

# The Subject in Hegel's Absolute Idea

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## Abstract

There has been a tendency in some of the most influential recent interpretations of Hegel to downplay (or simply ignore) the theological characterizations that Hegel gives to the subject-matter of logic, and to emphasize, instead, certain continuities taken to exist between Hegel's conception of logic and that of Kant. In the work of Robert Pippin and others, this has led to an 'apperception'-oriented interpretation of Hegel's logic, according to which Hegel follows Kant in taking logic to be primarily concerned with the nature of human self-conscious subjectivity. Here I put pressure on this interpretation—first, by foregrounding textual and systematic evidence for taking the theological characterizations to accurately convey Hegel's considered position on logic, as the science of the 'absolute idea', and then, secondly, by showing how Hegel's arguments for the absolute formality and universality of logic point instead to a more fully-fledged rejection of Kant's conception as too specifically psychological.

On the basis of its form, philosophy has endured reproaches and accusations from the side of religion, and, conversely, because of its speculative content, from a so-called philosophy...; it had *too little* of God in it for the former, *too much* for the latter. (EG: §573 Anm 10:380)<sup>1</sup>

God and logic—what a baroque synthesis! (Rosenkranz 1858: 37)

## I. Introduction: re-theologizing logic?

Since the 1980s, English-language discussions of Hegel have turned away from the metaphysical - or even theological-sounding - characterizations that Hegel himself frequently gives of the subject-matter of logic (and to philosophy as a whole),<sup>2</sup> and have sought instead to provide a more de-theologized, 'transcendental' interpretation, one which focuses on how Hegel's *Logics* might be seen primarily as a contribution to the Kantian project of spelling out the

nature and conditions of specifically human cognition.<sup>3</sup> This approach has been most systematically developed in Robert Pippin's 1989 *Hegel's Idealism*, and then explored further in subsequent work by Pippin, Terry Pinkard, and now many others.<sup>4</sup> Pippin has argued that our interpretation of the *Logics* should be oriented by the idea that 'the basic position of [Hegel's] entire philosophy should be understood as a direct variation on a crucial Kantian theme, the 'transcendental unity of apperception' (Pippin 1989: 6; cf. Pippin 2014a). To support this claim, Pippin draws on several passages from the *Logics* (and elsewhere) in which Hegel signals that Kant's account of the unity of apperception is one of the key insights worth developing out of the Critical philosophy. Hegel's own characterizations of the subject-matter of logic in particular as the 'science of *thinking* [Denken]' (*EL*: §19 Anm) are then interpreted as intending a variation on a conception of logic 'shared' with Kant's own.<sup>5</sup>

What makes Hegel's logic a *variation*, rather than mere repetition, of Kant's account is that Hegel incorporates much more of the *social-communal* and also *historical* dimensions and conditions for the activity of self-conscious discriminating, judging, giving and asking for reasons, etc. Perhaps most importantly, rather than laying out these conditions primarily with reference to the individual-cognitive 'I' of apperception, Hegel shifts our focus to the mutually recognitive 'I that is *we*' and 'we that is I', as he himself characterizes self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology* (*PG*: ¶177; cf. Brandom 1999; Pinkard 2000: 335; Redding 2007; Brandom 2009). This shift having been suitably marked, however, Hegel's *Logics* are then taken to share the core Kantian concern for the conditions for the possibility of meaningful judgement, for human discursive practices of rendering things intelligible: the *Logics* aim to give an 'account of all account-giving' (Pippin 1989: 40; cf. Pinkard 1994: 261; Pippin 2014a: 149), and 'make sense of sense-making' (Pippin 2017), and to do so in such a way as to respond more fully and adequately to Kant's own questions about the demands of our own self-conscious ('apperceptive') discursive activity.

This transcendental-apperceptive approach to Hegel has proved to be very fruitful along many fronts, both in terms of the illumination it has brought to difficult parts of Hegel's texts, and in terms of the philosophical reflection it has inspired in its own right, concerning the nature of cognition, action, aesthetics and a whole host of other topics.<sup>6</sup> Even so, given both the regularity with which Hegel clearly refers to God as the ultimate subject-matter of philosophy in general and of logic in particular, along with the consistency with which Hegel gives pride of place to God within his system more generally,<sup>7</sup> it is very difficult not to feel as though no amount of massaging social or historical elements into the Kantian apperception-theoretic conception of logic will ever be sufficient to capture what Hegel has in mind.<sup>8</sup>

In what follows I will aim to put a variety of kinds of pressure on the de-theologizing strategy at the heart of the apperception-theoretic approach to Hegel's logic. One line of pressure will come from the clear positive textual grounds for reading Hegel as affirming 'God', the 'divine [göttliche] idea', 'divine knowing', the 'divine concept', and so on, to be the genuine subject-matter of logic. A second will come from passages in which Hegel explicitly rejects the traditional modern philosophical idea, embraced by Kant, that logic is specifically 'about' finite subjective consciousness—because this is not 'formal' or universal enough to be treated in logic.

Along the way, I will argue that considerable systematic support for the theologizing interpretation can also be found in Hegel's 1807 *Phenomenology*, whose concluding section on 'absolute knowing' Hegel claims is meant to put us in the right position to understand his own conception of logic as the science of the 'absolute idea'. I will argue that the *Phenomenology*'s conception of absolute knowing bears much closer affinities with the idea, not of any sort of human knowing, but of the knowing by the divine infinite intellect that Hegel thinks Kant himself had already hit upon—an idea which the *Phenomenology* itself 'deduces' more adequately. I show, in particular, that the trajectory of the *Phenomenology* itself, along with the later *Encyclopaedia*, both point to the need to sharply distinguish the 'absolute' thinking (comprehending) involved in the absolute idea, not just from the activity of finite *individual*, apperceptive 'I', but also from that of the *social-historical* 'we'-subject, or what Hegel calls 'objective spirit'.

All of this promises to better contextualize the way in which Hegel means to go decisively beyond Kant, in affirming that logic as a whole (including what Hegel himself calls its 'subjective' part) provides 'forms' for *all* of reality or actuality, for *both* nature and spirit—rather than simply for the self-conscious discursive practices of making sense or rendering intelligible nature and spirit (as the apperception-theoretic reading would have it). When it is considered in itself, 'what is logical [*das Logische*]'—all of the categories or determinations that the *Logics* include—is, for Hegel, essentially 'indifferent' (to reprise a phrase from Schelling) to whether it is 'realized' in nature or in conscious spirit, and is in fact manifest in *all* things, 'unspiritual' and 'spiritual' alike.

Having raised textual and systematic worries for the idea that human apperceptive subjectivity is meant to play any central role in Hegel's logic at all, I will then turn to the question of what Hegel might be intending in those passages concerning Kant that have been taken to motivate the apperception-theoretic readings in the first place. Here I will draw attention to the explicitly heuristic, rather than doctrinal, role that Hegel gives to his pointings to Kant's account of 'the I' and the 'unity of apperception'. Hegel's appeal to Kant's ideas is limited to the instrumental role of providing an analogy to help his readers better come to

understand what Hegel himself means by ‘the concept’ and ultimately ‘the absolute idea’—rather than serving to accurately denote (let alone adequately encapsulate) the subject-matter of logic itself.

In conclusion, I will consider what a re-theologized reading should say about the relation between the absolute idea and what happens in and among individual and collective human subjects—and in particular, in and among philosophers, e.g., in Hegel's mind, in his books, and in the minds of his readers and in his philosophical community—in order to return to the question of whether it is right in any sense to say of any human ‘I’ or ‘we’, that they are the subject and substance of the absolute idea.

## II. God before the creation of nature and finite spirit

It is understandable that many of Hegel's early readers took both his logic, and his philosophy more generally, to be oriented toward and around theological concerns.<sup>9</sup> The very first section of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* announces the fact that philosophy in general and religion share the same ‘object’ (subject-matter), and then also distinguishes this object from ‘human spirit’:

Both [religion and philosophy] have the *truth* for their object, and, moreover, the truth in the highest sense—in the sense that *God* is the truth and *God alone* is the truth. Furthermore, both treat the sphere of what is finite, of *nature* and of *human spirit*, their relation to each other and to God as to their truth. (*EL*: §1 8:41)

It is hard to imagine Hegel being much clearer: while what is ‘treated’ in philosophy is ‘the truth’, and while philosophy will include both the truth of nature and of human spirit, these will be ‘further’ considerations; the ‘highest’ determination of ‘the truth’ is in terms Hegel recognizes might be more familiar from religion—i.e., in terms of the truth being ‘*God* and *God alone*’.

This same characterization of the subject-matter of philosophy returns at the conclusion of the *Encyclopaedia*, at the very end of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, as Hegel's account finally arrives at the treatment of ‘absolute spirit’, understood as ‘the one universal substance as spiritual’ (*EG*: §554 10:366). Here philosophy again is explicitly affirmed to be ‘the esoteric consideration [*Betrachtung*] of God’ (*EG*: §573 Anm 10:393). In the very last, very dense paragraph, absolute spirit itself is said to be ‘the eternal idea that is in and for itself’ and which, through a ‘*self-judging* [*Sich-Urteilen*]’, ‘determines’ both nature and spirit as two ‘appearances [*Erscheinungen*]’ which are nevertheless equally ‘*its* manifestations’, and does so in a way that is ‘eternally self-active, self-productive, and self-

satisfying as absolute spirit [*sich ewig als absoluter Geist betätigt, erzeugt und genießt*] (EG: §577 10:394). To this Hegel then appends lines from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in which Aristotle aligns 'reason [*nous*]' and its 'activity [*energeia*]', as 'thinking [*noesis*]' and 'theory [*theoria*]', with the 'life [*ζωη*]' that is 'eternal [*aidios*]' and performed by 'God [*theos*]' (EG: §577 10:395)—lines which then serve as the final words of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* as a whole.

