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The Structure and Function of the Idea of “God” in Idealist Logic

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at

THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Byron Ashley Clugston
Department of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts

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“For human reason, without being moved by the mere vanity of knowing it all, inexorably pushes on, driven by its own need to such questions that cannot be answered by any experiential use of reason and of principles borrowed from such a use; and thus a certain sort of metaphysics has actually been present in all human beings as soon as reason has extended itself to speculation in them, and it will also always remain there.” (Critique of Pure Reason, B21)

“…it is not at all [traditional] metaphysics that the Critique is doing but a whole new science, never before attempted, namely the critique of an a priori judging reason...”(Kant, Gesammelte Schriften, Vol. 10, 340)

“The complete transformation which philosophical thought in Germany has undergone in the last twenty-five years and the higher standpoint reached by spirit in its awareness of itself, have had but little influence as yet on the structure of logic...logic shows no traces so far of the new spirit which has arisen in the sciences no less than in the world of actuality. However, once the substantial form of the spirit has inwardly reconstituted itself, all attempts to preserve the forms of an earlier culture are utterly in vain; like withered leaves they are pushed off by the new buds already growing at their roots...Now whatever may have been accomplished for the form and the content of philosophy [Wissenschaft] in other directions, the science of logic which constitutes metaphysics proper or purely speculative philosophy, has hitherto still been much neglected...Philosophy, if it would be science, cannot...borrow its method from a subordinate science like mathematics, any more than it can remain satisfied with categorical assurances of inner intuition, or employ arguments based on grounds adduced by external reflection. On the contrary, it can be only the nature of the content itself, which spontaneously develops itself in a scientific method of knowing, since it is at the same time the reflection of the content itself which first posits and generates its determinate character [...] logic is to be understood as the system of pure reason, as the realm of pure thought. This realm is truth as it is without veil and in its own absolute nature. It can therefore be said that this content is the exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and a finite mind [Geist].”(Science of Logic, Preface to the First Edition, 25-27, Introduction, 50)
“Metaphysics has as the proper end of its investigation only three ideas: God, freedom, and immortality; so that the second concept, combined with the first, should lead to the third as a necessary conclusion. Everything else with which this science is concerned serves merely as a means of attaining these ideas and their reality. It does not need them for the sake of natural science, but instead to get beyond nature. The insight into these ideas would make theology, morals, and, through their combination, religion, thus the highest ends of our existence, dependent solely upon the faculty of speculative reason and on nothing else. In a systematic representation of those ideas, the suggested order, which is a synthetic one, would be the most appropriate; but in working through them, which must necessarily be done first, the analytic order, which inverts this one, is more suitable to the end of completing our great project, proceeding from what experience makes immediately available to us from the doctrine of the soul, to the doctrine of the world and from there all the way to the cognition of God.” (Critique of Pure Reason, B395; my emphases)

“...philosophy has absolutely nothing at all to do with merely correct definitions and even less with merely plausible ones, i.e., definitions whose correctness is immediately evident to the representing consciousness; it is concerned, instead, with definitions that have been validated, i.e., definitions whose content is not accepted merely as something that we come across, but is recognised as grounded in free thinking, and hence at the same time as grounded within itself.” (Encyclopedia Logic, §99, Addition, 158)

“Logic being the science of the absolute form, this formal science, in order to be true, must possess in its own self a content adequate to its form; and all the more, since the formal element of logic is the pure form, and therefore the truth of logic must be the pure truth itself. Consequently this formal science must be regarded as possessing richer determinations and a richer content and as being infinitely more potent in its influence on the concrete than is usually supposed.” (Science of Logic, Introduction to The Subjective Logic, 594)
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Just as one’s body may feel physically threatened by the sensation of weightlessness when floating atop deep water, so too does one’s mind discern a lack of control when confronted by a nebulous question. And in thoughts, as in actions, a certain friction brings comfort. I remind myself of Hegel’s remarks about self-consciousness when reflecting upon the writing process and realise not only would an honest list of acknowledgment include all of those whom I’ve read, but also all of those with whom I’ve spoken, because in any such cases we are buoyed by the manifestations of others to ourselves, and in a range of ways it is difficult to express adequately.

