an expression of philosophical thought, but a type of intellectual activity in which

ordinary “consciousness” is to be lead to a position from which it can start to think philosophically. According to the text’s original title, Hegel had conceived of phenomenology as a “science of the experience of consciousness”, but the “experience” involved here is meant to lead to the abandonment of the position of “consciousness” itself. Genuine philosophizing, then, would start in earnest with the *Science of Logic*, and would be continued in the system of “real philosophy” that would be constructed on the basis of the “thought determinations” worked out in the *Logic*. But what can be meant by the idea of thought going beyond the structures of “consciousness” in this way?

### *Consciousness*

With the idea of the need to surpass “consciousness”, Hegel was in no way suggesting that philosophical thought should be *unconscious*: “the distinction between the instinctive act and the intelligent and free one”, he notes, is that “the latter is performed with an awareness of what is being done ... spirit is essentially consciousness, this self-knowing is a fundamental determination of its actuality” (SL, p. 37). Hegel’s thoughts on “consciousness” are subtle. First, he was not tied to the Cartesian identification of thinking and consciousness, and even seemed to recognize a place for unconscious mental processes (SL, p. 39). Nevertheless, he held that for *free* thought the thinker has to rise to a consciousness of those determinations that structure thought—determinations of which one would not be normally conscious. Rather, the sense in which he denies that consciousness is the appropriate cognitive medium for philosophy is the sense in which consciousness is conceived in terms of a fundamental and fixed separation and opposition between the individual thinker (the “subject”) and that which is being thought (the “object” of which that subject is conscious)—a structure that had been elaborated by Reinhold. While this oppositional “subject–object” structure does characterize an essential *phase* of thinking for Hegel, it cannot be taken to be the defining characteristic or the essential nature of thought.

With this in mind, some of Hegel’s motives for denying that consciousness can be the medium of philosophy become apparent. For example, philosophy could never aspire to the comprehensiveness proper to it (there being nothing beyond the proper scope of philosophy—its subject matter is “the Absolute”) were its subject matter construed as an object *for* a subject. Clearly then there would be something excluded—the very subject doing the thinking. While what Hegel had in mind as an alternative to this intuitively plausible subject–object model of thought is not immediately obvious, a few possible candidates suggest themselves. He might be appealing to philosophy on the model of a type of *self*-knowledge, in which the subject-over-against-an-object conception seems wrong as subject and object are here identical, or he might be thinking of a type of collective thinking, undertaken by a community, say, in which the unity of the “thinking subject” is distributed over a plurality of different subjects, or he could have in mind something closer to a religious conception of some sort of “participation” of the individual conscious subject in the mind of a God. All of these elements play a role in Hegel’s alternative

to the simple subject–object model, but to select out one image in preference to the others gives a distorted impression as Hegel attempts to integrate these three dimensions into a uniquely structured single account.

### *Following the “experience” of consciousness*

Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* commences with a consideration of variously articulated structures (or “shapes”) of consciousness. Everyday subjects, Hegel thinks, in the first instance tend to understand themselves as individual conscious subjects who experience and know particular kinds of objects. The experience involved in reading the text will co-opt such subjects (the readers) for philosophical thought by getting them to divest themselves of the idea that the oppositional structure of consciousness is ultimate. But phenomenology does this not by offering arguments to persuade the reader to somehow relinquish its self-conception (this is one sense in which phenomenology is not philosophy proper). Rather, it simply appeals to the experience of following the consequences for a represented consciousness (the “object consciousness”) of that consciousness’s attempting to take seriously the normative shape within which it functions. It will be within and on account of this experience that the limitations of each shape of consciousness become apparent, forcing the object consciousness to move on to another shape. At the end of the process, the readers having themselves experienced the limitations of *all* particular shapes of consciousness now come to abandon the overarching subject–object opposition of consciousness itself, thereby becoming freed for thought proper, and hence for philosophy. While Hegel’s interpretation of “phenomenology” is a highly innovative one, we might think of the basic conception behind his idea as a Kantian one.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant had argued that since empirical knowledge is conditioned by structures contributed *by* the knower (both intuitional and conceptual), the “objects” thereby known cannot be thought of “realistically” as what makes up the world as it is “in itself”. In the “Transcendental Dialectic” Kant argued that this confusion of objects (in his jargon, confusing “phenomena” and “noumena”) characteristically results in the generation of contradictions such as those that have traditionally plagued metaphysics. For this reason, he implied, we must refrain from the attempt to know the world “as it is in itself”. This project of traditional metaphysics was then to be replaced by a type of self-knowledge—knowledge by the thinker of its own constitutive conditions as a thinker.

In Hegel’s *Phenomenology*, each of the steps within the experience that consciousness goes through will present micro-instances of the generation of the contradictions Kant had alluded to, but the contradictions are afforded *resolutions* that Kant would not have recognized. Thus in the “sense-certainty” examined in Chapter 1, this shape of consciousness takes as its true objects bare sensuous presences, somewhat like the “ideas” that early modern empiricists thought could be known with certainty. We readers then follow the attempts of the subject of this shape of consciousness to make these initially implicit criteria defining its objects explicit—

that is, consciously available to it. By the end of the chapter, however, we have seen that this consciousness has learnt from experience that its own initial conception of objecthood was contradictory. Rather than being immediate and singular as assumed—something immediately present like *this, here, now* (Phen, ¶¶91–5), its objects have been experienced as having some implicit universal (conceptual) aspect. To be *consciously aware* of what is present to the mind as *this* is now to be aware of it as an instance of a kind—it is now *a* this. A new criterion concerning the nature of the object known emerges from this realization that makes this conceptual dimension explicit—one that defines the new “shape” of “perception”, the experience of which is in turn observed in chapter 2.