This same framing recurs in the opening and closing of the *Encyclopaedia*'s treatment of the science of *logic* as well (EL). At the outset of the *Encyclopaedia*, Hegel provides a 'preliminary concept [*Vorbegriff*]' of logic itself, as 'the science of the pure idea' (EL: §19 8:67), adding the remark that 'what is logical is the absolute form of truth, and, even more than this, is the pure truth' (EL: §19 Anm 8:68).<sup>10</sup> In the first sections of the *Logic* proper, Hegel clarifies further that all of the 'logical determinations' he will go on to consider within the *Logic* 'can be regarded as definitions of the absolute, as *metaphysical definitions* of God' (EL: §85 8:181). In the concluding section on 'the idea', Hegel notes that here, with 'the definition of the *absolute*, that it is the *idea*', we finally have a definition which 'is now itself absolute' (EL: §213 Anm 8:367–68). In the next section, Hegel makes the theological resonances of the concept of the absolute idea more explicit, claiming that the absolute idea is engaged in 'eternal creation [*Schöpfung*]', as something 'eternally living', and as what will ultimately be seen to be 'eternal spirit' (EL: §214 Anm 8:371). In the final section, Hegel does note that we have only so far witnessed 'the absolute freedom of the idea', up to the point when it '*decides* [*sich entschließt*] ... to *release itself* [*sich entlassen*] as *nature* freely from itself' (EL: §244 8:393). Retrospectively, however, we will be able to see that the absolute idea is originally 'the universal and *one* idea' that subsequently 'particularizes itself [*sich besonderl*]' by 'judging', and 'from this judgment, the idea is *initially* only the one, universal *substance*' (nature), though in 'its developed, true actuality', the truth of this same idea is 'that it is as *subject* and thus as *spirit*' (EL: §213 Anm 8:368). This all closely echoes Hegel's concluding remarks to the *Encyclopaedia* as a whole.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, this same conception of logic can also be seen from the opening and closing of Hegel's *Science of Logic* (WL) itself. In WL's first division, Hegel claims that 'the object' of philosophy in general and logic in particular 'is called the eternal, the divine [*Göttliche*], the absolute' (WL: 5:78). What is more, though, for methodological reasons, we *begin* logic only with 'a first, immediate, simple determination': 'pure being' (WL: 5:78), Hegel notes that we will subsequently move on to consider 'if more lies in the intuition or thought' of this object, and show how this additional content can 'first come forth in knowing as thinking', rather than being dogmatically assumed at the start (WL: 5:79). Ultimately, 'at the *end* of the development' that begins in the logic, 'absolute *spirit*' will be 'put forward as the concrete and ultimate, highest truth of all being' (WL: 5:70). At

the end of the *Logic* itself, we will have only witnessed the development of the determination of 'the divine [göttliche] concept', which is still something 'closed up in pure thought' as 'idea' (*WL*: 6:572). What must then be 'determined' is the 'first decision of the pure idea to determine itself as external idea', as *nature*, and then also the further development through which the idea 'completes its liberation' in 'the science of spirit' (*WL*: 6:573). By the end of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, what was initially 'idea' will 'come to be cognized' as 'externalizing itself [*sich entäußernd*]' with freedom, releasing itself into the shape of an immediate being', as thus freely 'deciding for the creation of a world', such that 'all that fell within the development preceding that result' will be 'transformed' into 'something dependent on the result as principle [*Prinzip*]' (*WL*: 5:70; my ital.). From the concluding perspective in the *Philosophy of Spirit*, then, we will see that logic therefore consists in the 'presentation [*Darstellung*] of God'—more specifically, the presentation of God 'as he is in his eternal essence before the creation [*Erschaffung*] of nature and a finite spirit' (*WL*: 5:44). Just like the *Encyclopaedia* as a whole, the *WL* also identifies the subject-matter of logic is God (as to his essence), and likewise sharply differentiates this subject-matter from what pertains to 'finite spirit'.<sup>12</sup>

### III. Human understanding: Kant on the subjective universality of logic

There is, then, fairly direct textual evidence from across Hegel's published writings that Hegel means to distinguish what he is referring to with these theological terms from any specifically *human* spirit and from *finite* spirit in general. This should give us pause in the face of any attempts to align Hegel's conception of the subject-matter of logic with anything close to a Kantian 'transcendental' conception of logic, since for Kant logic seems instead to be first and foremost precisely the science of finite, especially human, discursive intelligibility. In this section I will provide a brief sketch of Kant's views on logic, to help illustrate key contrasts with the position we have just seen outlined above.

In line with many other early modern philosophers, Kant takes logic to be the 'science' of a human mental capacity—namely, our capacity for 'understanding' [*Verstand*] (B76). This capacity contrasts with our 'sensibility', or 'the receptivity of our mind [*Gemüt*]', in so far as our understanding is a 'capacity to bring forth representations itself [*selbst hervorzubringen*]', rather than having them be 'given' to the mind due to 'affection' by something outside of the mind (B76). Our understanding also contrasts with sensibility in terms of both the forms of its acts and the representational contents that they involve: whereas sensibility provides the mind with 'intuitions' that present the 'appearances' of things (B33–34), our understanding provides the mind with 'thoughts' of objects through 'concepts', paradigmatically taking the form of 'judgments' (B93–94). It is only

through the use of concepts in judgement, moreover, that Kant thinks we are able to achieve any ‘cognition [*Erkenntnis*]’ of things; merely having an intuition in one’s mind does not suffice (B75). For this reason, the subject-matter of logic itself (our understanding) can thus be equally characterized as the ‘capacity for thinking [*denken*]’ (B94), the ‘capacity for judging [*urteilen*]’ (B94), and the ‘capacity for cognizing [*erkennen*]’ (B74).

As Kant sees it, what had traditionally been called ‘general or universal [*allgemeine*]’ logic takes up the task of identifying the basic ‘forms’ of thinking and judging, abstracting from the various types of objects that we can think and judge about (B78; my ital.). This logic then also aims to identify ‘the absolutely necessary rules of thinking without which no use of the understanding would take place’ (B76; my ital.). In light of the former feature of its methodology, Kant thinks that the traditional ‘universal’ logic can also be called a ‘merely formal logic’ (B170). When it undertakes these tasks in a way that also abstracts from all of the real empirical-psychological conditions that might befall a human (or finite) mind trying to think, judge, cognize, etc., formal logic becomes a ‘pure’ science (B78–79).

Even in its purest, most general form, however, Kant is committed to the idea that formal logic remains concerned with something *subjective* or pertaining to the activity of human subjects. Even if it is also true that pure general formal logic attains a kind of universality and necessity in its forms and rules, this is ultimately only relative to a very specific domain, in so far as it spells out what is uniformly and necessarily true of any act of *understanding*, simply in virtue of being an act of understanding. Kant nowhere claims that the very same logical forms and rules actually characterize every *thing* without restriction, let alone every *mental act* (e.g., sensing), since not every thing *is* an act of understanding.

Now, in the first *Critique*, Kant himself argues for a broadening of the conception of the domain (or at least subject-matter) of logic, by setting forth a proposal for a new kind of pure and universal logic, one which will not focus solely on the elementary *forms* of thinking and judging, but instead will focus on the question of whether there is any equally elementary ‘content’ that is universally and necessarily involved in thinking and judging (B79–80). This is what Kant calls a ‘transcendental’ logic. In the *Critique*, Kant highlights his demonstration in the ‘Transcendental Aesthetic’ of the existence of space and time as pure contents of intuitions (sensibility) as suggesting that there might also be contents that constitute ‘pure thinking’ as well, and then provides a ‘metaphysical deduction’ of a set of twelve such ‘pure concepts’ or ‘categories’ (B102f). This deduction is based on the idea that each elementary form of thinking and judging ‘relates’ to its objects in its own distinctive way, with the pure concepts consisting in the basic varieties of representational relations to objects which are thereby determined when we judge this way or that (4:324f).

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Because we can, in effect, read off these contents (concepts) from the forms of the activity of the understanding, Kant thinks we are entitled to claim that the understanding itself is the 'birthplace' (B90) and 'origin' of these concepts (B159).

In so far as the 'content' of a thought or cognition serves as a specific way of representationally relating to an object, consideration of this dimension of thinking does thereby bring transcendental logic a step closer to something 'objective', at least in the sense of a consideration of not just the 'formal reality' of thinking but of the 'objective reality' of thinking, to use the traditional Scholastic distinction. More generally, however, Kant's account of these concepts or categories threatens to render them subjective in at least three senses. First, the categories are subjective as to their origin, in so far as their 'birthplace' is in the capacity of understanding itself. Second, even though these concepts representationally *relate* the mind to objects, the concepts themselves remain subjective in the further sense that they *themselves* are only *contents* of acts of thinking by individual subjects (by 'me'), items which are not identical with the *objects* (things, properties, relations, etc.) they represent. Note that this points up a specific kind of restriction on the universality and necessity of laws governing the categories themselves: though these concepts constitute the universal and necessary contents of any thought—and hence, contents which are present in any and every act of thinking, if the relevant content is to be something that can be 'thought at all', something that the 'I think' can 'accompany' (B131–32)—this, too, is ultimately a kind of subjective universality and necessity, since not everything *is* a content of thought, in the sense of something metaphysically 'contained' in a thought, and so the transcendental-logical laws which govern the categories themselves (qua contents) will not in any straightforward way range over absolutely everything.