In less indulgent fashion, I would thank certain teachers by whom I have had the honour of being taught, and by whose ways of thinking, writing, and talking I have been deeply affected: Paul Redding, Huw Price, and David Macarthur. It is Paul Redding to whom I owe the greatest debt, for his patient and profound guidance as my supervisor; and friend.

There are also friends who have not been teachers in a formal sense, yet whom I would like to acknowledge, and who know who they are. Certain changes in one’s ways of thinking may slowly become evident long after an initial blow has been struck to alter one’s course; it is with this fact in mind that I celebrate the joys of conversation and friendship and their potential for changing positively one’s manner of reflection.

I wish also to acknowledge the Australian Research Council, and to thank them for funding support, without which this thesis would not have been written. This funding support came from a grant awarded to Dr. Paolo Diego Bubbio and Prof. Paul Redding, for a project entitled “The God of Hegel’s post-Kantian Idealism”.


Preface

This thesis is a study of the idea of “God” in the philosophy of Kant and Hegel. It focuses on this idea in order to clarify certain high level structural features of their views about the aim, scope, and character of metaphysics. In order to achieve this aim the thesis at different points occupies distinct perspectives on the question of what the structure and function of the idea of "God" in idealist logic is, and in so doing, it relies on the claim that this idea is itself one side of a dialectical pair, the other side of which is the finite, rational judging subject. Significantly, this dialectical metaphysical relation is correlated with another relation at the epistemological level; namely, that between knowledge of individual things and the systematic unity of knowledge of which they are a part.

As a whole, this thesis constitutes an extended argument for the claim that in Kant and, in a different way, in Hegel, conceptual determination is that activity which involves mediation between judgments by rational subjects about individual things and the idea of a limit case that cannot be fully conceptually determined this way (“God”). Further, that this provides a ground for knowledge of individual things by situating them within a systematic unity. Another way of viewing conceptual determination is as an activity that, at least in Kant, extends in two directions without reaching a limit at either: maximal generality and maximal specificity. Neither the maximally general or inclusive (“the All”, or “the One”), nor the maximally specific and completely determined, may be represented and known conceptually. Both however serve as essential grounds and are instantiated as the \textit{ens realissimum} (I here also use the term \textit{sumnum genus}) and an empirical intuition (which is a representation of an \textit{infima species}).

Here, then, is one way to view Kant’s position: concepts do not reach either the upper or lower bounds of thought, but rather constitute the rational activity which reaches in two opposite directions simultaneously without coming to the limit of either.

For his part, Hegel sees the difficulty with this view and insists that whilst Kant may be correct insofar as the dialectical development of conceptual determinations cannot ever be seen as complete (thus reaching stasis), it is nevertheless misleading to think one can separate a “given” intuitional material from conceptual activity, as if the intuitional material was there to be exploited in a way that makes it seem as if it were amenable to conceptual activity.
whilst being separated from it by a gulf that could not in principle be crossed.

A key part of the extended argument referred to above is the claim that any such rational activity, in both practical and theoretical dimensions, involves moments of both schematic and symbolic activity, where schemata are structures involved with saying and “directly” representing, and symbols “show” cases where the “ought” is satisfied in an “is”. This structure is that which allows, at least in Kant, for the mediation between singular thoughts and the purported ground of them all; in Hegel, I take it the schematic-symbolic relation, although not articulated in the same way as Kant, is nevertheless pervasive and important for his critique of transcendental idealism. The consequence is that one can establish that the perceived relation between the finite and the infinite in both Kant and Hegel entails in each case a certain conception of rational activity. In particular, the logical triad of universal, particular, and singular, will be seen as an essential structural component of both idealisms in their respective theories of judgment and inference.