Already a pattern for the “experience of consciousness” has been established. As in Chapter 1, once again consciousness’s efforts to make its implicit criteria for objecthood explicit to itself by making them in turn objects of consciousness has resulted in contradictions. The objects of “perception” are basically conceived as something like Aristotelian instances of thing-kinds, but once more, experience finds that contradictions undermine this shape, and a new shape, “the understanding”, emerges from the rubble of perception. The understanding takes as real *not* those immediately graspable thing-kind instances of “perception”, but something underlying the perceived phenomena and responsible for them—posited (rather than perceived) “forces” (Phen, ¶136).

Of course “the understanding” will survive its own experience no more than the earlier shapes, but what emerges from the collapse of understanding marks a higher level transition than those seen so far—the transition to Chapter 4, “The Truth of Self-Certainty,” marking a transition from consciousness to *self*-consciousness. What we see here is something like a transition from all pre-Kantian conceptions of the objects of philosophy to a Kantian one, or, more specifically, to the form of transformed Kantianism found in the work of Fichte, and in this context we find what is perhaps the most well-known part of the *Phenomenology*, the “struggle of recognition” of the “master–slave dialectic”—a parable meant to reveal the necessity of normative, institutionalizable *recognitive* relations between individual subjects for the functioning of any form of “self-consciousness”.

Self-consciousness as “self-certainty” initially conceives itself in a negating relation to the object of which it is conscious, as in the intentional state of desire, but experience shows that it “*achieves its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness*” (Phen, ¶175). We readers are meant to grasp this relation of two mutually recognizing self-consciousnesses as an instantiation of spirit (*Geist*)—“an absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousness which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence” (Phen §177). But this essentially *mutual* relation constitutive of spirit is here contradicted by the *asymmetry* of its instantiation between master and slave (Phen §§184–5). A slave “does not count as an “I”, for his master is his “I” instead” (Enc, §163, Add), and this contradiction will become apparent to the protagonists in the *experience* of the condition of slavery in which the independence of the master turns into dependence *on* the slave.

The “dialectic” characterizing these “experiences” through which the reader will progress will eventually be seen within historical configurations of such relations of recognition constituting “objective spirit”. Clearly, there is a type of *telos* envisaged here aimed at a configuration of institutions capable of supporting the type of subjectivity that will itself be capable of truly “free” thought and action, and thus capable of philosophizing. Thus, after tracing the experience of self-consciousnesses through the more encompassing processes of “reason” (in Chapter 5) and configurations of “objective spirit” in (in Chapter 6), in the hastily sketched final two chapters of the *Phenomenology*, Chapters 7, “Religion” and 8, “Absolute Knowing,” Hegel moves to the level of what he calls “absolute spirit”, where rather than configurations of actual patterns of intersubjectivity (objective spirit), he focuses on the cultural objectifications of art, religion and philosophy as they develop through history.

While this termination in “absolute knowing” is often taken as testifying to Hegel’s rejection of Kant’s critical project and his commitment to a substantial “monistic” metaphysics (Horstmann 2006), some interpreters have tended to see Hegel as furthering the Kantian critique of “dogmatic” metaphysics. Thus rather than understand “absolute knowing” as the achievement of some ultimate and substantive “God’s-eye view” of everything—the philosophical analogue to the fusion with God sought in some religions—“post-Kantian” interpreters (e.g., Pippin (1989; 2008) and Pinkard (2000; 2012)) see it as the accession to a mode of self-critical thought in which the thinker becomes consciously aware of its own thought processes. This is the standpoint at which the reader of Hegel’s next book, the *Science of Logic*, is now meant to be situated. Philosophy proper starts here, although many of the ideas encountered will have been already seen in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

### Logic as the Standpoint of Philosophy

It is common to start a discussion of Hegel’s “logic” by pointing out that by “logic” we cannot assume that Hegel means what the term means in contemporary philosophy. Hegel did not have in mind that type of formal approach to valid inference that we now think of as the subject matter of logic. Rather, in contrast to any formal consideration of the processes of thought, Hegel says that logic “constitutes metaphysics proper or purely speculative philosophy” (SL, p. 27). Thus many have taken Hegel’s logic to be primarily an account of the constitutive structures of “being” (Beiser 2005; Houlgate 2006; Stern 2009).