To be sure, such contents are to be considered generically as to whatever will (and must) be present in *any* I's thinking; this is why Kant refers to *'the "I think"'* and to the necessity of the *possibility* of such accompanying. This in turn mirrors the (relative) universality of formal logic itself, which is meant to be valid of any act by any human's capacity of understanding. In this sense, both formal and transcendental logic might be said to enjoy a validity not just with respect to an individual subject's acts, but an *intersubjective* validity, in so far as it is valid for any thinker's acts and contents. This, in turn, allows Kant to avoid certain forms of empirical or solipsistic psychologism about either formal or transcendental logic.

Nevertheless, Kant himself recognizes that even if he could establish this kind of universality, it would not absolve him from the further task of demonstrating the objective validity of what is represented by these subjectively universal and necessary contents of thought, with respect to actually existent things, their properties, relations, and so on. Precisely due to their subjective



origin and existence, Kant thinks that, even if we grant that they stand as universal and necessary ‘subjective conditions’ of our ‘*thinking*’, and even though they *represent* objects (purport to be ‘about’ substances, causes, etc.), Hume is right to wonder whether we can actually demonstrate that these categories do in fact have ‘objective’ validity, in the sense of serving as means by which to actually ‘*cognize*’ something real and actual through them (B122)—rather than *merely* ‘think’ about what might be *mere* ‘thought-things [*Gedankendinge*]’.

Responding to just this challenge is, of course, the task of Kant’s ‘transcendental’ deduction of the pure concepts. Yet many of Kant’s readers (including Hegel) have felt that this deduction, even by Kant’s own lights, remains ‘subjective’ in a still further sense. This is because Kant claims to demonstrate *only* that these concepts yield cognition of objects when the concepts can be rule-governedly connected to *other representations* in our minds—namely, those sensory ‘appearances’ that we are given in intuitions that arise in our minds due to our being ‘affected’. Famously, for Kant, the result of the combination of pure concepts and appearances is the empirical cognition of objects *as they appear*, in what Kant calls ‘experience’ (B165–66). Yet since experience is itself a kind of *representation*, the domain of ‘objective’ validity for the categories threatens to remain something subjective, at least in this sense.<sup>13</sup> What is more, Kant himself seems to be quite open about his belief that we *cannot* demonstrate that these concepts are objectively valid of these objects *as they are in themselves*, independently of how they are experienced—i.e., we cannot actually achieve cognition of things ‘in themselves’, by their means (B297f).

#### IV. Reason beyond understanding: the possibility of a more universal logic

While these features of Kant’s position seemed to many of his successors to problematically limit the domain of (demonstrable) validity for transcendental logic, Kant’s readers were also quick to note that, at the same time, Kant seems to insist that our understanding *can* nevertheless use these same concepts to at least ‘*think*’ of the very things that it cannot ‘cognize’ (cf. Bxxvi). What is more, Kant claims that, given the broader constitution of our minds, we *must* in fact use these concepts to think of these things. This necessity arises due to our mind’s having a ‘need’ to achieve *more* than the ‘cognition’ of objects in experience under categories, thanks to our possession of a still-further mental capacity—namely, ‘*reason*’, as the capacity for ‘cognizing *from principles* [aus Prinzipien]’ (B357). Reason demands that we search for the ‘conditions’ for the objects that we cognize in experience, as well as the conditions for the experience (cognition) we

have of them (cf. B364f). In this recognition, Hegel and others ultimately see an opening onto a more 'universal' conception of logic.

In order to genuinely cognize 'from principles', Kant holds that reason has to go beyond any mere cognition of an object provided by the understanding (e. g., an experience of it), in order to attain to what Kant calls the '*comprehension* [Begriffen]' of objects (B356). The complete and absolute comprehension of a domain of objects would take the form of a 'science', understood as a 'system' of the cognitions of these objects, ordered according to its principles (B502). In preparation for this task, reason fashions its own concepts of conditions, ultimately forming concepts of the 'totality' of such conditions, and of the 'unconditioned'—'inferred' concepts of reason that Kant calls 'ideas', to distinguish them from categories as the concepts of understanding (cf. B378f).

As Kant makes clear in his lectures on logic, comprehension by reason thus stands several 'grades [*Graden*]' higher than mere cognition by the understanding on the progression of 'steps' that are possible for minded beings (9:64f).<sup>14</sup> Now, the fact that our understanding alone cannot comprehend the conditions or principles for experience does not automatically entail that they cannot be comprehended by some other means. For one thing, Kant accepts that we ourselves can use our reason to cognize some of the principles (conditions, laws, 'metaphysical foundations') of the objects in nature through inference; he also thinks that these cognitions of principles can then be systematized in 'natural science' (cf. 4:470f). Even so, Kant acknowledges that, as humans, we do not get very far at all into the realm of insight. What is more, he has an even less positive assessment of our ability to cognize what is unconditioned and thereby more fully comprehend how it conditions what it conditions, claiming that 'all of our comprehension is only relative', such that 'we do not comprehend anything without qualification [*schlechthin*]' (9:65). In fact, Kant holds that complete comprehension could be achieved only by a mind without the limitations of our own human mind, i.e., a mind in possession of a higher, 'intellectual' intuition, rather than a merely sensible one like ours (cf. B308).

Still, once we broaden our view of our own minds even further, to include the *practical* use of our reason—our capacity to determine and 'make actual' what we represent as good and right (cf. Bx)—Kant thinks that here our reason will demand not only that we both think and search after objects that we cannot comprehend, but also that we 'hold' certain thoughts about these objects 'to be true [*Fürwahrhalten*]', i.e., 'believe' them (cf. B850f). For one thing, we must 'postulate' that we ourselves actually possess a power to cause effects in nature according to reason (that we have 'freedom, considered positively'; cf. 5:132). Even more dramatically, we must also believe that a very specific condition exists on the objects of experience—namely, that a mind with the higher form of cognition exists and actually does comprehend all things (5:467f), and is using

such perfect comprehension to ensure that the ‘highest good’ coordinate with the fulfilment of the demands of morality is actually realized in nature, by ultimately being the overarching ‘cause’ of nature itself, as its ‘author’ (cf. 5:125f).

Though such a mind would merit the name of ‘understanding’ because it cognizes, its cognition would be of a radically different kind than our own. For one thing, Kant thinks it will turn out to be ‘intuitive’ rather than ‘discursive’.<sup>15</sup> What is more, this cognition would be not only intuitive but also ‘archetypal [*urbildlich*]’ (ibid.; cf. 28:995); as Kant puts it elsewhere, it would be ‘originary [*ursprünglich*]’, in the sense of ‘bringing forth [*hervorbringen*]’ the very ‘existence’ of its objects—unlike our own intuitions, which depend on the independent existence of the objects that then ‘give’ us their representations (cf. B72, B145). In so far as it bears this ‘originary’, productive relation to absolutely everything that it represents, and in so far as it represents *all* things, its very act of comprehension would function as a ‘ground’ for all that it represents—including for nature and for our own (finite human) souls, and (it would seem) for itself as well, at least in so far as it comprehends itself (and how could the most perfect ‘grade’ of mind not do this?). In this respect, this intellect functions as the ‘thing that contains the supreme condition of the possibility of everything that can be thought [*gedacht*]’ (the being of all beings), which can be nothing other than ‘the object of *theology*’ (B391)—namely, *God*. Finally, as perfectly comprehending, this higher understanding would cognize things as they genuinely are: as Kant puts it in his lectures, while ‘we cognize only the appearances’, ‘God cognizes things in themselves’ (29:833).

What bearing does this have on Kant’s conception of logic? One consequence is that it would seem to compromise even the alleged *subjective* ‘universality’ of both the traditional formal and Kant’s now transcendental logic, since now we are conceiving of a subject with an understanding whose forms of acts will be of a different kind than our own (since non-discursive; B145), with contents also of a different kind altogether than our own (since without concepts; 5:402).<sup>16</sup> This, in turn, opens up the possibility of a correlatively ‘higher’ logic, a science which would articulate whatever forms and contents is constitutive of the intuitive understanding. Finally, the logical forms and contents of acts of *this* understanding would be fully objective in the more obvious sense of effectively ‘determining’ both what is actual ‘in itself’.

What is especially striking, furthermore—and of significance to Hegel—is that Kant here shows that at least the *idea* of this form of mindedness (absolute comprehension) can be, and has actually already been, spelled out *for us* in thought by reason itself. In the idea of the ‘perfection’ of cognition, Kant admits we can, at least in thought, conceive of the act of absolute comprehension and its conditions—even if, in Kant’s hands, it is used mostly only to note that these conditions cannot be met by the human mind. But then Kant’s articulation of the

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rational necessity of both thoughts but also beliefs involving this further idea—i. e., one of a being whose capacities would transcend that of the very thinker (human) thinking about it, as it would exercise the most perfect form of understanding (comprehending)—also opens up a different, intermediate task for logic, one which articulates the specific, elementary forms of thinking by means of which reason goes beyond mere understanding to form the idea of absolute comprehension.