A point of clarification is in order. Kant famously characterised the limited, finite, conditioned position of thought which, as a discursive understanding, has empirical knowledge of phenomena, as “the human standpoint” (A11/B24). This kind of discursive understanding reasons from the part to the whole, but never knows the whole. That is to say, for Kant, we cannot know the unconditioned: we cannot know things in an unconditioned manner, nor can we have unconditioned knowledge. This coordinates with the claim that “knowledge of God” is to be construed as knowledge of God as well as knowledge like that of a God.

Kant contrasted this characterisation of “the human standpoint” with the idea of an “intuitive understanding” (CJ, 76-77), which, if such a hypothetical subject existed, would know noumena; that is, such would know things in an unconditioned manner and would thus have unconditioned knowledge. This kind of knowledge possessed by such an understanding (or, an “intelectual intuition”) would know the parts in virtue of knowing the whole. I take it this latter idea of an intuitive understanding, or intellectual intuition (I shall not focus on the difference here), is the philosophical core of the “Godly knowledge” or “knowledge of God”, and the ens realissimum, or “most real being”, is the “philosophical kernel of the idea of God” (Allison, 2004, 386). Thus an intuitive understanding is that hypothetical epistemic agent which would know the omnitudo realitatis (“all of reality”) in its perfection, thus as containing the
perfections of all possible predicates, as the “most real being”, the singular *ens realissimum*.

Under this way of thinking God's knowledge would be of God itself; in Neoplatonic terminology “the One” would know only “the One”, which would of course be an unsatisfactory proposition due to the fact that such knowing would require a division within "the One", whereby it could, paradoxically, only know itself in its act of knowing and could not thereby know itself fully.

In any case, the way this idea plays out in idealist logic as a transformation of Aristotle's *noesos noeseos noesos* demonstrates how the idea of the finite and infinite perspectives relate to one other; the Absolute Idea, as the methodological remarks in that chapter in the *Science of Logic* reveal, may be regarded as a transformation of this Aristotelian idea of such “divine narcissism”, such that God ought not be regarded simply as "the One" which divides itself and produces itself by thinking only of itself, but rather "God" is only intelligible insofar as a community of rational subject is; thus, that these two ideas are internally related. Of course, given Kant's transcendentally ideal view of rational entities and his nominalism at the phenomenal level, the idea of a "One" being real, let alone able to “know itself”, he could not accept such a proposition, yet the idea is revealing for the alternative Hegel proposes.

I take it the above interpretation of the hypothetical infinite epistemic agent, the intuitive understanding, is a reasonably uncontroversial interpretation of Kant's meaning which, moreover, justifies my interpretive choice to focus on the idea of "God". But what of Hegel? Here the case is slightly more complicated, and the structural difference in the relation between the human and the divine in Hegel is unique and foreshadows some of the conclusions drawn later in this work.

Firstly, Hegel at many points rails against Kant's “metaphysics of subjectivity” on the grounds that he misconstrues the nature of reason by appearing to extrude it from the realm of actual human practices of reasoning. In Hegel's words from *Faith and Knowledge*, Kant's philosophy was an “idealism of the finite”, because Kant, Hegel suggested, had separated the finite rational subject which partakes of reason from reason itself, the result being that there was something that reason was separated from and therefore limited by (actual reasoning practices of reasoners!), thus making reason limited rather than unlimited, finite not infinite, conditioned and not unconditioned, and perhaps worst of all, *more* phenomenal than “mere” appearances.
At this point it is worth briefly digressing to note a complaint against this critique. I here set aside the objection that Hegel's quarrel was merely verbal, that his objection consisted simply in a stipulation about the meaning of “infinite” and related terms. Whatever the theoretical merits of Hegel's objection, the practical merits of his reformed vision of rationality are obvious: if one can expect to never have “true” thoughts by virtue of definitively failing to know “things in themselves” as well as failing to become satisfactorily moral, by failing to satisfy the demands of the moral law, then one must live with the guilt of human failure, with the gravity of perpetual disappointment. This line of criticism against Kant is well expressed by Stanley Cavell's remark that much modern Western philosophy appears to labour under an illusory and existentially problematic “Rejection of the Human” (The Claim of Reason, p. 207). I take it one of Hegel's goals was to make coherent the idea of a supreme ground of reason, truth, and spirit that transcended individual rational subjects, but not all of them at once; that God was the “divine” ground of a self-mediating community that recognized itself in its other, whose subjects recognised themselves in their own norms, and which constituted truly rational autonomy.