Nevertheless, such claims that Hegel’s logic is “really” a metaphysics can obscure both the degree to which it remains a “logic” as well as the peculiarities of the type of “metaphysics” that such a logic is meant to constitute.<sup>2</sup> Hegel certainly resisted any attempt to *reduce* logic to what he described as a “logic of the understanding”, but nevertheless insisted that “the mere logic of the understanding is contained in the speculative logic” (EL, § 82 remark) and considered the

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<sup>2</sup> For a welcome corrective to the traditional view, see Burbidge 2011.

understanding as “the first form of logical thinking” (EL, §80 add). It was “an infinite step forward that the forms of thought have been freed from the material in which they are submerged in self-conscious intuition, figurate conception, and in our ... ideational desiring and willing ... and that these universalities have been brought into prominence for their own sake and made objects of contemplation as was done by Plato and after him especially by Aristotle” (SL, 33). It is the “right” and “merit” of the understanding that it gives “fixity” and “determinacy” to the domains of theoretical and practical reasoning (EL, 126) since in philosophy “each thought should be grasped in its full precision and ... nothing should remain vague and indeterminate” (EL, §81 add.).

For Hegel, the restriction of logic to the fixed determinations in the “logic of the understanding” is problematic, not because he embraced any “irrationalist” conception of a world-process fundamentally outside the scope of conceptual capture. Rather, he is critical of the “logic of the understanding” because it leaves out the two other essential moments of rational thinking: the negativity of “dialectic” which, as we have seen, brings the fixed determinations of the understanding into contradiction,<sup>3</sup> and the positivity of “speculation”, which “apprehends the unity of the determinations in their opposition, the affirmative that is contained in their dissolution and in their transition” (EL, §82). It is only these three interconnected dimensions of “logic” that gives life to thought.

Despite Hegel’s criticisms of Kant’s restrictedness to the understanding, we can still recognize in Hegel’s approach to the categories or “thought determinations” elements of Kant’s “metaphysical deduction” of the categories in the “Transcendental analytic, Book 1, Chapter I” of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. For Hegel, Kant’s deduction of the categories had relied upon a taxonomy of judgment forms that he had simply accepted from the tradition and *not deduced*, thus allowing an external determination into a process that should have been one of immanent development. Hegel’s positive use of a dialectic that for Kant had *only negative* connotations supplies him, he thinks, with the means for expounding this rational development. Thus in the first chapter of Book 1, “Being,” we see how developments in the *Logic* in many ways repeat those of the first chapters of the *Phenomenology*—now, however, at the level of the determinations of “thought” itself, rather than within the oppositional structure of “consciousness”. “Being” is the thought determination with which the work commences because it at first seems to be the most obvious and “immediate”: what everything has in common is that it *is*. “Being” seems to have no presuppositions, but the effort of thought to make such a content determinate as a content for conscious awareness ultimately undermines it and brings about some new content. “Being” seems to be both immediate and simple, but reflection reveals that it itself is, in fact, only determinate by standing in opposition to something else—“nothing.” In fact, the attempt to think “being” as immediate, and so as not mediated by its opposing concept “nothing,” has so deprived it of any determinacy or meaning

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<sup>3</sup> For the philosophical background to this dimension of reason as Hegel conceives it, see Forster 1989.

at all that being has effectively become *nothing*. The way out of this paradox is to posit a third category, “becoming”—the concept that “apprehends the unity of the determinations in their opposition”. We now grasp that “being” was not a self-sufficient concept as had seemed, but a “moment” of another more inclusive determination that is now affirmed.

The thought determinations of Book 1 lead eventually into those of Book 2, “The Doctrine of Essence”. Crucially, the contrasting pair “essence” and “appearance” allow the thought of some underlying reality which manifests itself through a different overlying appearance—we are reminded of those “forces” with which “the understanding” in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* had been concerned. But distinctions such as “essence” and “appearance” will themselves instantiate the relation of determinate negation, and the metaphysical tendency to think of reality as made up of some underlying substrates or forces in contrast to the merely superficial appearance will itself come to grief with the discovery that the notion of an “essence” is only meaningful in relation to the “appearance” that it is meant to explain away.

Hegel is critical of Kant for presupposing an array of judgment forms when deducing the categories, but nevertheless, like Kant links these categorial structures to the structures of judgments and inferences they inform. But these must be deduced rather than assumed, and he attempts to do in the course of Book 3, “The Doctrine of Concept”, this “book” also comprising “Volume Two” of the work, the system of “Subjective Logic”.

The account of “the concept” with which Book 3 commences is “in the first instance, formal” and it is here, in Chapters 2 (“The Judgment”) and 3 (“The Syllogism”) that we find Hegel’s account of formal logic. Clearly Hegel doesn’t mean by “concept” (*Begriff*, sometimes translated as “notion”) what Kant standardly meant—the type of empirical conceptual representation applied in a judgment. Rather, Hegel’s model for “concept” is the “transcendental” concept or “idea” that Kant thought as ultimately presupposed by the application of *any* empirical concept—the concept “I” (SL, 583–4). We have mentioned Hegel’s innovative recognitive account of the conditions of self-conscious “I-hood” in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and, to be determinate, such recognitive acts must employ concepts in the way implied by the fact that a slave, for example, recognizes his master *as a master*, and in this affirms his own status *as a slave*. Hegel had made the “I” one such concept, but the “I” is not universal to human life, as Kant thought; rather, it emerges with developments of “spirit” only found in history after the decline of the Greek polis. Possession of the concept “I” will thereby be dependent on the possession of many other concepts, including ones with which an individual will recognize others and recognize the worldly things which mediate relation to others. Thus “I” will be no self-sufficient atomic concept; it must ultimately be conceptually related to many other concepts, and Hegel purports to unpack this implicit content via an examination of the way concepts function in judgments and syllogisms. This will lead to the puzzling idea that the formal syllogism will generate a content from its own processes

and thus give itself objective reality. This is one point on which disagreements as to the sense in which “logic” constitutes a metaphysics will turn.

