RETHINKING SELLARS MYTH OF THE GIVEN: FROM THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL TO THE MODAL RELEVANCE OF GIVENNESS IN KANT AND HEGEL.

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Especially since the appearance of Richard Rorty's popular, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Rorty 1979), Wilfrid Sellars critique of the "Myth of the Given" has become widely regarded as a major step forward in twentieth-century philosophy, and as able to speak across differing philosophical traditions. As presented in his 1956 lectures published as *Empiricism and Philosophy of Mind* (Sellars 1997), Sellars critique is complex and multi-sided, but the core elements of what might be considered to have become its prototypical form—the critique of earlier twentieth-century empiricist "sense-datum theories"—are easily stated. Sense-datum theorists such as Bertrand Russell in *The Principles of Philosophy* (Russell 1912) had sought to ground empirical knowledge in the mind's certain and immediate knowledge of "sense-data" given immediately in experience. But, Sellars asked, how could anything conceived as a type of *sensed particular* play the appropriate role of providing evidence for the truth of some non-inferential judgment meant to be grounded on it? *Qua* particular, the sense-datum simply lacks the requisite logical form required to support such rational relations, the sense-datum theorist seeming to "sever the logical connection between sense data and non-inferential knowledge" (Sellars 1997, 18). In *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* Rorty had paired Sellars critique with arguments from the later Wittgenstein, Quine and Davidson (Rorty 1979, ch. 4) in an effort to undermine the entire project of regarding the mind as capable of representing or "mirroring" the world.

In his 1994 book, *Mind and World*, John McDowell similarly links Sellars critique to Donald Davidson's apparently complementary claim that "nothing can count as a reason for holding a belief except another belief" (Davidson 2001, 141; McDowell 2009, 268).[1] But McDowell also points to the dangers of the Davidson–Rorty dismissal of perceptual experience, attempting to preserve some fundamental sense of our "being open" to the world in such experience. McDowell especially highlights the relation of Sellars critique to the earlier critiques of empiricism made by Kant and Hegel, thereby playing an important role in recent attempts to breathe life back into these approaches to philosophy. This paper is in the spirit of such a project, attempting to preserve some sense of the role of perceptual experience in McDowell he worries goes missing in the approaches of Rorty and Davidson. But my efforts will be directed to an attempt to *reframe* the debate about the role of the givenness in perceptual experience, in a way that distinguishes between the approaches of Kant and Hegel, by relocating this discussion to a different terrain. If we use the upper-case "Given" to capture what Sellars refers to as "a piece of professional—*epistemological*—shoptalk" (Sellars 1997, 13 emphasis added), we might retain the lower-case in relation to the

[1] Davidson had offered this as being "in agreement with Rorty" (Davidson 2001, 141).

role played by givenness in another, specifically the *modal* context, as treated by both Kant and Hegel.

Kant's arguments show a mixture of modal and epistemological concerns that are difficult to untangle, however, the way in which Kant understands modality might be understood as encouraging a similar interpretation of givenness to that of the empiricist *Given* as found in sense-datum theorists. In contrast, Hegel's attitude to modality is such that it allows a clearer alignment with Sellars' critique of the mythical Given, while still allowing a role for perceptual givenness differently understood. Expressly resisting the need to establish some particular cognitions as *grounds* upon which other judgments can be justified as objective, Hegel rather establishes them as having the status of immediate and correctable context-bound cognitions of objects of an always subject-related *actual* world, and he derives judgments about *possible* alternative ways the world might be from the effect of *negations* of those original judgments. In this way, his modified conception of judgment is, I suggest, better able to accommodate the modal role Kant had given to empirical intuitions, at the same time avoiding the risk of treating intuitions as empiricist-like Givens that threatens in Kant. Moreover, Hegel's treatment avoids the elimination of experience that worries McDowell about the approaches of Rorty and Davidson. But this involves introducing a conception of judgment that is *not* found in Rorty, Davidson *or* McDowell, a conception I discuss under the banner of Hegel's "logical dualism".

The first task to be undertaken here is that of examining the approach to modality found first in Kant and its consequences for the understanding of Kantian empirical intuitions. I will argue that Kant's position in the *Critique of Pure Reason* can be understood as a *critical*, and so non-ontological, version of Leibniz's earlier approach to modality that can be labelled as "possibilist"—broadly, an approach to the actual world that treats it as *just one* of a variety of real alternative possibilities. This, I suggest, leaves empirical intuitions seeming to function as epistemological Givens and it raises the pressing question of the rational role of such Givens. Then, in section 2, I contrast possibilism with its "actualist" alternative—an approach to modality recognizable in some contemporary modal metaphysicians, but also, I suggest, in Hegel. From such a perspective we might expect that the idea of something *given* in perceptual experience can be more clearly resistant to this threatening interpretation, and this topic, and its bearing on the Myth of the Given and its Sellarsian critique, is then explored in section 3.

1. Modal–Epistemic relations in Kant, and the Significance of the Givens of Empirical Intuition.

In *Mind and World* McDowell commences by taking an oft-quoted claim from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as the starting point for his Sellars-based criticisms of foundationalist appeals to the Given. At the outset of the Transcendental Logic, Kant links the "receptive" and "spontaneous" sources of human cognitive function—"the understanding" and "sensibility"—by making the operations of each dependent on the other.