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With this brief sketch of Kant's account of human understanding, reason and the divine intellect in hand,<sup>17</sup> we can now begin to turn more directly to Hegel's own remarks about the relevance of the divine understanding for the philosophy of logic. While the transcendental logic of reason and its ideas is, in fact, taken up in Kant's transcendental logic, under the heading of the 'Transcendental Dialectic', Kant's characterization of the standing of this investigation would seem to place it under an even sharper restriction in the scope of its validity than the 'Transcendental Analytic' of the understanding. This is because, in contrast to the categories, Kant thinks that 'no *objective deduction* of the transcendental ideas is really possible', and that all we can ultimately provide is a merely 'subjective derivation [*Ableitung*]' of such ideas 'out of the nature of our reason' (B393).<sup>18</sup> As the *third Critique* makes especially clear, this is true even of the rational idea of intuitive understanding (cf. 5:469).

Hegel takes both of these two points—the rational necessity of thinking of an absolute understanding, and the fact that thinking is capable of forming the concept of this understanding—as points of departure for his own critique and projected revisions of Kant's conception of logic. In his own *Logics* and elsewhere, Hegel argues that Kant's restriction of the validity of the idea of absolute comprehension by the intuitive intellect—to something merely necessary for us yet ultimately 'subjective'—stands in fairly direct tension with Kant's account of the nature of *truth* itself. Like many in the modern tradition, Kant accepts the basic conception of truth as a kind of 'agreement [*Übereinstimmung*]' between a judgement (cognition) and its object (B83). As we have just seen, however, Kant also accepts that the most perfect agreement that can be conceived will only obtain between *divine* cognition and its objects. But then, in this respect, divine cognition *itself* consists in the most perfect 'truth'. In Hegel's words:

If Kant had held the *idea of an intuiting understanding* up to this definition of truth, he would have treated that idea which expresses the required agreement, not as a thought-thing, but rather *as truth*. (6.266; my ital.; cf. 6:264)

But then, rather than being a mere ‘thought-thing’, Hegel takes the idea of the intuitive understanding to be what actually ‘expresses’ what ‘the truth’ itself *is*, in so far as it is this understanding’s intuitions themselves that consist in the most perfect ‘agreement’ of a cognition with its object. What is more, since, for Kant, *this* ‘agreement’ will be obtained in the absence of any concepts, it is hard to see how any judgement made by the human understanding, or even by reason itself, could possibly hope to be absolutely true, since by definition it would involve concepts, and hence also by definition it would seem to be unable to be in full agreement itself with its object in the perfect way that obtains in the divine understanding. All acts of human understanding will, of necessity, be *false*.

## V. Spirit beyond mere reason: Hegel on reason’s objectification

While many of Hegel’s readers have noted (whether to applaud or criticize) his emphasis in his *Logics* on the subjective standing of Kant’s conception of logic, and his attempt to demonstrate the instability of Kant’s position,<sup>19</sup> what has received relatively less direct attention, in this context, is the relevance of Hegel’s arguments in the *Phenomenology* (and elsewhere) purporting to demonstrate the objectivity of reason itself, on the road to developing his revised conception of absolute knowing, for his conception of logic itself.<sup>20</sup>

One of Hegel’s goals in the *Phenomenology* more generally is to ‘present [*darstellen*]’ the experience of consciousness in coming to recognize the lesson we have just rehearsed about ‘the truth’, and to do so in a way that itself scientifically comprehends the path that consciousness takes toward the recognition of the nature of the truth and the ‘absolute knowing’ which would comprehend it (cf. *PG*: ¶¶76–77, ¶¶87–88). Strikingly, the intermediate path Hegel follows is one that moves according to a series of steps or shapes that correspond in key ways to the progression we have charted above in our discussion of Kant; indeed, Hegel proceeds using many of Kant’s own terms, as can be seen even from the main section headings.<sup>21</sup> In this section I will give a sketch of Hegel’s account of the transcending of both the understanding and reason in what Hegel calls ‘spirit [*Geist*]’, as this account is developed in the *Phenomenology*, supplementing this with several considerations from the *Encyclopaedia Philosophy of Spirit*, to set the stage for Hegel’s own account of the further progression to ‘absolute knowing’.

This progression in the *Phenomenology* begins by showing what it is like for ‘my’ finite immediate, natural ‘consciousness [*Bewußtsein*]’ to attempt to come to terms with what is immediately there or present for it via ‘sense’ (*PG*: ¶¶90–91), only to be driven beyond the immediate sensory appearances toward the thought of an essence beyond or behind the world of appearances, to achieve the thought of the supersensible world, a determination that takes place by means of what

Hegel, too, calls 'the *understanding*' (PG: ¶¶129 *et seq.*). That consciousness also includes consciousness of this movement toward ('desire' for) the essence of things (for 'explanation or clarification [*Erklärung*']), which in turn leads to consciousness of what pertains to consciousness itself, in 'self-consciousness', and the further desire to become conscious of the essence of consciousness itself (PG: ¶¶163 *et seq.*). Here consciousness becomes aware of itself as essentially the 'living' unity of consciousness and self-consciousness (not one more than the other), and hence as something identical across a living 'process' (PG: ¶171). This leads consciousness to the higher perspective of this unity of consciousness and self-consciousness in of what Hegel calls 'reason' (PG: ¶¶230 *et seq.*), which itself gives consciousness a new model for its objects generally, and ultimately enables the consciousness not only that 'its [i.e., reason's] thinking is itself immediately actuality [*Wirklichkeit*]' (PG: ¶232)—i.e. reason is actual as what is (now) thinking—but also a consciousness which involves at least the thought ('assertion [*Behauptung*']) that it (rational being) itself 'is all reality [*Realität*]' (PG: ¶233).

At first, then, reason appears only in the form of an 'idealism' which consists in nothing more than a 'pure *assurance*' that existence itself has the form of reason, without being able to actually 'present the way' that it 'comprehends [*begreift*]' itself as being all reality (PG: ¶234). In this respect, Hegel's initial presentation of reason echoes what he took to be Kant's own merely 'subjective' account of the validity of the perspective of reason. Yet, unlike Kant, Hegel thinks that the 'reality' of reason *can* be demonstrated to be 'objective' in just this way. This is so, not just through its ability to cause the 'actualization' of what it represents in its consciousness (e.g., in effective action; PG: ¶357 *et seq.*), but also by this rational activity (of the actualization of reason) *itself* showing itself to be 'found' as something objective for consciousness. It does so by showing itself to have the form of a 'substance' which has arisen out of 'self-standing *actuality* of individuals' and consists in the 'absolute spiritual *unity* of their essence', in what Hegel calls 'ethical life [*Sittlichkeit*]' (PG: ¶349). This already existing 'actualization' out of which individuals arise (through birth, etc) is found by consciousness in 'the life of a *people* [*Volk*]' (PG: ¶350; my ital.).

Once there is a *self-consciousness* of reason, as itself having realized itself in this way—once reason is 'conscious of itself as its world, and the world as itself'—this marks what Hegel calls the 'coming to be of *spirit*' (PG: ¶438; my ital.). The forms taken by Hegel will later (in *EG*) call 'objective spirit' are shapes of this social consciousness, shapes which constitute 'higher' persons than mere individuals—e.g., the family (*EG*: §523; cf. PG: ¶439) and the state (*EG*: §535; cf. PG: ¶448 and ¶455). In these, consciousness as spirit exists as the 'self-conscious substance' of which individual humans are now parts or members, rather than the substances fully constituting the subjects of consciousness unto themselves.<sup>22</sup>

Already at this point, then, with the self-consciousness of the realization of reason in 'objective spirit', Hegel has pointed to a form of consciousness that

transcends the shapes of consciousness most pointedly in focus within Kant's perspective, as this can seem to remain within a subjective psychological perspective (or perhaps what retrospectively Hegel might describe as, at best, 'subjective spirit'). Rather than being conscious in reason only of *concepts* of objects 'taken' to be existent but with potentially only subjective status, the 'objectivity' of reason itself is secured by the self-consciousness of objective spirit—i.e., by the perspective in which consciousness as spirit itself takes the form of a 'reality [*Realität*]' for itself, such that spiritual activity confronts *itself* (in ethical life) as 'a world to be brought forth [*hervorzubringenden*], and [already] brought forth [*hervorgebracht*]' by spirit itself (*EG*: §385 10:32). What is more, in so far as it confronts ethical life as an already existent world (or as 'a *second nature*', as the *Philosophy of Right* famously puts it; cf. §151 7:301), this self-consciousness of itself as arising from an already-*past* rational activity points also to the need to incorporate historical dimension into consciousness essentially.

## VI. From objective to absolute spirit: beyond the historical-intersubjective shape of consciousness

To this extent, there is something essentially right in the common assumption that Hegel's criticism of Kant's account of knowing involves a step which insists upon a revision of the Kantian doctrine of consciousness or apperception, to incorporate the kind of consciousness (and self-consciousness) that comes to be only in the intersubjectivity of society (families, corporations, states) in history. Crucially, however, the *Phenomenology* (also, the *Encyclopaedia*) does not stop here. Prima facie, this itself speaks against any interpretation that implies that something on the order of objective spirit could count as attaining a form of consciousness in which there is absolute comprehension—or, to use the terms in which Hegel characterizes Kant's intuitive understanding: a form of consciousness which is itself *the truth* (as the absolute or perfect agreement of concept and object). The core obstacle to the interpretation of Hegel as putting forward merely a social-historical variation on Kant's transcendental-apperceptive problematic is that this domain—objective spirit, in each of its forms—is, and is aware of, itself as *finite*. Hegel takes this to indicate 'an *inadequacy* [*Unangemessenheit*]' between its 'concept' and the 'reality' it confronts (*EG*: §386 10:33).