In Hegel's view, we need to reevaluate our rational activity as involving us as having a double aspect: we are both finite and infinite; we are finite in the sense of merely being an instance of the in-itself; that is, we are in a sense a mere thing. And yet we are also a case of that which is for-itself: we are able to self-reflexively form a perspective on who and what we are, which in turn provides us with the distance from ourselves required for us to form ideals which guide our life and action, some cases of which are ideals of ourselves, indeed, ideals that make us who we are.

It is this latter perspective that leads Hegel to defend a stronger conception of freedom than Kant, for instance. But I am not focusing on freedom here, so I will restrict my claim to this: in Hegel, Kant's idea of “the human standpoint” is transformed from the idea of something finite and conditioned to something which is both this and its contrary; that is, for Hegel, we have a finite and an infinite aspect. This seems to simply run together Kant's dualism dogmatically, into a “monism” (yet we must take care with this word). How could this Hegelian critique be satisfactory? The trick is to be found in what Hegel does with Kant's idea of “God”, and the epistemic model of the intuitive understanding, or intellectual intuition.

The idea of "God" is thematised in many places in Hegel's writings, yet the most important context for us at present is the
following: the end of the “Spirit” chapter of the *Phenomenology* where Hegel discusses the dialectical relation between the judge and the confessor in the context of “the moral view of the world”. It is in this moral context that Hegel’s complaint against Kant’s conception of a God from whom we are radically separated is clearest; Hegel claims that God exists in the shape of spirit of a community which comes into being where two (or more) subjects enjoy the kinship actualised in confession and forgiveness. It is this possibility of living one’s norms which is necessary for the idea of “God” to make sense; Kant’s error was to postulate a form of constraint that was unintelligible. Ask oneself, for instance: “What is moral perfection? What is unconditioned knowledge?” namely: “What do we hear God’s voice commanding us to do when we feel the moral law bearing down upon us in our conscience? And what kind of knowledge do we think we are in principle, and in metaphysical terms, incapable of?”

Now, so conceived, “God” in Hegel, is an essential ground of the dialectic between what he calls the in-itself and the for-itself, because “God” expresses that ground of true mutuality and true community. Thus for Hegel “God” is still a dialectical pole opposed to the finite, rational judging subject, yet because he conceives such subjects as partaking of the infinite, he allows a moment of the divine within the human, and vice versa, as can be gleaned from his account of “the Son”, Jesus, as the second moment of the Trinity.

The parallel with Kant is thus imperfect, because for Kant the idea of “God” is rendered as external to “the human standpoint”, rather than internal, as in Hegel’s philosophy. But this imperfection is beside the point, for if there were complete agreement between Kant and Hegel there would be nothing to say. This thesis is therefore an extended defence of the above-described Hegelian reform of Kant.

The overall picture that emerges is that both Kant and Hegel had quite novel views about the idea of “God” that, when examined closely, reveal some interesting features of their views of both theoretical and practical philosophy; and specifically, about the determination of the world through judgment and the determination of the will in action. Along the way, we encounter long neglected themes in their work that resonate with current concerns. These themes turn out to be interesting for their own sake, as well as key moments in idealist logic which reveal it to have some affinity with currents in epistemology, the philosophy of language and semiotics, as well as philosophical logic, meta-ontology, and epistemic modality. It is the view of the present author that much more can be done to
integrate such insights as emerge from classical German philosophy, in a way that would complement current interest in the prospects for an analytical Hegelianism.