"Without sensibility" he writes, "no object would be given to us, and without understanding none would be thought". Then, relying on the distinction between the respective cognitions (*Erkenntnisse*) characteristic of those two sources, concepts and intuitions, he adds "thoughts without [intuitive] content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (Kant 1998, A51/B75).

Kant's employment of the intuition–concept distinction, however, makes his own standing within the context of Sellars critique of the Myth of the Given unclear and controversial. It could be thought that it is the mere fact that for Kant intuitions must operate *in concert with concepts* that protects them from the charge of being equivalent to empiricist Givens,[2] but it is not clear that this alone is sufficient to protect Kant from Sellars charge. Nor is it sufficient for McDowell who, in *Mind and* World, insists that to avoid the Myth one must have "receptivity" as not making "*an even notionally separable contribution* to the cooperation" between the two human faculties (McDowell 1994, 9, emphasis added). As to whether Kant meets this stricter criterion, McDowell's answer is both "yes" and "no": "yes" if one considers Kant's approach to experience itself, but "no" when one considers things from the perspective of his associated "transcendental story" (McDowell 1994, 41).

Opinions as to whether Kant is reliant on the empiricist idea of intuition as an epistemic Given or whether, like Sellars, he is a critic of this idea, range across a wide spectrum. For example, Rorty (1979, ch. 3.3) and Michael Friedman (2002) respectively condemn Kant and praise him for relying on intuition to play the role played by the empiricist's Given. Sellars and the early McDowell are more nuanced, reading Kant as fundamentally a critic of the empiricist thesis whose criticism is, however, compromised in one way or other. For McDowell *after Mind and World*, a more careful reading of Kant shows him to be a consistent critic of the empiricist thesis, with the earlier alluded-to "transcendental story" as based on a mis-reading (McDowell 1998, lecture 2). Here I wish to circumvent the task of adjudicating these conflicting claims, and take the controversy itself as evidence for the weaker thesis that Kant's texts can at least be intelligibly *read* in either way. Instead I want to refocus the discussion onto other features of Kant's treatment of intuition that might help clarify why he might be taken as an advocate of the Given—in particular, to look to his discussion on the *modal* properties ascribed to intuitions in the "Postulates of Empirical Thought" (Kant 1998, A218–226/B265–274) where in the first postulate he characterizes the *possible* as "whatever agrees with the formal conditions of experience (in accordance with intuition and concepts)". The notions of intuition and concept here, understood in relation to their *forms*, are here seen as contributing specific formal conditions to the possibility of experience.

Broadly, we might think of Kant's treatment of the conditions of experience in the Transcendental Analytic in terms of his critical transformation of the two principles of

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[2] C.f., Watkins 2008, 518. C. I. Lewis, often taken to be a target by critics as an advocate of the Given, and on McDowell's criteria would seem so. C.f., Lewis 1929, 47–8). For a defense of Lewis against this charge, see Sachs 2014.

Leibniz's metaphysical method: the principle of contradiction and the principle of sufficient reason. Effectively, Kant relativizes the latter principle to the knowledge of objective appearances in time and space, rather than to the knowledge of things in themselves, but the more general scope of the former principle will remain. Thus, were we to approach the conditions of the first postulate from the perspective of unschematized conceptual conditions alone, it would be demanded that thought be non-contradictory in the sense that the Principle of Contradiction provides "a merely negative criterion of truth" that belongs "merely to logic"—that is, to *general* rather than transcendental logic (A150–152/B189–191). It is this negative sense of escaping non-contradiction that Kant attributes to the concept "God" as thinkable, for example. But if an object is to be deemed not *merely* thinkable but *knowable*, it must also be seen to conform to the formal conditions of *intuition*—that is, it must be essentially localizable in space and time where it can be experienced, and be subject to the schematized categories of the understanding. It is this restriction that prevents our being able to derive something substantial from the "distinguishing and inner predicates" of the concept of God—as attempted in the ontological proof of God, for example.

In the second postulate Kant then turns from the issue of intuitional form to that of intuitional *content*, stating that "that which is connected with the material conditions (of sensation) is *actual*". We might then think of objects conforming to both sets of formal conditions alluded to in the first postulate as "possible" in a different sense to that which applies to the possibility of God. In this other sense, possibility will allude to the sorts of entities whose existence might be entertained in some empirical hypothesis, leaving the confirmation to actual sensory experience—this possibility being *epistemic* rather than simply logical. As Kant sums up in the Transcendental Doctrine of Method: "It is only possible for our reason to use the conditions of possible experience as conditions of the possibility of things; but it is by no means possible for it as it were to create new ones, independent of these conditions, for concepts of this sort, although free of contradiction, would nevertheless also be without any object" (Kant 1998, A771/B799).