Most obviously, objective spirit does not 'bring forth' ('first') *nature* itself; to the extent that it 'has nature as its presupposition' (cf. *EG*: §381), spirit is still 'conditioned' from without. This is true even of the most 'universal' form that Hegel allows for objective spirit to take—namely, that of 'world spirit [*Weltgeist*]', as the universal subject responsible for making or bringing forth all of the

'history [*Geschichte*]' of all of the successive 'spirits of the people [*Volksgeister*]' (cf. *EG*: §549 and §552). The activity of world spirit is, of course, itself already beyond not just any one individual 'I', but also any one concrete human manifestation of a 'we' in a nation or state.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, even this spirit does not achieve the form of consciousness which has moved beyond any mere 'finding [*das Vorfinden*]' of the world as 'presupposed [*vorausgesetzten*]', toward one involving 'the *generating* [*das Erzeugen*] of the world as one that is posited [*Gesetzten*] by spirit' itself, so as to finally achieve *complete* 'liberation'—and having done so 'for itself' (*EG*: §386). Absolute spirit is the self-consciousness of the spirit that is responsible not just for the world *history* of objective spirit ('second' nature), but also for the whole of ('first') *nature* itself, with nature and history both 'serving as its revelation and vessels of its honour' (*EG*: §552 10:353).<sup>24</sup> Only in this way can absolute spirit achieve complete 'adequacy' between its concept and its reality: the whole world no longer stands over and against it as 'a found actuality [*vorgefundene Wirklichkeit*]', but rather stands as an 'objective world whose inner ground of its actual obtaining' is 'the concept' possessed by absolute spirit itself—the whole world is *its* 'accomplished *absolute* purpose' (*WL*: 6:548).

Understandably, it is only in this transition to absolute spirit that we find Hegel announcing 'the elevating [*Erhebung*] of spirit to *God*' (*EG*: §552 Anm 10:354). There is reason to think, however, that Hegel ultimately goes beyond even Kant's conception of divine knowing, toward something closer to pan-en-theism: to be fully absolute, Hegel seems to think that spirit must not only *be conscious* of itself *as the ground* of all of nature as well as history, but must be conscious of itself *as being identical* to both nature and history; only with this further step would the concept (divine knowing) achieve a complete reconciliation with its object (the truth), such that the one would be in no way alien to the other.<sup>25</sup> This can be seen from Hegel's characterization of the absolutely '*comprehending* knowing [*das begreifende Wissen*]' as *itself* 'the truth', such that the knowing of the truth is the truth, and conversely the truth itself takes the form of the subject and substance doing this knowing or having this 'certainty or knowingness [*Gewissheit*]: 'the *truth* is not only *in itself* completely equal to *certainty*, but has also the *shape* of certainty of itself, or it is in its existence, i.e., for the knowing spirit, in the *form* of knowing' (*PG*: ¶798). Absolute spirit thereby comprehends *itself*, its own knowing, as the '*substance*' of the truth itself (*PG*: ¶17).

The core of Hegel's conception of absolute comprehension, then, would seem to be that it is achieved only in the perspective of the spirit not just responsible for 'creating' both nature and history, but even more so, in being self-conscious of *itself* as the truth. And it is only the idea of *this* absolute kind of 'comprehending knowing' which is entitled to claim the status of the idea of true



‘science’ (PG: ¶27)—which is, in Hegel’s words, nothing other than ‘the life of God and divine cognizing’ (PG: ¶19).

\* \* \*

By retracing what Kant had judged to be the experience of the failure of finite human understanding to achieve ‘the truth’ (what Hegel describes as ‘the way of despair’; PG: ¶78), but by nevertheless continuing on to the further ‘stages’ opened up by Kant’s own thinking about the infinite intuitive understanding, Hegel takes the *Phenomenology* to have prepared the way for attaining the correct perspective on genuinely universal absolute knowing, an account of absolute knowing as genuinely ‘comprehending’ science (WL: 5:42). Bracketing questions about Hegel’s success, what will instead be crucial for our subsequent discussion is Hegel’s own conception of the significance of the *Phenomenology*’s ‘presentation’ of this path for the proper re-conception of *logic* itself. For Hegel thinks that, while the *Phenomenology* ‘deduces’ the concept of science (absolute comprehending) itself as its ‘result’, this deduction itself, along with the concept or idea of science itself, becomes a ‘presupposition’ for his own *Logic* (cf. WL: 5:47, 67).<sup>26</sup> It is also, therefore, a ‘presentation’ (‘deduction’) that Hegel himself is presupposing we will have in mind when we start reading the *Encyclopaedia* and see Hegel claiming that, like religion, philosophy, too, has ‘the truth’ as its ‘object’, which, in its ‘highest sense’, is nothing other than ‘God’ and ‘God alone’ (EL: §1 8:41). Finally, it is what we must have in mind as we start reading the *Logics* and see Hegel claiming, at the outset and the conclusion, that the idea of absolute comprehending is ultimately the ‘divine idea’, considered prior to the ‘creation’ of nature and finite spirit, and ultimately responsible for the free ‘releasing’ of nature and finite spirit from itself.

## VII. From absolute spirit to absolute idea: the formality (and universality) of logic

The fact that logic itself already ‘presupposes’ the supersession of objective spirit by absolute spirit is therefore something that poses difficulties for any reading that means to hold that Hegel’s *Logics* are in any straightforward sense primarily ‘about’ the structure of specifically human social practice, rather than oriented essentially toward divine existence as absolute comprehension. There is, however, a still deeper worry for the social-communal ‘transcendental’ approach—namely, Hegel’s repeated *denial* in the *Logics* themselves that logic is specifically ‘about’ consciousness or spirit in particular, in *any* of its ‘shapes’, whether ‘subjective’ or ‘objective’, whether I-apperceptive or we-structured, etc. This is because, for Hegel, the subject-matter of logic is something more ‘formal’.

## The Subject in Hegel's Absolute Idea

In the *Logics*, Hegel draws out this point by elaborating on what the relation of logic to the *Phenomenology* is supposed to amount to. In *WL*, Hegel notes that because the *Phenomenology* 'sought to present consciousness', this required beginning with 'a knowing bound to something external' (i.e., its object) and then seeing consciousness undergo the 'forward movement' as 'appearing spirit' (*WL*: 5:17). More specifically, 'the science of appearing spirit' required that 'the beginning is made from empirical, *sensory* consciousness', and the 'result' was the 'concept of science' or '*pure knowing*' (5:67). In logic, however, this result is simply 'presupposed', and the beginning is made with this concept itself, i.e., with 'the idea as pure knowing' (5:67). What this means, concretely, is that logic begins with pure knowing itself and presents its own 'determinations', beginning with itself as 'withdrawn into the unity' of a 'simple immediacy', as 'pure being' (5:68), and following out the rest of its determinations through the 'entire extent of its development' (5:67). What 'constitutes the content of logic', then, are the 'pure essentialities', 'pure thoughts' of 'spirit that thinks its essence' as pure knowing (*WL*: 5:17).

In *EL*, Hegel claims, similarly, that 'logic is the science of the *pure idea*' (*EL*: §19 8:67). For this reason, while the *Phenomenology* began with 'the first, simplest appearance of spirit, with *immediate consciousness*', logic will begin instead with the 'simple thought-determinations' which are constitutive of 'philosophical science' (*EL*: §25 Anm 8:92). And just as in *WL*, in *EL* as well, we do not find consciousness or anything specifically pertaining to consciousness at the outset; rather, we again find the pure idea or pure knowing characterized first as '*pure being*', as 'the undetermined, simple immediate' (*EL*: §86 8:183). In fact, when Hegel aims to remind us about the true nature of our subject-matter, he does not advert to consciousness at all, but instead notes that, in this context, 'being itself, as well as the following determinations not only of being, but the logical determinations in general, can be regarded as definitions of the *absolute*, as metaphysical definitions of *God*' (*EL*: §85 8:181). In other words, Hegel again points us past consciousness to the account of absolute spirit and absolute knowing, rather than to consciousness itself (or to self-consciousness, reason or pre-absolute spirit, for that matter).

Yet if we do not begin with consciousness in the logic, then perhaps consciousness itself eventually shows up as a 'moment' in the logic itself, as one of the 'determinations' that must be accorded to 'pure knowing' or 'philosophical science'? At least at the level of explicit titles, we simply do not find consciousness itself (or spirit, for that matter) set forth as a 'moment' anywhere in either of the *Logics*. This is so, even in what Hegel calls the 'subjective' part of the *Logics*—even in sections that treat topics that have traditionally been associated with conscious mental activity, such as 'judgement', 'inference', and 'cognition', among others. In fact, at the outset of the 'subjective logic' in *EL*,

Hegel begins by explicitly contrasting the way in which the logical determinations he is about to introduce (concept, judgement, inference, idea, cognition, etc.) are *usually* understood in ‘ordinary logic’—namely as ‘only determinations of conscious thinking’—with the way in which they *ought* to be understood (*EL*: §162 Anm 8:309–10).