The concept, Hegel asserts “contains three moments: universality, particularity and singularity (*Einzelheit*)” and these three categories will form the master categories structuring the rest of the exposition. Kant had contrasted the generality of concepts with the “singularity” (*Einzelheit*) of the intuitive contents needed to make concepts determinate. Hegel also recognizes that *merely* universal concepts are indeterminate and must become determinate in order to function at all, but rather than indicating the need for the addition of something *non-conceptual*, he appeals to a different “moment” of conceptuality—particularity. Hegel uses “particularity” (*Besonderheit*) with the sense it had for the Greeks: a “particular” is to be grasped in terms of the genus-concept specifying the *kind* instantiated, and is to be distinguished from something singular (*einzel*)—commonly called a “bare particular”. We have in fact seen these crucial distinctions before, in Hegel’s critique of “sense-certainty” in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. What sense-certainty had immediately grasped as singular turned out to be a concept-containing particular—a thing-kind instance. These distinctions will be crucial for Hegel’s account of judgments and inferences, which are taxonomized according to the different ways the concepts constituting them function as universals, particulars, or singulars.

When Hegel comes to discuss judgments in Chapter 2 he contrasts two different approaches to the logical structure of judgment that might be taken: a term-first approach in which subject and predicate are “considered complete, each on its own account, apart from the other” (SL, 625), and an approach in which subject and predicate terms receive their determination “in the judgment first” (SL, 627; Burbidge 2011, 165). The former clearly reflects the approach of traditional term logics like that of Aristotle, while the latter seems to allude to the approach in which the components of the judgment are treated in terms of their contribution to what is usually thought of as their propositional content, such as in Stoic logic with which Hegel was familiar (LHP II, p. 255; Redding 2013). The significance of these differences comes out clearly in Hegel’s treatment of inferences (“syllogisms”) in Chapter 3, but it also reflects on the differences in the structures of the doctrines of being and essence, as the negations found in being reflect the term negations of *term logic*, which those of essence reflect the external negations of *propositional logics*.

Hegel describes the syllogism as “the truth of the judgment” (SL, 669), a claim that might be read in terms of an “inferentialist” account of judgment content (Brandt 2002; Redding 2007). At a “formal” level Hegel shows unexpected sophistication here, as what he has in mind with such a “proposition-first” approach becomes explicit in his discussion of the “mathematical syllogism”—an approach to judgment introduced by Leibniz and developed by the Tübingen logician whose influence was felt during Hegel’s time there, Gottfried Ploucquet (SL, 679–86). Rather than, like Aristotle, thinking of the judgment as the joining of a universal-naming predicate to a substance-naming particular subject, Leibniz suggested treating the subject term as itself a predicate, such that “S is P” could be read as identifying

terms “S” and “P” in that both could be regarded as being predicated of some (singular) “third” not named in the judgment (Capozzi and Roncaglia, 2009, 94–5). Treating this relation between subject and predicate as a type of identity—“S=P”—allowed their mathematical representation. This transformation results in the traditional syllogistic being completely reconfigured into what Hegel describes as the “syllogism of reflection”, which becomes made up on *singular* judgments, which allow *inductive* inferences.

This change in attitude to judgments and syllogisms reflect deep metaphysical differences between ancient and modern thought. Thus, while the objects that the Aristotelian categorical judgments making up the “syllogisms of existence” are about will be instances of thing-kinds to which contingent properties are predicated, this characterization will *not* hold for the objects of the constituent judgments of “syllogisms of reflection”. They are no longer perceivable substances but the abstract “posits” of the understanding. It is clear that for Hegel, Leibniz’s logic, which he treats at the point of transition between these two syllogistic forms (SL, 679–86), actualizes the dialectical self-undermining potential that is implicit in Aristotle’s whole logical project. Leibniz is today championed as the instigator of the type of algebraicization of logic reinvented in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Boole and others, as well as the type of *mechanization* of thought that blossomed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup>. Hegel treats Leibniz and Ploucquet more as representing the point of dialectical collapse of the traditional syllogistic, but his reasons here are similar to those championing such approaches today. In the judgments of the mathematical syllogism all distinctions between the “universal” and “particular” moments have been leveled as all concepts have been reduced to bare universal predicates applying to singular terms (SL, 679–80), but this undermines the intuitable (diagrammable) relations upon which Aristotelian inferential relations had initially been understood. Logical relations are now just a matter of “combinations and permutations” among symbols and so can be conceived as carried out *mechanically*—that is, independently of consciousness.<sup>4</sup> For Hegel, of course, loss of consciousness represents the *death* of what is *essential* for spirit and thought.