My suggestion is that passages such as these allow Kant to be read as having transformed Leibniz's "possibilist" approach to modality into a type of "transcendental" version of that doctrine. For Leibniz, metaphysics aimed at a knowledge of a reality of greater scope than that of the actual world: it aimed at a knowledge of the totality of equally real *possible* worlds of which the actual world was just one (c.f., Stang 2016, ch. 1). Within the framework of Kant's transcendental logic that structures the Transcendental Analytic, of course, all this is relativized to the realm of objective *appearances* rather than reality as it is "in itself". Kant's deflated version of Leibniz's possibilism thus replaces knowledge of (real) possible worlds with knowledge of the many possibilities that experience of the (one) world might take, but the idea of the actual world that comes to be known *in* experience as located within a larger space of possibility that can be known *a priori* remains. On such a picture, it falls to empirical intuitions to delimit this smaller realm of actuality, and hence, to distinguish our *knowledge* of what is actual from what is merely possible. With this it is not clear that Kant's transcendental turn has saved him from being susceptible to Sellars' critique. Of

course, Kant's differs from Russell's project. First rather than as a foundation of certainty upon which knowledge is erected, Kantian intuitions show which of a plurality of already accessible epistemic possibilities are actual, and next, they provide an epistemological basis only for Kant's more modest knowledge of "objective appearance". In relation to the first point, David Lewis for one seems to appeal to empiricist Givens in this way as a means of eliminating possibilities in order to converge on definitive knowledge of the actual (Lewis 1996), and in relation to the second, it could be argued that *how* we interpret the nature of knowledge at the meta-level is a quite separate point to Sellars' target in his criticism of the Given. To pursue such issues further, I want to elaborate the underlying picture of modality in the Kantian account and locate it against alternatives. It will be the way that Kant understands possibility, I suggest, that encourages the empiricist reading of sensory intuitions.

In the first *Critique*, Kant employs the modal notion of possibility [*Möglichkeit*] in a number of different places. In the Metaphysical Deduction he writes that the modality that shows up here as necessity, possibility and actuality "contributes nothing to the content of the judgment", thus leaving the issue of content to be exhausted by the contributions of the other three categories, quantity, quality and relation (Kant 1998, A74/B99–100). In contrast to the other categories, the mode involved "concerns only the value of the copula in relation to thinking in general" (Kant 1998, A74/B100). What Kant appears to be saying with the idea that the mode "contributes nothing" to the content but only concerns the "value" of the copula—that is, the question of whether the predicate is *possibly true of* the subject—seems to presuppose a "de-dicto" approach modality. For this approach, *what is being qualified as* necessary, possible, or actual is the entire *content*—the "dictum"— of the judgment itself, and not some particular component of it, such as the subject that the judgment is about, and whether or not it has certain properties that are essential to it.[3] Here, a linguist might say that the modal operator works as a *sentential* adverb—it qualifies the whole judgment as being necessary, possible or actual. Indeed, this is how modal operators are standardly conceived in contemporary *propositional* modal logic, as originating in Kant-influenced work of C. I. Lewis. From the perspective of such a *de-dicto* conception of modality, the opposed "*de-re*" conception of modality will typically be rejected as a remnant of an outmoded Aristotelian *pre-critical* essentialist metaphysics, as in Kant's rejection of the ontological argument (PR A592–602/B620–630), which relies on the idea of existence, and so effectively the modality of *actuality*, being an essential predicate of the subject, and so as *contributing something* to the content of the judgment. In short, the de-dicto approach to modality would seem appropriate to the context of Kant's Transcendental Analytic, leaving the *de-re* conception tied to the limitations of the Transcendental Dialectic.

Indeed, at a more general level, the *de-dicto* approach to modality would seem to follow from the fundamentally *de-dicto* approach to discursive *judgment* that seems

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[3] Kant's idea of modality as adding nothing to the *content* of a judgment may be taken in this way and is consistent with his more specific claim in relation to the ontological argument that existence (actuality) is not a predicate (Kant 1998, A598/B626).

presupposed in the Transcendental Analytic, as reflected in Kant's critique of the traditional subject-predicate structure of judgment as "the representation of a relation between two concepts". The traditional approach fails to ask, "wherein this relation consists" (Kant 1998, B140–141), with Kant's answer taking us to the doctrine of the transcendental unity of apperception. Thus, the two component concepts of a judgment "Bodies are heavy" will belong together only "in virtue of the necessary unity of the apperception in the synthesis of intuitions, i.e., in accordance with principles … [that] are all derived from the principle of the transcendental unity of apperception" (B142). That empirical judgments are to be unified through their being held to be true by an "I" strongly suggests that we are to think of such judgments as having a basically *de-dicto* form, such that the unity existing among them will be that of their consistency, a unity suggested by what Kant, in the Transcendental Dialectic, calls a "distributive" rather than "collective" one (Kant 1998, A582 and 644/B610 and 672).[4] Such a picture of judgments as *acts* directed to abstract objective propositions became explicit only after Kant with the development of the modern notion of the proposition as the proper content of "propositional attitudes" (Sundholm 2006), but it is tempting to spell out the transcendental unity of apperception in this way.[5]

It is this primarily *de-dicto* approach to judgment made determinate in propositional contents that leads naturally to the thesis of the actual world as one of many alternate possibilities, as judgments will be thought of as subject to modal "axioms" such as if some content is judged to be (actually) true, then it must be possibly true while a content's being possibly true does *not* imply its being (actually) true. Such modal axioms portray the scope of possible truths—truths *about* possible states of affairs—as wider than the scope of actual truths, which in turn is wider than the scope of necessary truths, and from this it seems a small step to talk of "possible worlds"—i.e., worlds represented by sets of consistent propositions, in terms of which *modal* truths can be made determinate. Thus, a modal statement such as "possibly *p*" can be regarded as true, even when *p* is actually false just in case there can be said to exist some alternative possible world or worlds in which p is *true*—an idea found in Leibniz and resurrected in the mid-twentieth century.