How ought these terms be understood, if *not* in the usual sense of determinations of a subject’s conscious mental activity? We have just noted that, in general, logical determinations are to be taken as determinations of the ‘absolute’ or of ‘God’, rather than determinations of finite subjectivity. In *WL*, Hegel further clarifies what lies behind this shift: consciousness (and self-consciousness, and finite spirit more generally) must be excluded from the subject-matter of logic, on the grounds that consciousness is actually better understood as a ‘concrete’ version of certain logical determinations, rather than a pure logical determination itself:

Concerning the subject-matter [of logic] itself, we should note, first of all, that each of the shapes of intuition, representation, and the like belong to self-conscious spirit, and so are not as such to be considered in the logical science. [...] These concrete shapes, however, belong in the logical science just as little as the concrete forms which the logical determinations in nature assume, and which would be space and time, then filled space and time, then inorganic nature, and organic nature. (*WL*: 6:257)

As with the previous remarks from *EL*, Hegel makes these comments also at the outset of *WL*’s ‘subjective logic’, no doubt again trying to anticipate the temptation readers will feel in an especially acute way when they see the titles of the division using words traditionally associated with what goes on in the consciousness of finite spirit in particular. But note the particular reason that Hegel gives for the distancing of his own understanding of concept, judgement, and inference, as moments (thought-determinations) of logic in particular, from the usual understanding of these terms: it is not just that consciousness is *too* ‘concrete’, it is that truly logical determinations—including those of being a concept, a judgement, an inference, etc.—are concretized in *more* than consciousness or spirit, since they are also concretized in nature itself.

In the *Logics* themselves, Hegel characterizes this feature of logic—that it is realized in both nature and spirit—in terms of its *formality*. In particular, Hegel uses the formality of logic to contrast its subject-matter with that of the other ‘philosophical sciences’ (e.g., the philosophy of nature and of spirit contained in the *Encyclopaedia*), which take up one or the other concrete or ‘real’ versions of

logical determinations.<sup>27</sup> Hegel reiterates just this point in relation to what he means by 'concept' in particular:

The concept is also not to be considered here as the act of the self-conscious understanding, not as *subjective understanding*, but as the concept in and for itself, which constitutes a *stage* of *nature* as well as of *spirit*. [...] Its logical form, however, is independent of the former unspiritual [*ungeistigen*] and also the latter spiritual shape. (*WL*: 6:257)

This is of a piece with Hegel's remarks earlier in the introductory sections, which explicitly *dissociate* what *he* means by 'subjective' (and what he means by 'concept') in his division-heading from anything pertaining to 'determinations that belong to the form of *consciousness*' (*WL*: 5:62; 6:487).

All of this helps to point up just how *non*-'subjective', in most traditional senses, Hegel ultimately takes the subject-matter of logic to be—including what he himself calls its 'subjective' part. As we saw above, Hegel takes 'what is logical' to provide the forms not just for spirit (consciousness, etc.) but also for nature, with each successive logical 'determination' providing steps for *each* of their developments. This entails not only that none of the determinations themselves should contain anything specifically pertaining to 'consciousness' (whether in the form of subjective spirit or objective spirit), but also that all of the determinations should be 'realized' in both nature and spirit—again, including those of 'subjective' logic.

And this is just what Hegel himself actually claims, even about the determinations of the 'subjective' part. Concerning the determinations of the first section of the 'Subjective Logic' (*EL*: the 'subjective concept'; *WL*: 'subjectivity'), Hegel repeats time and again that it is not just the activity of finite subjective self-conscious spirit that will necessarily involve, or take the form of, concepts or judgements or syllogisms, but rather that *all things* will share these determinations: 'everything is a concept' (*EL*: §181 Anm), 'all things are a judgement' (*EL*: §167); 'everything is a syllogism' (*EL*: §181 Anm; cf. *EL*: §24 Z2, *EL*: §182).<sup>28</sup> The same affirmations can be found concerning the determinations from the second section as well (*EL*: 'the object'; *WL*: 'objectivity'), with Hegel leading off this section considering the summary 'definition' that 'the absolute is the object' (*EL*: §194 Anm 8:350).

The same is true, finally, of the third and final section of the 'Subjective Logic' (*EL*: 'the idea'; *WL*: 'the idea'), with Hegel again starting out by considering the relation of the determination in question to the absolute or to God ('the definition of *the absolute*, that it is the *idea*'), rather than to anything pertaining to consciousness in particular (*EL*: §213 Anm 8:367). To be sure, as with the earlier section on the 'subjective concept', when taken out of context, the

particular titles under the general determination of ‘the idea’ might seem to suggest otherwise. In particular, especially when read within the context of Kant’s philosophy, Hegel’s treatment of the idea as ‘cognition’ (*EL*: §223) (and especially as ‘theorem’, as ‘construction’ and as ‘proof’ (*EL*: §231)), and then as ‘willing’ (*EL*: §233), can surely suggest that he is discussing determinations particular to self-conscious, apperceptive minds. Nevertheless, here again, Hegel could not be clearer: ‘*everything* actual, in so far as it is something true, is the idea’ (*EL*: §213 Anm 8:368). And when we turn to the end of Hegel’s *Encyclopaedia Philosophy of Nature* (*EN*), we do indeed find him claiming that nature itself manifests just these determinations pertaining to ‘subjectivity’ from the logic, even those just mentioned pertaining to ‘the idea’.<sup>29</sup> Strikingly, in Hegel’s lectures on the philosophy of nature, its conclusion is singled out as having brought us to ‘an image of nature’ in which we ‘cognize God, not in the consideration of spirit but in this his immediate existence’—i.e., in *nature* itself (*EN*: §376 Z 9:539). This is, of course, just as one would expect, given the foregoing remarks from the *Logics*: Hegel really means to affirm the neutrality of the logical determinations with respect to both their concretization in self-conscious human subjectivity and in nature, all the way up to and including that of the absolute (divine) idea itself.<sup>30</sup>

### VIII. The rejection of Kant’s ‘psychological reflection’, the embrace of Anaxagoras’s divine thought

In light of Hegel’s understanding of the formality and universality of logic, it is hard to see how even the ‘subjective’ logic—let alone the *Logics* as a whole—might nevertheless be construed as intending primarily to provide a successor-account to Kant’s of the forms of specifically self-conscious activity (e.g., human thinking, explanations, accounts, whether individualistically or socially construed). Rather, for Hegel, logic (and ‘the concept’ as its subject-matter) provides the forms of *all* things simpliciter, and does so in something of a pan-en-theistic manner.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, if one reads through Hegel’s discussions of the logical determinations themselves with the intention of looking for *any* obvious references whatsoever to thinking subjects and their acting, judging, thinking—‘taking’ things to be true, or taking themselves to take-true, in the Sellarsian expressions for the normativity of self-consciousness alleged to be the central topic throughout logic—it is striking just how *absent* any such references are, and how far from being keyed into this concern each of the logical determinations in Hegel’s *Logics* (including its ‘subjective’ component) will seem to be.

Conversely, a closer look at the broader context of the few places where Hegel does directly mention consciousness, ‘the I’, or Kant’s thinking subject, gives the complementary impression that Hegel’s purpose is, on the one hand, to

reject the idea that logic is specifically 'about' what pertains to this sort of subject (as we saw in the previous section, in the remarks emphasizing the formality and universality of logic in Hegel's sense), and then, on the other hand, to try to fish out from something in Kant's own remarks about 'the I', 'pure self-consciousness', and the 'unity of apperception' which might nevertheless provide a useful model for what Hegel himself means to discuss under the heading of 'subjective logic' (*WL*: 6:253f). Now, it is the latter group of passages which have (understandably) provided important points of inspiration for apperception-theoretic interpretations, since in them Hegel clearly means to be signalling something that Kant got right. Yet once they are read with Hegel's above points about the formality of logic (in his sense) firmly in mind, these passages themselves fairly clearly suggest that Hegel means *only* to be highlighting certain limited, very specific *analogies* that Kant's conception of apperception bears to the subject-matter of logic, and in particular the determination of 'the concept' as 'idea'.

In fact, Hegel cites this essentially heuristic concern as what 'justifies' his proposal for considering 'a main thesis of the Kantian philosophy' *at all*. Right at the outset of the 'subjective logic', Hegel tells us that he means to make use of Kant primarily to 'contribute to the apprehending [*Auffassen*] of the concept as developed here [in logic] and facilitate [*erleichtern*] finding one's way into it' (*WL*: 6:253). Kant's doctrine of 'the original synthetic unity of apperception' is thus set forth only as something that 'contains the *beginning* of the true apprehending of the nature of the concept' (my ital.)—and (crucially) as one which does *not* have much 'corresponding to it' in its 'further development' (*WL*: 6:251). This is in large part precisely because Kant himself 'only remained standing with the *psychological* reflection [*Reflex*] of the concept' (my ital.), which leaves him with a merely 'psychological idealism' because the relevant determinations are claimed to be '*only* determinations derived [*herkommen*] from self-consciousness' (*WL*: 6:251). (Note the association of self-consciousness with psychology *rather than* logic.)