That something *living*—here reason—has to be brought to the point of its death before a proper resolution of the underlying problem is apparent is a recurring theme in Hegel from the *Phenomenology*’s “struggle for recognition” onwards. Thus, Henry Harris has argued for the importance for Hegel of the example of the pseudo-science of phrenology, where “observing reason” has been forced to the absurd identification of spirit with “a bone” (Phen ¶343). Harris’s description of phrenology as “the Calvary where singular Reason is crucified, and the spirit of ‘absolute knowledge’ rises from the grave” (Harris, vol 1, 585) reminds us of the significance of *God’s* very death in Hegel’s understanding of Christianity. Similarly, Leibniz’s logic represents the “ossification” of thought (SL, 575) as it reduces the life of

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<sup>4</sup> By this calculus, logic is meant to be “*mechanically* brought within the reach of the uneducated (*Ungebildeten*)” (SL, 686)—that is, those whose thinking has not been brought to the standpoint of philosophy.

thought to the operations of a dead mechanism—here too, thought must somehow “rise from the grave”. Clearly *something* of the Aristotelian speculative philosophy in which thought and existence were not abstractly opposed is called for, but *equally* clearly the solution must somehow incorporate the new rather than be a simple return to the old, as the *negation* of the old was already entailed by it.<sup>5</sup>

The reflective syllogism has provided a new type of inference for a distinctively modern conception of inductive reasoning which attempts to produce generalities from arrays of single instances, but, Hegel points out such reasoning must rely on analogies between individual things, such as when one reasons by analogy, hypothetically inferring properties of some thing on the basis of its similarity to another. One might understand the moon *as* an earth (each orbits another body), and infer (fallibly) by analogy possible properties of the moon. Like the *Phenomenology*’s “this” that is also an *instance* of “a this”, here the earth is both a single thing and an instance of a kind. As such it plays the role of a model for the task of understanding other bodies, but it plays this role only because it has been *given* it by a reasoner in a process of reasoning with it.

Here relations between universals and particulars hold in as much as they are posited by a subject—the “I” from which the determinations of subjective logic had started. The inherence of universals within particulars *is* not simply to be presupposed as in the objective logic, and Aristotelian realism about logical form has given place to a version of Kantian *idealism* about form. But this Kantian form of idealism must be stripped of the “formal” concept of its presupposed “transcendental I”. The I must be shown to be itself the product of an objective, historically developed, form of life. Hegel thus describes these processes which we have seen in the “ossified” material of formal logic as “pregnant” with content (SL, 695)—a content within which can be actualized the hitherto *presupposed* transcendental “I” itself.

### *The Return to the Objectivity of Logic and the Transition to Realphilosophy*

The *Subjective Logic* commenced with the discussion of “Subjectivity” within which Hegel has sketched his historical account of the development of formal logic from Aristotle to Leibniz, but formal logic only presents the ossified material of thought, and so “the problem is to render this material fluid and to re-ignite the spontaneity of the Notion is such dead matter” (SL, 575). In the next section, “Objectivity”, logic regains the sort of objectivity that it had for the ancients before the separation of being and thought, but this objectivity must now accommodate a place for the “I” which has been revealed as an essential component of the logical process. We now have to think of “judgments” and “syllogisms” not simply as subjective acts, but as processes running through the world such that elements of the world can be understood as configurations of thought’s articulations. This sounds like the ancient doctrine of “nous” or “logos” permeating reality, but this can no longer be thought of independently of the presence of finite beings such as ourselves, through whose

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<sup>5</sup> The centrality of “mechanism” to Hegel’s account of spirit in the socio-political sphere has recently been underlined by Ross (2008).

activities such processes unfold. And such beings have to be capable of the type of objectivity of thought that allows conceptual life to permeate nature. In this sense, Hegel's treatment of "Objectivity" in Section Two of Book 3 and, following this, in Section Three, "The Idea", must be read as attempting to exhibit the "content" able to function as objective conditions for this very type of thought.

What we find in "Objectivity" then, is Hegel's attempt to provide the logical structure of a series of forms of increasingly complex thought, starting with thought about mechanical processes and leading through thought about more complex processes such as chemical ones, and finally to the thought of organisms. This will provide the logical infrastructure of what in the following "real-philosophy" will be his *Philosophy of Nature*. Then, in Section Three, "The Idea", he will attempt to sketch the logical structure to be realized in the *Philosophy of Spirit*.

## Hegel's Systematic Real Philosophy

### *Philosophy of Nature*

Like the *Science of Logic*, the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* is itself divided into three parts: *Logic*, *Philosophy of Nature* and *Philosophy of Spirit*. Hegel's philosophy of nature, tied as it is to a presentation of the state of the natural sciences in his time, is generally thought to have little more than historical interest; it is clearly the philosophy of spirit that been the focus of most subsequent attention, and it is expansions on sections of the philosophy of spirit that form major texts within Hegel's oeuvre. We cannot pass over philosophy of nature, however, before addressing one common objection: the objection that Hegel attempts to "deduce" the entirety of the natural world from logical considerations alone, and so pre-empt empirical science. This objection is summed up in a critique of *Schelling's* early idealism made by the philosopher W. T. Krug in 1801. Hegel had responded in the following year and would return to his defense even after his break with Schelling. Krug had asserted that such an idealism must deduce, from the idea of "the Absolute" alone, *all* contingent phenomena, including the *actual* pen with which he was writing his very critique. Krug's criticism, Hegel responded, was made not from the point of view of philosophy but from "the common understanding" that "posits the Absolute on exactly the same level with the finite, and extends the range of the requirements that are made in respect of the finite to the Absolute" (OHU, 299). Krug did not understand "that the determinacies which cannot be comprehended within transcendental idealism, belong – so far as they are a proper topic of philosophical discussion at all – as Mr. Krug's pen is not – to the philosophy of nature" (ibid.). Hegel was to make a similar point in a remark added to the *Philosophy of Nature*: "It is the height of pointlessness to demand of the concept that it should explain, and as it is said, construe or deduce these contingent products of nature ... Traces of conceptual determination will certainly survive in the most particularized product, although they will not exhaust its nature" (PN, §250, remark). Rather than "deducing" the entire content of empirical reality, philosophy of nature takes as its subject matter the results of the natural sciences and tries to find *within* these results the sorts of categorial

structures deduced in the logic. Hegel's rejection of Kant's intuition–concept dichotomy was not meant to imply that there is no place for the contingencies of the *actual* world that Kant had tied to the contribution of intuition.