Summing up, Kant's idea of the transcendental unity of apperception seems to suggest a picture of a subject bringing to experience an a priori knowledge of the types of logical connection required by coherent knowledge of a unified realm of objective appearance. What will *count* as a belief content is conceived in such a way that will render it capable of cohering with other compatible belief contents and contradicting other incompatible ones. Against the background, intuitive content is given the role of distinguishing one such content as not merely compatible with the set to which it belongs, but actually *true*, and yet exactly how sensory intuition can achieve this can seem mysterious. On such a reading, the reason why "nothing can count as a reason for holding a belief except another belief" is that nothing

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4 This fundamentally de-dicto view of such unified contents has been stressed by Robert Howell (1992, Ch 7).

5 Thinking of Kantian judgments with propositional contents in this sense seems to be behind the popular tendency to stress the Kantian background to Frege. See, for example, Sluga 1980.

can be compatible or incompatible with a proposition except *another proposition*. With this, transcendental possibilism sets up the "severed logical connection" between intuitive contents and knowledge of any kind as an inevitability. Rather than simply to look to features of givenness as problematic here, we should look to the larger question of the logical framework that excludes a meaningful role for perceptual givenness of any kind.

2. From (Kantian) Modal Possibilism to (Hegelian) Modal Actualism 2000

While traditional metaphysics had been derided within analytic philosophy during the period of positivist dominance in the 1930s and 40s, the re-emergence of interest in modality from the late 1950s onwards, consequent upon technical developments in modal logic, had put such metaphysical issues back on the table. Propositional modal logic had been introduced earlier by C. I. Lewis, a philosopher with Kantian leanings who also appealed to the givens (or perhaps the Givens) of intuition (Lewis 1929). Crucially, Kripke's innovations in modal logic (1959) had initiated a turn towards Leibniz's way of talking of possibility in terms of the contents of "possible worlds", and David Lewis had interpreted this literally and realistically (Lewis 1986). For those wishing to extract the convenience of these developments from the *inconvenience* of Lewis metaphysical assumptions, some alternative way of construing the idea of possible worlds had to be found, with various forms of "actualism" put forward as alternatives. Here I consider the version found in the work of Robert Stalnaker (Stalnaker 2003, 2008, 2012).

For Stalnaker, talk of "possible worlds" is just "loose talk" for a way of talking about unrealized but possible states of *this* world, the *actual* world. Such possibilities he sometimes describes as "maximal properties that a universe might have or, equivalently, maximal propositions … in the sense that for every (actual) proposition either it or its contradictory is entailed by it" (Stalnaker 2012, 19–20). On this second formulation alternate "possible worlds" are propositional constructs—maximal sets of consistent propositions.[6] Stalnaker expresses concern with how the *imagery* of possible-worlds talk can give misleading connotations, as found in David Lewis, for example. In particular, it can lead to the idea of particular locations in *this* world as analogous to particular cities within one's own country, and locations in *other* possible worlds as akin to locations in *foreign* countries. But, Stalnaker argues that wondering "what world" one is in is just the same as wondering *where* in the actual world one is.[7] Thus while Stalnaker adopts Lewis' idea of understanding the actual

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[6] Note that for Stalnaker possible worlds *are* these constructs—they are not represented or pictured by them. Stalnaker rejects the idea that propositions "represent" anything. Propositions are abstract objects with certain properties, and are responsible for providing judgments, which are representations, with content. But they themselves do not in turn "have" representational content. Such a conception would lead to an infinite regress.

[7] Thus, driving from Boston to New York, one might ask oneself as to whether the strip of highway one is presently on is in Massachusetts or New York State, but the same question can be asked by asking if the "world" one is in is a world in which *this* strip of road is in Massachusetts or in New York (Stalnaker 2008, 51–52).

world *indexically*—i.e., as being the world *that one is in*—he rejects the extension of "indexical" along the lines of the imagery of alluded to above.

I will later suggest parallels between Stalnaker and Hegel in this respect, but let us first see how Stalnaker himself employs his approach. One can meaningfully entertain a thought about some non-actual possibility—in one of Stalnaker's examples, the possibility that Saul Kripke could have had a seventh son—by envisaging a possible state of the world in which the proposition "Saul Kripke has a seventh son" is true. This proposition is not fully specific, however. Compare the situation with that of my neighbour, Oskar, who *does have* seven sons. In his case the proposition "Oskar has a seventh son" *will* entail the existence of a singular proposition that is true *of* some specific person. Stalnaker does not say much about the singular propositions in question here, but I assume that he has in mind something like the content of a claim like "*He* (pointing to a particular person) is Oskar's seventh son". This *de-re* existential judgment is the "witness" to the more abstract existential claim "Oskar has a seventh son". Of course, nothing like this can apply in the case of the "possible" seventh son of Kripke—there is no actual person to whom one can point and say that "*that's him*"—but Stalnaker has in mind a *not-so-obvious* alternative. Neither can one point to some actual person and say of *him* that *he could have been* Kripke's seventh son—that is, that *he* is the person about whom the proposition would be true, *were* it true.[8]