Rather than attempting to salvage Kant, Hegel goes on to applaud instead the advances by the post-Kantians toward a more properly logical conception of 'the concept'—and indeed, toward what Hegel himself has in mind by divine comprehending—advances made precisely by pointing *away* from the finite I, and toward a more 'originary doing [*ursprüngliche Tun*]' which is '*freed*' of the relation to 'the finitude of consciousness' and 'subjectivity' in this sense (*WL*: 5:60; my ital.). Such 'originary doing' (à la Fichte and especially Schelling) ultimately provides a better model for absolute cognizing than Kant's conception of understanding, since with the post-Kantians, all 'finite determinacy' pertaining to 'the I' and 'consciousness' has been '*struck away* [*abgestreift*]' (*WL*: 5:61; my ital.).

Given the sharply limited analogies that Hegel explicitly states himself to be intending to draw in these remarks, it will be hard to find reasons for claiming, nevertheless, that they provide grounds for thinking that Hegel's logic should still be read as being about the normative structure of consciousness or self-consciousness in particular (whether this is construed as the Kantian I-subject of 'subjective spirit', or even as the Fichtean we-subject of 'objective spirit'). Indeed, we will find very little direct mention of topics pertaining specifically to the structure and normativity of self-conscious individual or social practices at all elsewhere in the *Logics*, outside of these few heuristic remarks.

What *is* present in the *Logics*, however, at both the outset and the conclusion, and in fairly explicit fashion, is Hegel's celebration, not of a *Kantian* insight, but instead of the following 'Anaxagorean thought': that what is truly logical is the 'logos' of 'nous', and ultimately, of infinite 'spirit', which is in fact 'the *cause* [*Ursache*] of the world' (*EL*: §8 Anm 8:52; my ital.):

Anaxagoras is celebrated as the man who first gave voice to the thought that Nous, thought, is the *principle* [Prinzip] of the world; that the *essence* [Wesen] of the world is to be determined *as thought*. In this, he laid down the foundation for an intellectual view of the universe, the pure shape of which must be logic. (*WL*: 5:44; my ital.)

And when this is combined with Hegel's assertion that *das Logische* should be understood as 'God in God's essence before the creation of nature and finite spirit', the implication is straightforward enough: the 'logos' in logic should be heard with pan-en-theistic, rather than transcendental-critical, overtones.<sup>32</sup> What is more, Hegel is fully self-conscious about how religious these 'Anaxagorean' remarks will sound—and, far from eschewing these resonances, he seems to wholeheartedly embrace them:

I could have refrained from mentioning that our [philosophical] principle (i.e. that reason governs [*regiere*] the world and always has done so) has a religious equivalent in the doctrine of a ruling providence; this would have allowed me to avoid the question of whether it is possible to obtain knowledge of God. But I did not wish to do so, partly in order to bring out some further implications of these questions, and partly also to allay any suspicions that philosophy has or should have any cause to fear discussing religious truths, or that it circumvents them because it does not, so to speak, have an easy conscience about them. On the contrary, we have recently reached the point

where philosophy has had to defend the content of religion against certain kinds of theology. (*WL*: 12:27)

### IX. Conclusion: the subject in the absolute idea

Taken as a whole, then, Hegel's consistent use of theological vocabulary—both in his critique of Kant, and then in the exposition of his own positive views on absolute comprehension, science, and truth—strongly suggests that, in the *Logics* (and in the *Encyclopaedia*, and in philosophy more generally), Hegel does not at all mean to rest content with Kant's exploration of the conditions for self-consciousness in *finite* human subjects, but instead really has the ambition and the purport of determining the conditions for absolute comprehension by the *infinite* divine subject. For Hegel, rather than being about something 'in' our accounts of the world, or 'in' our accounts of our accounts, the subject-matter of logic is said to be 'in' the world itself (cf. *EL*: §24), in both spirit and in nature, as its divine creative-productive form, as providing its very being (essence, existence).

In emphasizing this line of thought, I have meant to put pressure on recent interpretations which seek to downplay the specifically theological notes that, as we have now seen, Hegel consistently sounds throughout his work. For although there is widespread agreement that Hegel aims in some sense to overcome the limits Kant sets for logic (and philosophy more generally), the apperception-theoretic approaches to Hegel tend to assume there is no way that Hegel's theological vocabulary could possibly be meant at face value, and often avoid almost any direct engagement with it whatsoever.<sup>33</sup> In part, this is because, rather than seeing Hegel as rejecting *all* forms of 'humanism' about the subject-matter of logic, Hegel is now more commonly read as rejecting only the humanistic *individualism* implicit in Kant's thesis that logic concerns, first and foremost, the intellectual perspective of the individual human 'I think'. Now, as we have seen, there is no question that *social-communal* concerns motivate the *Phenomenology's* treatment of both the need for consciousness to develop from the perspective of the understanding to that of reason and its realization in objective spirit.<sup>34</sup> Still, as we have also seen, social-communal shapes of consciousness—even in their most universal form as the universal world-spirit of history—simply do not achieve the existence of absolute comprehension, and indeed rightly comprehend themselves as *not* being the ground of second *and first* nature both.<sup>35</sup>

It should be admitted, in conclusion, that the foregoing, of course, is not at all sufficient to determine what either absolute comprehension itself actually is, for Hegel, either considered 'in itself' as to its concept (as 'absolute idea'), or considered as to how it is fully realized (as 'absolute spirit'). Perhaps most notably, we have not addressed important questions concerning how exactly



Hegel's conception of logic will fit in with the details of his own account of theology itself (including his advocacy of a 'trinitarian' conception of God),<sup>36</sup> and his broader account of religion as itself one of the manifestations of absolute spirit—indeed, as occurring 'in' and 'through' human spirit itself.<sup>37</sup> I hope to address these important questions more systematically in future work.<sup>38</sup>

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> I use the following abbreviations for Hegel's works: *PG*=*Phänomenologie des Geistes*; *WL*=*Wissenschaft der Logik*; *EL*=*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften, I: Wissenschaft der Logik*; *EN*=*Enzyklopädie II: Philosophie der Natur*; *EG*=*Enzyklopädie, III: Philosophie des Geistes*. I cite Hegel's works by volume: page number of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, ed. E. Moldenhauer and K. M. Michel (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1969). 'Anm' refers to *Anmerkung*; 'Z' to *Zusatz*. I have consulted, and in the main followed, the following translations: *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); *The Science of Logic*, trans. G. di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline, Part I: Science of Logic*, trans. and ed. K. Brinkmann and D. O. Dahlstrom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); *Philosophy of Mind*, trans. W. Wallace and A. V. Miller, rev. M. Inwood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

I refer to Kant's works by the *Akademie* volume and page numbers, except for the first *Critique*, which I refer to according to the B-Edition pagination. For translations I have consulted (and usually followed) the *Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*.

<sup>2</sup> As is acknowledged in Taylor 1975; more recently, compare de Boer 2004, Beiser 2005, and especially Williams 2017 and Plevrakis 2017.

<sup>3</sup> For overviews see especially Kreines 2006 and Lumsden 2008.

<sup>4</sup> Compare Pippin 1989; Pinkard 1994; Brandom 1999; Pinkard 2000; Pinkard 2002; Zambrana 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Cf.: 'Kant and Hegel continue to share a common problematic: a search for those aspects of a conceptual scheme without which there could not be a scheme, and so could not be objects discriminated by that scheme' (Pippin 1989: 8; cf. Pippin 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Compare Pippin 2008; Brandom 2009; McDowell 2009; Yeomans 2012; Pippin 2014b.

<sup>7</sup> For references, see below in §2, §6, and §8. For two recent approaches which take theological concerns to be central to Hegel's logic—though differing from one another, and from the account I develop below—see Williams 2017 and especially Plevrakis 2017.

## The Subject in Hegel's Absolute Idea

<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Pippin himself has openly acknowledged the (at least *prima facie*) very strong interpretive pull toward a more theological conception of Hegel's subject-matter, given the near-constant supply of passages in which Hegel invokes God, as infinite divine substance and subjectivity, as the single appropriate characterization of what he means to be talking about under the heading of 'absolute spirit', as what engages in 'absolute knowing', and in particular as what would contain the 'absolute idea' that provides the ultimate subject-matter of logic itself. In Pippin's own words, such passages 'tend to make it seem inevitable that Hegel's full theoretical position depends essentially on some metaphysical doctrine of spiritual substance (an Absolute Subject), 'active' in history and nature, the 'blueprint' for whose activity can be found in the *Logic*' (Pippin 1989: 177). Still, Pippin nevertheless remains confident that, in such remarks, Hegel simply 'could not have been proposing some version of a creative, divine intellect' (Pippin 1989: 78), and that, in his doctrines of absolute knowing and the absolute idea, 'Hegel is not referring to a knowledge of an absolute substance-Subject, a Divine Mind, or a Spirit-Monad' (Pippin 1989: 168; cf. Pippin 2014a: 156), and that any interpretation along these lines 'must be rejected' (Pippin 1989:177; cf. Pippin 2017: §9.3).

For his part, Pinkard frequently emphasizes that Hegel should not be saddled with a deflationary, merely 'humanistic' understanding of these terms, insisting on the importance of a distinction between ourselves as humans and the 'divine principle in us' (Pinkard 1994: 254; Pinkard 2002: 244)—though it remains less than clear how much of the more-than-humanistic, more traditionally theological significance of Hegel's conception of the absolute Pinkard would ultimately like to embrace.

<sup>9</sup> Compare Plevrakis 2017: 17f for the early history of unhesitatingly theological interpretations (by Göschel, Rosenkranz and others) of Hegel's philosophy and logic in particular in the first decade following Hegel's death. See also Williams 2017: 157f for Michelet's reading.