The work is in three parts. Chapter One briefly outlines the dialectic between the idea of “God” and “the human standpoint” in both Kant and Hegel, and explains why certain of the divergences between their views are connected in a deep way with fundamental differences at this level. The rest of the chapter offers a synoptic account of some contemporary disputes over the nature of the metaphysics conceived by Kant and Hegel.

Chapter Two begins by detailing the different structures Kant claims exist at the level of the understanding and reason, respectively. It proceeds to offer criticisms of Kant that follow from his own position; it also offers elaborations of certain ideas present in Kant that, if developed adequately, stand to resolve these difficulties. The remainder of the chapter offers a reading of Hegel’s view of representational structure, firstly, in general, then secondly, at the specific level of cognition of “God”. This latter discussion goes some way to showing how Hegel could defend philosophical theology as a project without regressing to a pre-Critical view of metaphysics. It also acknowledges that Kant’s and Hegel’s views about “God” should be understood in close connection with their views about the nature of conscience.

Chapter Three focuses narrowly on a principle employed by reason in its speculative use, as discussed by Kant in the Transcendental Dialectic, which was taken by him to generate the idea of the omnitudo realitatis (“All of reality”) and the ens realissimum (“the most real being”), where the latter is to be understood as the core of the idea of “God”. The structure of this principle is analysed and some crucial elements of Kant’s theory of judgment are explained in connection with it. A Hegelian dialectical exposition of the principle is offered by way of an evaluation of the idealist logical components that purportedly ground it. The result is an explanation of what “God” could not mean for Hegel. The final section of the work involves offering the skeleton of a positive account of what “God” seems to have meant for Hegel, where this entails an explanation of the connection between self-consciousness and its activity of determination.
Chapter One: Philosophical Theology, Philosophical Anthropology, and Metaphysics
I Preamble

Beatrice Longuenesse\(^1\) has proposed an interpretation of Hegel’s critique of Kant that concludes with an endorsement of the latter’s critique of traditional metaphysics by way of appraisal of his supposed comparative success at articulating the contours of “the human standpoint”. Importantly, the notion of a “human standpoint” has traditionally been conceived as what Hegel would call an “abstract negation” of the idea of “knowledge of God”, where the former is associated with a particular understanding of the concept of “finite” (“the conditioned”), the latter with a particular understanding of the concept of “infinite” (“the unconditioned”).\(^2\) Hegel discusses this point at length in the Introduction to *Faith and Knowledge*.

The fixed standpoint which the all-powerful culture of our time has established for philosophy is that of a Reason affected by sensibility. In this situation philosophy cannot aim at the cognition of God, but only at what is called the cognition of man...philosophy is not supposed to present the Idea of man, but the abstract concept of an empirical mankind all tangled up in limitations, and to stay immovably impaled on the stake of absolute antithesis...\(^3\)

I take it that an “abstract” view of negation refers to the idea that two concepts or things are contradictions or contraries of one another, and yet in addition, entirely independent of one another. Hegel conceives of this outlook as a product of the understanding which is overcome by reason.

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\(^1\) See Longuenesse (1992/2007, esp. 216-217), 1995/2007, esp. 167 & 191), 2001/2005, esp. 207-208). Although the first two papers were originally written in the early nineties the recency of their republication, in conjunction with the systematic reading that emerges from her entire oeuvre, gives the impression that the stance taken in the papers themselves would not differ radically from Longuenesse’s current view.

\(^2\) See Kreines (2007, 323-324), where he acknowledges that Kant’s conception of finitude relies on a contrast with a certain conception of divine intellect, the conception of the both of which, in Hegel’s eyes, can be questioned. He claims that “Hegel’s initial example of knowledge of natural laws and kinds suggests that Kant’s basic distinction is rather a false dichotomy.”