Stalnaker's idea of specific singular propositions able to "witness" general propositions appears to be an adaptation of an idea found in the type of "intuitionistic" or "constructivist" approach to mathematics first developed early in the 20th century by the idealist Dutch mathematician L. E. J. Brouwer.[9] While Brouwer's own version of intuitionism was a highly subjectivistic doctrine, later versions such as that suggested by Michael Dummett construed it in a more "pragmatist" way based on the "meaning is use" idea of the later Wittgenstein (Dummett 1977). Similarly, Brouwer's student and follower, Arend Heyting developed a distinctive intuitionist non-classical *logic* on the basis of Brouwer's ideas and in the 1930s likened the role played by witnesses to the role Husserl had given to perceptions needed to "fulfil" abstract intentions (Heyting 1964, 59). Significantly, the law of excluded middle is not conceived as holding uniformly here, nor the law of indirect proof, which requires the double negation of a proposition to be logically equivalent to that proposition. Intuitionistic logic in this way deviates from classical logic in ways broadly similar to those found in Hegel's account of judgments and syllogisms in his *Science of Logic*, but to appreciate the metaphysical significance of these features of Hegel's logic we need to briefly turn to his attitude to the nature of modalities, and to the "actualism" that, I claim, characterizes his philosophical alternative to Kant.

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8 That locution has a different role and is used where someone has a seventh son and the asserter is not sure of who it is.

9 Brouwer's approach to mathematics was heavily influenced by Kant's linking of mathematical truths to the form of intuition, although Brouwer restricted this form of intuition to temporality alone. The development of intuitionistic or constructivist *logic* was achieved by his student, Arend Heyting.

In the 19th century Hegel was often referred to as the "modern Aristotle" and in many places Hegel appeals to Aristotle's as paradigmatic of his own "speculative" approach. A large part of Hegel's attraction to Aristotle was, I suggest, the way his philosophy expressed the *this-worldliness* or "*Heimatlichkeit*" of ancient Greek culture that he clearly admired. This was a capacity for Greeks to feel "at home" in the world and at home with themselves *as* this-worldly beings and not to seek escape in imaginary worlds of abstractions that he thought characterized other, particularly Eastern, civilizations (Redding 2017a). It was that aspect of Hegel's philosophy that J. N. Findlay had captured with his claim that "there never has been a philosopher by whom the *Jenseitige*, the merely transcendent, has been more thoroughly 'done away with'" (Findlay 1958: 19–20). It is along these lines that I have elsewhere argued for Hegel's philosophical stance as a variety of "actualism" (Redding 2017b, 2018), linking this to features of his logic that I have used to contrast with the approach to logic of Robert Brandom (Brandom 1994, Redding 2015).

Robert Brandom, I've argued, is right to attribute an "inferentialist" account of judgment to Hegel, but not his own "strongly" inferentialist one. While Brandom treats a judgment's inferential relations as necessary and sufficient for the determinacy of its meaning, Hegel, I argue, treats them as necessary but *not* sufficient, there remaining for him a necessary role for some "bottom-up" contribution from individual conscious perceptual experiences to the conceptual content of judgments. But this is not to suggest that Hegel relies on any problematic epistemological "Given": rather, *modal* issues are at the heart of Hegel's account, with a role for immediate judgments in Hegel's logic analogous to that played by empirical intuitions in Kant, but avoiding the problems of Kant's own transcendental version of "possibilism". For Hegel, the immediate judgments of his logic are more analogous to Stalnaker's "witness" propositions: they help determine the contents of cognition as about the actual *as actual* and not as merely possible. It is this that I now take further here by tracing features of Hegel's account of judgment in his Subjective Logic.

3. A Logical Dualism for Hegel's Modal Actualism

What we find in the section Judgment in the Subjective Logic of Hegel's *Science of Logic* is a developing sequence of *concepts* about the nature of judgment—effectively conceptions or theories of what it takes *to be* a judgment. In the Objective Logic, Hegel's categories had unfolded in a series of cycles, the pattern for which had been set by the first, where problems with the determinacy of the concept *Being* forced a transition to its negation, *Nothing*, which, suffering from similar shortcomings, transited to a third category, *Becoming*. Now the first two categories can be understood as abstractions of the third: for something to become is for it to pass *from* nothing *to* being. Similar problems will arise for Becoming, sparking off a further cycle, and so on, the process ending only with the terminal category of the Objective Logic, *Actuality* (*Wirklichkeit*), a termination that *itself* suggests the "actualist" dimension of Hegel's idealism.

In a similar way, the account of judgment found in the Subjective Logic has conceptions of judgment evolving through a series of cycles, starting with a judgment form that possesses a concrete subject term, and passing through a more abstract form to result in a third, the subject of which has been restored to a concrete status like the first. The subject of this third form of judgment, however, will be understood a transformation of that of the first, the transformation somehow having been enabled by the mediating abstract second judgment form through which the process has passed. Thus, in the first cycle, judgments start off as ones about concrete things, for example concrete *roses*, and end as ones about the *kinds* that those things instantiate, in the case of roses, the *kind* rose. In particular, these cycles involve an alternation between two different types of *predication* at the heart of these judgment forms: predication as "inherence" of the predicate in the concrete subject, and predication as the subsumption of some *indeterminately singular* subject under an abstract predicate (Hegel 2010, 555; Redding 2014). It is a process of *negation* that transforms the initial "inherence" judgments into "subsuming" ones, and then takes these latter back to the reconfigured, more complex inherence ones the end that cycle. This alternation will continue through to Hegel's account of *syllogisms* into which the account of judgments later transitions.