### *Philosophy of Spirit*

Hegel's usual triadic pattern in the *Philosophy of Spirit* results in the philosophies of subjective spirit, objective spirit, and absolute spirit. The first of these constitutes what is closest in Hegel's philosophy to a "philosophy of mind" in the contemporary sense while the philosophy of objective spirit concerns the objective patterns of social interaction and the cultural institutions within which "spirit" is objectified in patterns of human life. The last, comprises his philosophies of art, religion, and philosophy itself. Other than the *Encyclopedia* and the *Philosophy of Right*, the bulk of Hegel's mature written legacy consists in reconstructions of various series of lectures given at the University of Berlin. These lectures had been reconstituted (sometimes, unreliably) on the basis of Hegel's own notes and on various surviving student transcriptions. Of these series, one on philosophy of history, coincides with the final sections of the *Encyclopedia* section on "Objective Spirit", while the philosophy of art, philosophy of religion and the history of philosophy, coincide with the contents of "Absolute Spirit".

### *Subjective Spirit*

From what we have seen of Hegel's discussion of the polar oppositions of consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as well as the fact that the *Philosophy of Nature* concludes in a consideration of the animal organism, we can confidently expect that the starting point for Hegel's approach to the mind will be something *closer* to Aristotle's conception of the soul than the modern conception of "consciousness". Thus in "Anthropology" Hegel is concerned with what he terms "Seele", "soul"—which seems to translate more the ancient Greek term, "psyche": "If soul and body are absolutely opposed to one another as is maintained by the abstractive intellectual consciousness" Hegel comments, "then there is no possibility of any community between them. The community was, however, recognized by ancient metaphysics as an undeniable fact" (PN, § 389 add). Here spirit is "sunk" in nature, and consciousness is limited to what now might be described as "phenomenal consciousness" alone—"the feeling soul". Consciousness in the sense of the modern subject–object opposition only makes its appearance in the following second section labeled "Phenomenology of Spirit" (which, reprising much of the earlier book of that name, raises a problem for how we are to understand the relation of "phenomenology" and actual philosophy). Subjective spirit concludes with "psychology" which treats of the expressly rational dimensions of the life of the mind, considered in terms that would now be described as "normative" rather than naturalistic. This means that subjective spirit will ultimately only be understood in the context of *objective* spirit.

### *Objective Spirit*

Philosophy of *objective spirit* concerns the objective patterns of social interaction and the cultural institutions within which “spirit” is objectified in history, and here we are in the realm of “normative” and “institutional” facts rather than “brute” ones.

Objective spirit *starts* from the conception of a single agent who grasps itself as the bearer of “abstract right”, but not from any commitment to the ontological primacy of individuals. Just as the initial simple categories of the *Logic* develop in a way meant to demonstrate that what had at the start been conceived as simple can in fact only be made determinate in virtue of being part of some larger structure or process, here too it is meant to be shown that any simple willing and right-bearing subject only gains *its* determinacy in virtue of a place it finds for itself in a larger *social*, and ultimately *historical*, structure or process. As is explicit in the expanded section of *Philosophy of Right*, contractual exchange (the minimal social interaction for contract theorists) is treated as a form of recognition (EPR, §71 remark)—the approach introduced in Chapter 4 of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. A contractual exchange of commodities between two individuals itself involves an implicit act of recognition in as much as each, in giving something to the other in exchange for what they want, is thereby recognizing that other *as* a proprietor of that thing, or, more properly, of its *value*. By contrast, such proprietorship would be *denied* rather than recognized in fraud or theft—forms of “wrong” (*Unrecht*) in which right is negated rather than acknowledged or posited. In the exchange relation that we can see what it means for Hegel for individual subjects to share a “common will”—an idea which will have important implications with respect to the difference of Hegel’s conception of the state from that of Rousseau.

Hegel passes from the abstract individualism of “Abstract Right” to the social determinacies of “*Sittlichkeit*” or “Ethical Life” via considerations first of “wrong” (the negation of right) and its punishment (the negation of wrong, and hence the “negation of the negation” of the original right), and then of “morality,” conceived more or less as an internalization of the external legal relations. The corresponding paragraphs on morality *Philosophy of Right* (§§129–41) contain passages well-known in the context of Hegel’s critique of Kant’s morality of the categorical imperative. Just as Hegel had accused Kant’s deduction of the categories as relying on “external” considerations, here Hegel argues that the doctrine of the categorical imperative is unable to account for *actual* concrete duties and must presuppose them. Kant’s account of morality can only be understood against the background of concrete normative forms of life: *Sittlichkeit* within which the modern reflective moral subject will play a real but limited role.