\(^3\) Hegel (1977a, 65).
Chapter One: Theology, Anthropology, and Metaphysics

It is a commonly held view that one of Hegel’s core innovations was to overcome the traditional understanding of negation by offering a dialectical account of it. His resultant view may be referred to as “symmetricalism” about negation.\(^1\) This view is manifest everywhere in Hegel’s dialectical philosophical approach; it is expressed by his famous phrase “determinate negation” and complemented by his concept of “sublation” (\textit{Aufhebung}). By “symmetricalism” I mean a position that insists positive claims have no logical primacy over negative ones; that they are two sides of one discursive coin. Hegel’s particular version of this view is part of his rejection of positivism: the view that to each significant claim there matches sense-data of some kind (cf. Kant’s claim that matter is “that in the appearance that corresponds to sensation”).\(^2\)

The contrast between the theological and the anthropological is the core of the interpretive framework here employed, due to the fact that it brings into focus how Hegel attempted to overcome what he saw as the problematically dualistic image of human finitude to which he claims Kant was captive.\(^3\) I develop a reading\(^4\) that is sympathetic to many of Longuenesse’s broad interpretive claims, although I emphasise that Hegel’s account of “knowledge of God” (knowledge of God “itself”, as well as knowledge like that of God’s) differs in important ways from Kant’s.\(^5\) In contradistinction to her reading I claim that a proper assessment on this count stands to vindicate rather than damn Hegel. If this criticism is sound, significant consequences for assessments of Kant, and Hegel’s attempted critique of him, follow.

Primarily, I claim that once one acknowledges Hegel was self-consciously post-Kantian, an uncritically negative assessment of his endorsement of the human affinity for “knowledge of God” cannot be

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\(^1\) On this view see Horn (1989). For a historical angle of the influence of such a perspective on negation, see Adams (2007).

\(^2\) A20/B34.

\(^3\) Of note here is Wallace (2005), in which his aim is to defend Hegel’s formulation of an individualism that avoids the standard pitfalls of modern secularised pictures of the human; ones that, in a merely compatibilist manner, offer a weak sense of freedom and self-determination in place of the theologically-funded picture of humans as strongly metaphysically free actors.


\(^5\) For Kant, knowledge of the unconditioned is coextensive with unconditioned knowledge. Hegel would seem to agree, although he redefines such key terms.
sufficiently motivated. In particular, given that Hegel avowed to have completed Kant’s Copernican Turn by adding further dimensions to the latter’s critique of traditional metaphysics, I claim that his apparently flamboyant metaphysical claims about “God” and “Absolute Knowing” are to be understood more sympathetically as part of this overall transformation of Kant’s Critical Philosophy. (One should not underestimate the extent of hyperbole and metaphor in Hegel’s writings; contrariwise, one should not underestimate the confusion engendered by affixing the word “mere” to the front end of “metaphor”, even when speaking of Hegel’s penchant for vivid turns of phrase.) In short, one must be cognisant of the fact that an adequate account of Hegel’s idea of “God” is necessary for understanding the conception of metaphysics he endorses, and therefore his philosophical project as a whole.

One must here be reminded that, for Hegel, the idea of “God” is the “form” and “content” of the three forms of Absolute Spirit (art, religion, and philosophy); he explicitly identifies “God” with Absolute Spirit in the Logic, which when combined with his identification of that work with “the exposition of God”, would mean the work is an exposition of “God” at the level of philosophy. Although Hegel is always warning his readers to avoid being satisfied with brief and programmatic statements, which, as such, are abstract and not “true”, at some point one needs a perspective from which to interpret his intentions and there is simply no better perspective to take than the ones he explicitly provides his readers as a guide.

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1 Cf. Pippin (1989, 7): “Just attributing moderate philosophic intelligence to Hegel should at least make one hesitate before construing him as a post-Kantian philosopher with a pre-Critical metaphysics.” Unfortunately, Pippin characterises Hegel’s view as a form of anti-realism (99, 262 n.15, and 267 n.23) and this simply confuses the issue since it saddles Hegel with a highly general label that may not illuminate his way of thinking at all, but rather obscure it further. What, after all, is anti-realism? One then needs to explain this, and it is not easily done.