These two forms of predication effectively develop further the logical structures distinguishing the two divisions of the Objective Logic, Being and Essence, and the especially the type of *negation* operating in those logics. Historically, the predicative distinction reflects the different conceptions of predication found in Aristotelian *term logic* on the one hand, and the more *propositionally based logic*, as found in the ancient *Stoics* (Redding 2013) or, closer to Hegel's time, in Leibniz's universal characteristic on the other. It is this properly "propositional" conception of judgment content that is also reflected in the modern "classical" logic of Frege and Russell.[10] In light of this, Hegel's distinction, I suggest, might *also* be seen to approximate that distinguishing modern classical logic from various and more recent *modal* logics, particularly the "tense" or "temporal" logic introduced by Arthur Prior in the 1950s and 60s (Prior 1957, 1967; Redding 2017b).[11]

That judgment forms for Hegel can *oscillate* between different logical structures like these suggests ways of *translating* between judgments of each of these forms, and indeed it is now conventionally accepted that systematic translations relate sentences from tense and other modal logics to classical logic and vice-versa (Blackburn et. al. 2001, Preface). Such modal logics are now thought of as treating claims that are in some way *context dependent*, and as presupposing a type of subjective "centre" *from which* the things being reasoned and

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10 As noted, this objectivistic doctrine of propositions qua abstract entities developed in the nineteenth century, first being made explicit in Bolzano's notion of the "Satz an sich", the "proposition as such" (Sundholm 2006).

11 A similarity to the philosophy of *Hegel* should not be surprising here, given Prior's acknowledgment of the influence on his own tense logic of the views of his former teacher, John Findlay, who Prior described as "the founding father of tense logic" (Prior 1967, 1). Findlay had started his philosophical life as an idealist and after a flirtation with the objectivist approach to propositions returned to the idealism of Hegel to become perhaps the first exponent of the Anglophone Hegel revival that started from the 1950s (see Redding 2017b).

thought about are grasped. This is clearest in tense logic, where the judgment is centred on the "now" of the judge, but can also be seen in *alethic* modal logic *itself*, where the relevant "context" is taken as *the actual world* from the perspective of which the proposition counts as *possibly* or *necessarily* true, depending on the way that it will be true or false in *other* "accessible" possible worlds.[12] Both of these modalities, I argue elsewhere (Redding forthcoming 2019), can be recognized in Hegel's cyclical development of judgment structure, and so too can the judgments that are contextualized to the beliefs of agents—"doxastic logic" (Redding 2018).

Understanding Hegel's comparatively neglected account of judgment can be aided by a consideration of the logic that he had been taught while a student at the Tübingen Stift—that of Gottfried Ploucquet, a significant 18th century logical innovator (Ploucquet 2006, Aner 1909). Ploucquet had modernized the Aristotelian syllogism in "Leibnizian" ways by incorporating *singular judgments* (as in "Socrates is mortal") into a system that had traditionally only catered for two types of *general* judgment: particular judgments (e.g., "Some Athenians are philosophers") and universal judgments (e.g., "All Athenians are mortal"). The incorporation of singular judgments had been carried out by medieval nominalist logicians by treating singular judgments as logically equivalent to *universal* judgments, on the grounds that both were *exceptionless*, however, to this Leibniz had added a second way of incorporating judgments about individuals into syllogisms, by using the model of *particular* judgments. (One can use the "some" form about an individual rather than a name, as in "Some Athenian is a philosopher", said about, *Socrates*, say.) Ploucquet's description of this distinction as between "exclusive" and "comprehensive" forms of particularity (Ploucquet 2006, §§14–15) was used freely by Hegel,[13] and Leibniz's free intersubstitution of such terms provided, I suggest, a way of interrelating the determinations that Hegel treated as the three moments of "the concept": singularity, particularity and universality (Hegel 2010, 529: 12.32).

Hegel uses these "moments" to differentiate judgment types, by distributing them over the two *grammatical* determinations of subject and predicate in an utterance, giving judgment forms such as "the particular is the universal" (Hegel 2010, 534), "the singular is particular" (566), "the singular is (the) universal" (560, 744), and "the universal is singular" (559, 560, 561). (The only combinations ruled out are those in which the logical determinations of subject and predicate terms were identical.) Hegel describes transitions between such forms as driven by a process of *negation* as a means for *abstraction*.

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12 Significantly, the constructivist logic developed in relation to the mathematics of Brouwer referred to earlier, with its idea of the role of "witness propositions", was *itself* shown to be a type of modal logic in the 1930s by Gödel. Later Prior treated intuitionistic and tense logics as formally similar (Prior 1957, ch. 2).

13 In the Subjective Logic, references to comprehensive particulars can be found at Hegel 2010, 571 and 602, and to exclusive particulars or singulars at 549, 623 and 659.