One of the distinctive features of modern *Sittlichkeit* is the way in which it distinguishes the sphere of “civil society” from that of the state proper, situating this economically based sphere as dependent upon and in contrastive opposition to the more *immediate* sphere of the family. While civil society is structured by the abstract cognitive forms we have seen in *contract*, the family is a form of sociality mediated by a quasi-natural inter-subjective recognition rooted in sentiment and feeling. In the

family the particularity of each individual tends to be absorbed into the particular social unit, giving this manifestation of *Sittlichkeit* a one-sidedness that is the inverse of that found in market relations in which participants grasp themselves in the first instance as separate singular individuals who *then* enter into relationships that are external to them.

These two opposite but interlocking principles of social existence provide the basic structures in terms of which the component parts of the modern state are articulated and understood. Part of the problem for the rational state will be to ensure that each of these two principles mediates the other, each thereby mitigating the *one-sidedness* of the other. All these spheres are meant as modeled on different “syllogistic” configurations from the logic, and we might see Hegel’s “logical” schematisation of the modern “rational” state as a way of displaying the structure of just those sorts of institutions that a state must provide if it is to answer Rousseau’s question of the form of association needed for the formation and expression of the “general will”.

Perhaps one of the most influential parts of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* concerns the contradictions of the unfettered capitalist economy reflecting the unmediated operations of civil society. While it is true that “subjective selfishness” turns into a “contribution towards the satisfaction of the needs of everyone else,” (PR, §199) this does not entail that this “general plenty” would thereby trickle down through the rest of society for the benefit of all. In fact, the unfettered operation of the market *produces* a class caught in a spiral of poverty. Starting from this “dialectical” analysis, Marx later used it as evidence of the need to abolish the individual proprietorial rights at the heart of Hegel’s “civil society” and socialize the means of production, but Hegel, had not drawn this conclusion. The distortions of the economy was to be contained within an over-arching institutional framework of the state, and its social effects offset by welfarist state intervention.

The final five paragraphs of objective spirit, and hence the point of transition to absolute spirit, concern *world history* (*die Weltgeschichte*). We have seen the relevance of historical issues for Hegel in the context of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, such that a series of different forms of objective spirit can be grasped in terms of the degree to which they enable the development of a universalizable self-consciousness capable of rationality and freedom. Hegel was to enlarge on these ideas in a lecture series given five times during his Berlin period, and it was *via* the text assembled on the basis of these lectures by his son Karl, that many readers would be introduced to Hegel’s ideas after his death.

World history is made up of the histories of *particular* peoples within which spirit assumes some “particular principle on the lines of which it must run through a development of its consciousness and its actuality” (PM, §548). Just the same dialectic that we have first seen operative within shapes of consciousness in the *Phenomenology* is to be observed here. An historical community acts on the principle that informs its social life, the experience of this action bringing about a conscious awareness of this principle, breaking the immediacy of its operation. This brings

about the decline of that community but gives rise to the principle of a new community: “in rendering itself objective and making this its being an object of thought, [spirit] on the one hand destroys the determinate form of its being, and on the other hand gains a comprehension of the universal element which it involves, and thereby gives a new form to its inherent principle ... [which] has risen into another, and in fact a higher principle” (PH, 78) This dialectic, which, however, only passes through *some* communities, is “the path of liberation for the spiritual substance, the deed by which the absolute final aim of the world is realized in it, and the merely implicit mind achieves consciousness and self-consciousness” (PM, §549).

“The analysis of the successive grades [of universal history] in their abstract form belongs to logic” (PH, 56), but once more, it must be stressed that, as with philosophy of nature, philosophy of history is not meant to somehow *deduce* actual empirical historical phenomena like Krug’s pen; rather, it takes the results of actual empirical history as its material and attempts to find exemplified within this material the sorts of categorial progressions of the logic.<sup>6</sup> The actual is full of contingencies from which empirical historians will have already abstracted in constructing their narratives, for example, when writing from particular *national* perspectives. To grasp history *philosophically*, however, will be to grasp it from *the stance of world-history* itself, and this provides the transition to *absolute* spirit, as world history will be understood in terms of the manifestation of what from a religious perspective is called “God”, or from a philosophical perspective, “reason”. Hegel clearly thinks that there is a way of cognitively relating to history in a way that goes beyond the standpoint of “consciousness” and the understanding—the standpoint of what we now think of as informing scientific history. From the perspective of consciousness history is something that stands over against me *qua* something known, but from the standpoint of *self-consciousness* I grasp this history as the history of that which contributes to *me*, *qua* rational and free being.

### *Absolute Spirit*

The subject matter of the final 25 paragraphs of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Spirit*, “Absolute Spirit”, came to be expanded massively into the contents of three different lectures series on philosophy of art, religion, and history of philosophy that were to appear after Hegel’s death, and with which Hegel was to become perhaps the most significant synoptic theorist of these cultural phenomena. As any attempt to capture the richness of his thought here in a few paragraphs would be futile, I will simply sketch how his approach draws on the conceptual resources noted so far.