<sup>10</sup> Compare the *Zusatz*: 'The first question is, what is the object of our science? The simplest and most intelligible answer to this question is that the *truth* is its object. [...] [But] God is the truth; how are we supposed to cognize him?' (*EL*: §18 Z1 8:68).

<sup>11</sup> Hegel's early editors would seem to agree, as they place a *Zusatz* to these sections which refers specifically to 'the *noesis noeseos*, or what Aristotle had already designated as the highest form of the idea' (*EL*: §236 Z1 8:388).

<sup>12</sup> Compare Plevrakis 2017: 4.

<sup>13</sup> Even if 'universally' so with respect to the domain of human subjectivity, as valid for each and every human mind.

<sup>14</sup> '[T]o cognize something through reason' at all is already 'to have *insight* into [*einsehen*]' it, rather than mere cognition; still higher is to 'comprehend [*begreifen*]' it, or 'to cognize through reason *a priori*' (9:65). For more on Kant's conception of the progression of representations from cognition to comprehension, see Tolley 2017c.

<sup>15</sup> This is because Kant takes the fact that 'our understanding cannot cognize things otherwise than through certain general marks' (i.e., via concepts) to be 'a limitation' on our understanding, and so something which 'cannot occur' in 'a maximum understanding, that is, an intuitive understanding' (28:996).

<sup>16</sup> Compare Tolley 2017b. Indeed, in his lectures, Kant is recorded as denying that this understanding *thinks*: ‘God’s understanding will not be a capacity of thinking but a faculty of intuiting’ (28:1017).

<sup>17</sup> Compare Förster 2000; Longuenesse 2000; Nuzzo 2009.

<sup>18</sup> This is complicated somewhat by the fact that, by the end of the Dialectic, Kant argues that these ideas can be put to a ‘regulative’ use in relation to our thinking about the objects of experience, such that we can and must ‘*assume* [annehmen]’ that these ideas have an ‘objective’ though ‘indeterminate’ validity (cf. B697, B701). Still, Kant’s arguments here seem only to draw on the subjective necessity of such an assumption, given our reason (cf. B694, B708).

<sup>19</sup> Compare Ameriks 1985; Bristow 2007.

<sup>20</sup> Though compare again Williams 2017 and Plevrakis 2017; see also Forster 1998.

<sup>21</sup> Compare Förster 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Compare Hardimon 1994.

<sup>23</sup> In fact, ‘the self-consciousness of a particular people’ as a whole now is now demoted to merely ‘the bearer [Träger]’ of the particular ‘stage of development’ of this more ‘universal spirit’ (EG: §550 10:352) and ‘the individual’ is now reconceived as its ‘instrument [Werkzeug]’ (EG: §551). Compare as well Hegel’s remarks from the *Phenomenology*: though we all in some sense contribute to realizing absolute spirit, each ‘I’ and ‘we’ does so only partially, ‘finitely’. From the point of view of any one individual or community, the perspective of absolute spirit can seem to be ‘a remote beyond [*eine jenseitige Ferne*]’ in which ordinary individual consciousness ‘no longer possesses itself’ (PG: ¶26)—and rightfully, since ‘the share in the total work of Spirit which falls to the individual can only be very small’, which does suggest that ‘the individual must all the more forget himself, as the nature of Science implies and requires’ (PG: ¶72).

<sup>24</sup> Compare Rosenkranz 1858: 33–34.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Williams 2017: 12, 190, 279f. Compare the final Zusatz to the *Encyclopaedia Philosophica of Nature*, where we find the Schellingian claim that we can see God even *in nature* itself: ‘not in the consideration of spirit’, but rather in nature itself as God’s *own* ‘immediate existence’ (EN: §376 Z 9:539).

<sup>26</sup> Compare Forster 1998.

<sup>27</sup> ‘[L]ogic as the *formal science* cannot also contain, nor should contain, the kind of reality [*Realität*] which is the content of the other parts of philosophy, of the *sciences of nature and of spirit*’ (WL: 6:264–65).

<sup>28</sup> Given the prominence of talk of judgement among apperception-theoretic interpreters (following Kant’s prioritizing of judgement in *his* logic), it is worth quoting in full Hegel’s explicit rejection of the traditional determination of judgement in its ‘logical’ significance by reference to specifically subjective acts: ‘Judgment is usually taken in the subjective sense as an operation and form that surfaces merely in self-conscious thinking. This difference, however, is not yet on hand in the logical [sphere, where] judgment is supposed to be taken in the completely universal sense: *all things are a judgment*,—i.e. they are individuals which are a universality or inner nature in themselves, or a universal that is individuated’ (EL: §167).

## The Subject in Hegel's Absolute Idea

<sup>29</sup> That life as manifest in nature is perhaps fairly straightforward and uncontroversial; perhaps it is more controversial that there is a purely logical determination. In Hegel's own characterization of life in nature as 'organism', however, he explicitly describes this both as 'the idea arriving in existence', and as nature itself finally becoming 'self-ish [*selbstisch*] and subjective' (EN: §337 9:337). And once natural life has taken the form of 'animal organism' in particular, Hegel singles out two 'processes' pertaining to 'assimilation' in relation to its environment, one 'theoretical process' which unifies what arrives from its 'senses' into a 'determinate feeling' (EN: §357 9:464), and another 'practical relation' which involves the 'feeling of lack and of drive [*Trieb*]' (EN: §358 9:468). Finally, Hegel singles out the 'process of the genus [*Gattungsprozess*]' as concretizing, not just the generic form of the idea (as does all natural life, even that of the earth itself), but the absolute idea, in so far as the genus as a whole is a 'process of concluding itself together with itself' subsequent to the 'judgement [*Urteil*]' and 'diremption' which particularizes and individualizes itself (EN: §367 9:498). (This helps bring out the extent to which, in nature, it is the genus, and not the individual animal, which manifests 'self-preservation and reproduction' (cf. EN: §366).)

<sup>30</sup> Compare Rosenkranz 1858: 34f.

<sup>31</sup> It is worth emphasizing just how distant Hegel's talk of 'formality' is from Kant's own. Hegel does not mean that logic is 'formal' in Kant's sense, since for Hegel the forms in question are not the forms of finite acts of 'conscious thinking' about objects, but rather are the forms of the objects ('essentialities of the *things*') themselves, forms 'in the world', not something 'foreign and external' to things (EL: §24 and Anm 8:81). This was already anticipated in the characterization of absolute knowing itself at the end of the *Phenomenology*, as both subject (knowing) and substance (known), rather than forms that obtain merely on the side of the subject (however otherwise 'absolute' it might be).

<sup>32</sup> Compare again Rosenkranz 1858: 34.

<sup>33</sup> Or even mention of it, as in Pippin 2017. For related criticisms of Pippin's earlier work, compare de Boer 2004. These same criticisms would apply to Sedgwick's recent account (cf. Sedgwick 2012), which, in addition to failing to directly engage with Hegel's theological positions, also remains content to offer what looks to be a decidedly *individualist* interpretation of Hegel's own positive account of knowing, focusing largely on Hegel's local critiques of Kant's characterization of the internal structure of finite apperceptive structure (e.g., concerning a potentially more originary unity of sensibility and understanding, or concepts and intuitions, in the productive imagination)—all the while, remaining almost entirely silent about Hegel's challenges to Kant's deeper assumptions about the primacy of individual apperception itself, and thereby leaving to the side even Hegel's Fichtean points about reciprocal-recognitive sociality, let alone his Schellingian commitment to the en-spiriting of nature itself. Kreines's more recent work contains a refreshing, and much more direct, attempt to push beyond the apperception-theoretic readings, in favour of a much more metaphysically-minded interpretation (cf. Kreines 2015)—though in his book Kreines stops short of embracing the more fully re-theologized reading developed here, and gives almost no indication of how he understands

the transition from the point of view of reason (objective spirit) to that of absolute knowing (absolute spirit); cf. Tolley 2017a.

<sup>34</sup> For developments of the *Phenomenology's* conception of 'the sociality of reason' along these lines, see especially Pinkard 1994; compare as well Brandom 2009 and McDowell 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Compare Plevrakis 2017: 99n350, 273n20. For his part, Pinkard openly acknowledges that none of these 'absolute' tasks, which surely seem to be ascribed to absolute spirit, are ones that any human 'I', or any human 'we', could ever sensically (let alone rightly) 'take' themselves to have accomplished (Pinkard 2012: 201n52).

<sup>36</sup> Here again compare Williams 2017 and Plevrakis 2017.

<sup>37</sup> Importantly, Hegel does claim that it is 'only from and by' objective spirit that 'the idea of God is known [gewußt] as free spirit' (*EG*: §552 Anm 10:354; my ital.). What is more, Hegel's version of theological trinitarianism is explicitly formulated to allow the metaphysics of absolute spirit to incorporate human spirit, an incorporation 'represented' in Christianity both by the incarnation in Jesus and in the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church; for one version of how this might work that is broadly sympathetic to the position developed above, compare Williams 2017. For the relation between theology and Hegel's philosophy of religion more generally, compare Jaeschke 1986.

<sup>38</sup> I would like to thank the anonymous referees for the *Bulletin* who provided useful feedback on an earlier draft; I would also like to thank audiences at University of Cambridge, Universität Bonn, Catholic University of America, UC San Diego, and especially those who participated in the 2017 Pittsburgh conference on Hegel's logic for very helpful discussion of earlier versions of this material.

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