In the first sub-type of the judgment of inherence—the judgment of *Dasein* (existence)—the logical determination expressed by the subject term (universality) is instantiated in a specific concrete thing, a rose, say, and the logical determination expressed by its predicate term (singularity, *Einzelheit*) is expressed in some *sensuously perceived* property—a specific shade of red, a specific fragrance, etc.—inhering in that object.[14] Note that as *einzeln*, the predicate of this judgment is formally similar to a Kantian *intuition*. It will be simple positive judgments of this type that will play, I suggest, the role of "witnesses" for the more generally conceived judgment in which the predicative relation is that of "subsumption", and it is the logical process of *negation* that relates the former to the latter.

An initially *positive* judgment like "the rose is red" can be met with denial ("the rose is *not* red"), with Hegel's interest here being directed to the way negation allows a redetermination of the logical form of the judgment itself. In the first instance negation will be taken as negating the *particular* property being affirmed of the rose—in denying its *redness*, it is assumed that the rose is *some other* non-red colour—and this re-determines the predicate term from *singularity* to *particularity* which "immediately expresses that the particular contains universality" (Hegel 2010, 565).[15] That is, negation has generalized the predicate term: it is no longer affirmed as being *this singular* (*einzeln*) shade of red, but rather *some* non-red colour, the negative statement leaving it indeterminate as to *which non-red colour* it is. As contrariety rather than contradiction holds here among opposing judgments, to logic governing such exclusions does not conform to the law of excluded middle. Hegel's dualism of predicative structures is unusual but not unique: Kant had used it in transitional works of the 1760s,[16] and more recently it is found in W. E. Johnson's treatment of colour as a "determinable" divided into an array of contrary colours, its "determinates" (Johnson 1921, ch. 11), a structure he opposed to the genus-species relation. Still basically expressing a positive judgment (it says something positive, albeit indeterminate, about the rose) the predicate-negated form *too* can be negated, with the new negation playing a more radically transformative role. Hegel describes this negation as negating not only the "Bestimmtheit" (determinacy) of the terms involved but their "Bestimmung" (determination).

The simplest way to conceive of this second negation is as the "external" or "propositional" negation found in Stoic logic (Redding 2013) and modern classical logic, and while this is appropriate it does not capture the full extent of Hegel's treatment. The general direction of his thought becomes clear when we consider the *degenerate* judgment form (in

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14 Here, treating the singular subject of the judgment, some specific rose, as a universal, seems to be in line with the *ontological* doctrine of "singular essences" had developed in Medieval philosophy in the wake of the logical treatment of individuals as universals. Thus Socrates, say, could now be understood as manifesting the essence of *himself* as an individual, and not simply that of the kind, human. See, for example, Klima 2005 and Tarlazzi 2017. This is effectively an individual version of Hegel's "concrete universal".

15 Hegel might equally have describe this as "the universal is a particular" as the subject term had started off as a universal. Perhaps his idea is that the rose is here treated as an "immediate" unity of singular and universal, and so can be treated in either way.

16 In "Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Magnitudes into Philosophy" (1763) and "Concerning the Ultimate Ground of the Differentiation of Directions in Space" (1768), both in Kant 1992.

having identically determined subject and predicate terms) that he sees resulting from this second negation. This is the "infinite judgment",[17] examples of which, such as "rose is not an elephant" and "the understanding is not a table" (Hegel 2010, 567), suggest responses to category mistakes. For this reason, the second negation might better be described in Johnsonian terms as negating the *determinable* as well as a specific *determinate* of both subject and predicate terms, stripping both of their categorical or *kind* determinations. Again, as found in intuitionistic logic, another law of classical logic is suspended here, the law of double negation for which *not* (*not p*) results in *p*.

We might now expand on Hegel's not so helpful rose example by describing a second negation as one in which an interlocutor now denies that what the judgment is *about* is, in fact *a rose*—a denial not so much of the judgment itself as of its *presupposition*. This radicalizes the indeterminacy brought about by the first negation. Just as with the original denial of the rose's colour, this negation might be made on the basis of a belief that the purported rose is an instance of some *different* kind of flower, say, but nevertheless, in a simple denial this is not *said*: what the judgment is about is simply described as *not a rose*, its kind being left entirely indeterminate. With the indeterminacy brought about by such "external negation", Hegel has raised an issue with particular relevance to modern classical logic, one which flows from this logic's parallels with Leibniz's universal characteristic.

From his later discussion of the "mathematical syllogism" it is clear that the "infinite judgment" anticipates the account of judgment found in the project of the universal characteristic of Leibniz and Ploucquet (Hegel 2010, 602–8) in which both subject and predicate terms are taken *as* abstractly universal "subsuming" predicates that are linked by the fact of subsuming the same objects, but as these objects are not referred to in the overt expression itself, they are left as indeterminate "whatevers". This is close to the way that judgment contents are understood in the modern "classical" logic of Frege and Russell, within which *negation* is understood, not as an act of denial, but as a "truth-functional" operator acting on an abstract proposition so as to reverse its "truth-value". Closer to Hegel's time, it is, I have suggested, effectively the way that Kant conceived of judgments, *qua* judgable *contents* able to be integrated into the transcendental unity of apperception. Such contents now have no place within them for kind terms, which are dropped as a superfluous remnant of Aristotelianism. For Hegel, however, this has disengaged such contents from perceptual experience.