For Kant, aesthetic experience had been conceived largely in relation to the experience of the beauty of nature, but for Hegel aesthetics is primarily about *art*, and the art of historical peoples is understood in terms of the attempt to bring before consciousness the totality of what is: it is as art that “consciousness of the Absolute first takes shape” (PM, §556). In the 1790s, Friedrich Schiller and Friedrich Schlegel

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<sup>6</sup> The way the activity of the philosophical historian presupposes that of “original” and “reflective” historians is treated in the “Introduction” (LPH, 1–8).

had historicized aesthetics, distinguishing the forms of ancient and modern art, and Hegel adopts Schlegel's terminology to distinguish the "classical" art that thrived in the Greek and Roman worlds from the "romantic" art of post-classical times. Again, the romantic or modern here will be characterized by the depth of a form of *subjective* consciousness that is largely missing in antiquity. But those in antiquity had lived with a comfortable felt unity between spirit and body, and so modern subjectivity is purchased as the expense of a sense of alienation from the actual world. Hegel, influenced by the work of a former colleague, the Heidelberg philologist Friedrich Creuzer (A, 310–11), adds to this categorization of art forms a further one characterizing the material cultures of ancient Eastern civilizations such as Persia, India and Egypt: "symbolic" art.

The symbolic art of pantheistic religions of the East used natural elements to symbolize the gods of such cultures: Zoroastrianism had taken light, for example, to symbolize the divine (A 325), and animal worship was found in the Egyptians (A 357). But such actual *things* had to be distinguished from what was meant to be symbolized by them, so violence had to be done to such natural forms in attempts to represent the absolute—such cultural products thus becoming "bizarre, grotesque, and tasteless" (A, 77). This, however, undermined their initial function, and a dialectical solution to this contradiction would be found with the art of the Greeks, which gave expression to "the Absolute" or "the Idea" by taking as its material the specifically *human form*, but only on condition of its being rendered "exempt from all the deficiency of the purely sensuous and from the contingent finitude of the phenomenal world". But even as idealized in Greek sculpture, say, the represented Greek god is still an object of "naïve intuition and sensuous imagination" (A, 77–8), and as such the classical gods contained the germ of their own decline as they could not evade "the finitudes incidental to anthropomorphism [which] pervert the gods into the reverse of what constitutes the essence of the substantial and Divine" (A, 502–4). A new form of art will be needed to resolve these contradictions: romantic art. But the *material* for this form will not come from within art itself.

Romantic art still represents the Absolute in the form of a man, but now one "not merely imagined but factual". This man is Jesus, understood as the son of God (A, 505). That is, the transition from classical art to the religious art of Christianity also liberates religion from the grip of the sensuous, and Christianity avoids the type of reliance on the beautiful productions of art in the way that characterized classical religions. The shift from classical to romantic art, then, represents a broader shift between a culture whose final authority is an aesthetic one to a culture in which this authority is religious, and thus represents a shift in the authoritativeness of different cognitive forms.

While Greek art-religion relied on beautiful sensuous presences to represent the Absolute, the *new* religious content is fundamentally represented to consciousness as "*Vorstellung*"—"representation". This is a form of representation based in that of everyday *perceivable* objects and conceives of "higher" things on the metaphorical extension of such cognition. Thus trinitarian Christian religion still has a (once)

perceivable object as the medium for representing its God—Jesus—but Jesus is not an aesthetically idealized human, but the “son of” another divine person within the trinune diety who can only be posited as his “father”. After the death of the actual Jesus, God continues to exist in the practices of the religious community *qua* “holy spirit”. Trinitarian Christianity, especially in its modern protestant phase, becomes the “consummate religion”, allowing a type of universalization of I-hood not found in other religions.

*Vorstellungen* combine sensuous images with conceptualized relations, and a final shift in absolute spirit will occur when this type of thinking is replaced by *properly* conceptual thought. Hegel sees this as a continuation of the internal transformation within Christianity from medieval Catholicism and modern Protestantism: “It is a great obstinacy, the kind of obstinacy which does honour to human beings, that they are unwilling to acknowledge in their attitudes anything which has not been justified by thought – and this obstinacy is the characteristic property of the modern age, as well as being the distinctive principle of Protestantism. What Luther inaugurated as faith in feeling and the testimony of the spirit is the same thing that the spirit, at a more mature stage of its development, endeavours to grasp in the *concept* so as to free itself in the present, and thus find itself therein” (EPR, Preface, p. 22).

As with the transition from art to religion, the transition from religion to philosophy thus involves a shift within the authority of cognitive forms. Whether Hegel was signaling the overcoming of religion by a fundamentally *secular* philosophy, or a transition to some higher, more *rational* form of religion is a question that divided his followers into “left” and “right” Hegelianism—the split that ultimately brought down Hegelian philosophy itself. One thing is clear: if one takes Hegel as a basically *secular* modernist, for whom the governance of life in the modern world is to be driven by argumentative conceptually articulated inquiry rather than appeals to tradition and religion, his account of the nature of “logical life” underlying this modern life will separate him from those more mainstream “naturalistic” forms of secularist modernism. Hegel identified himself as a Christian as he saw the Trinitarian conception of God as a precursor, in the form of “*Vorstellungen*”, of his *own* holistic notion of “the concept”. Without this element we have only the dead ossifications of reason, rather than reason itself, and the inability to conceptually distinguish the realms of nature and spirit.

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