In rejecting the infinite judgment as a proper judgment form, Hegel is thus rejecting what would come to be the standard modern concept of what a judgment actually is. For Hegel it can *become* a proper judgment by having one of its terms redetermined, and in this way can become a "judgment of reflection", the first *proper* subsumptive judgment. In the judgment of reflection, the subject term continues to be determined as a kind-less singular, "subsumed" by an abstract predicate that "constitutes *the basis* against which the subject is to

[17] In traditional logic, "infinite" and "indefinite" had the same meaning.

be measured and determined accordingly" (Hegel 2010, 569). These reflective judgments can then be classified into singularly, particularly and universally quantified subforms, but the status of these general, abstract judgments for Hegel must be transitional, and the reflective judgment will, through another series of negations, transition into a modified "de re" judgment form, the judgment of necessity. This *starts* as the traditional Aristotelian categorical judgment, in which the subject term has come to stand for the *kind* itself—"the rose as such", as in "the rose is a plant" (Hegel 2010, 576), rather than a simple instance of such a kind, but this categorical judgment will initiate a further analogous cycle that will end in judgments that are evaluative and applied explicitly to individuals (the judgment of the concept), which will transition into a syllogism. For our purposes, however, we need to stay with the significance that this doubly-negated *infinite judgment* has for Hegel.

In the traditional syllogistic, positive judgments carried existential assumptions about their subject terms, and this is why Hegel's initial judgment of inherence can be called a judgment of *existence*. However *negative* judgments were free of such "existential import", and analogously, the double negation has *negated* this assumption. That is, infinite judgments cannot be thought to be specifically *about* actual, i.e., existing *things*. The negations have opened up a space of *posited* alternative possibilities within which the original object the judgment is about becomes located and within which it can be considered. The first negation in the rose example, had opened up the question of the possible alternative colours that a rose may have, the second has opened up the space of alternative *kinds* that the purported rose may belong to, and so on. So considered within this abstract space of possible alternatives, the object now exists *as* just another possibility, rather than *as* an actuality. But crucially for Hegel, the existence of this abstract form is dependent on the original concrete judgment and *the object* whose existence has been asserted *in* that judgment.

This reveals the peculiar dialectic involved in reasoning for Hegel. We must be able to bring our immediate judgments into question, a process involving more than bringing into question certain predications made (the rose's colour): we must be able also to bring into question background beliefs *presupposed* in making those predications (that it *is* a rose, perhaps even that it is a *plant*, and so on). Later, with the transition to the syllogism, the scope of these presuppositions will have been expanded to include even ones pertaining to *human acts of judging*. (Was the judgment made under normal lighting conditions, for example?) So, questions of the rose's colour can now be understood as dependent on facts that go well beyond facts about the rose as such. But Hegel is aware that this capacity for such questioning is purchased at the price of a potential loss of the experiential features that distinguish perceptual from inferential judgments, and so distinguish actuality from possibility. There must be some way of keeping track of the dependence of judgments of abstract reasoning on simpler judgments of immediate perception, while acknowledging that abstract reasoning can lead us to redetermine what it is that those simpler acts of perception are about. This is the sense in which "witness" judgments are ineliminable from the system.

Conclusion: How we remain in the actual world *even in thought*

In a tradition stretching from Plato's *Symposium* to Leibniz's project of the universal characteristic, cognition had been conceived as involving abstraction pictured as the mind's stepwise "ascent" from an immediate perceptual engagement with worldly objects to higher and higher levels of cognition, at the apex of which was a type of "God's-eye view". In Leibniz's version, this apex is God's comprehensive view of not only the actual world but the totality of logical possibilities of which the actual world is just one. Hegel *cyclical* movement between a sequence of judgment forms consciously eschews this imagery and the Platonic metaphysics it supports. Thus, in each of Hegel's cycles "ascent" goes no further than the first and second abstracting negations, before it turns "back to earth" as it were—back towards a more conceptually mediated and enriched experience of the things of the actual world. This enriched experience is one to be had *from* a place within it rather than somehow "above" it, but with the enriched conceptualization the thinker has ways of correcting the determinations it uses. For example, at the end of the first cycle, *kinds* appealed to are now understood as necessarily correlated with the universal ascripition of particular properties—the patterns of *universally quantified* "subsumptive" judgments that are "reflected into" the relevant kind concept. Thus, immediate perceptual judgments are maintained by being able to be conceptually redetermined—that is, "aufgehoben"—within in more conceptually mediated forms of experience. Those original context-dependent judgments cannot be construed as knowledge-guaranteeing "Givens", but neither can they simply be replaced by objects of more "abstract" and "objective" forms of reasoning. They remain "aufgehoben" as a constant trace of what differentiates thought of the actual from the possible, and for this there must be a way of translating between concrete and abstract and back again. Kant's answer to this problem had been the doctrine of empirical intuitions, but this had dichotomised intuitions conceived as singular from the generality of concepts, and as concrete from the abstractness of the judgment forms demanded by the apparatus of the transcendental unity of apperception. Hegel's logic might thereby be thought as aimed at a restoration of such "severed logical connections" alienating the immediacy of experience from the mediated nature of the contents of our intentional acts.[18]

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