2 See Pinkard (2002, 264-265). Pippin (1989, 82-83) also acknowledges this point in the context of a discussion of Hegel’s “identity theory”. I take it that the same point pertains for Hegel’s talk of “the Absolute”. See Kant’s remarks about “absolute” (as in, absolute possibility) at A322-323/B379-380 in “On the Concepts of Pure Reason”).

3 See the explanation of this in the introduction to the “Objectivity” section of the Subjective Logic, where Hegel compares his conception of “God” with the traditional rationalist idea of the “sum-total of all realities”.

4 Hegel (1969, 50).
Chapter One: Theology, Anthropology, and Metaphysics

The Hegelian descendent of Kant’s critique of metaphysics should thus be understood not as a simple rejection of metaphysics, but, in truly Hegelian fashion, an attempt to offer a more “adequate” conception of it. This is well recognised. We ought then to speak of Hegel’s “dialectical exposition” of the concepts of metaphysics, rather than his “critique” of them. Consequently, Hegel’s conception of “God” is not be understood as a metaphysically inflationary, transcendent version of Kant’s God that is “infinite” in a sense abstractly opposed to Kant’s conception of human finitude. Hegel provides the materials for a much more complex and philosophically interesting idea of “God” than this.

Overall, three basic assumptions which ground suspicion about Hegel’s attempts to reform Kant’s dualistic position can be questioned: (i) The assumption that Hegel accepts Kant’s pietistic Christian idea of “God” and conception of “knowledge of God”/“Godly knowledge” and, therefore, endorses humanity’s affinity for Kant’s conception of the latter; (ii) the assumption that this—Kant’s—conception of “God” and “knowledge of God” is at best philosophically superior or, at worst, philosophically neutral. Upon reflection, it is revealed simply to be theologically dogmatic, relative to a quite specific Christian religious view and, further, critically undeduced; thus it is a serious blindspot for Kant, given his general aim of critiquing metaphysics.

Attention to these two assumptions leads to the revelation and then rejection of (iii): the assumption that the conception of “the human standpoint” and “knowledge of God”, with which Kant’s

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1 Longuenesse (2007, 4 & ff.) acknowledges that this point is more than terminological when she cautions against the idea that Hegel’s “critique” of metaphysics—the title of the book to which her reading under scrutiny here belongs—would be of the same variety as Kant’s. One should bear in mind here Hegel’s objection to critical, transcendental philosophy, as expressed in the Introduction to the Science of Logic. His view is that such philosophical accounts of epistemological principles or foundations resemble attempting to learn to swim before getting into the water (Hegel 1991b, §41, Addition 1., 82), and are furthermore akin to the event of being “shot from a pistol” (Hegel (1969, 67)). These statements express Hegel’s rejection of epistemic, semantic, and ontological forms of foundationalism.

2 Such an idea of “God” is akin to Spinoza’s, rather than Hegel’s; it is isomorphic to reality considered as “the One”, qua singular object. Of course, one of Hegel’s initial moves here would be to say that such an idea is incoherent at least because such a “One” could not know itself, for if it could it would have to implicitly distinguish itself from its thinking of itself, which would make it non-simple and therefore not “the One”.
contrast between “conditioned” and “unconditioned” is correlated, is philosophically uncontroversial; therefore, that Kant’s conception of “the human standpoint” is philosophically neutral or unproblematic.¹

Crucially, it is the last assumption—(iii)—that grounds Longuenesse’s (among others’) overarching endorsement of Kant’s philosophy.² Revelation of its difficulties rewards one with a fresh view of both Kant and Hegel and paves the way for an extension of Longuenesse’s claims in her doctoral dissertation Hegel et la Critique de la Métaphysique. It also makes headroom for further engagement between ambitiously reconstructive readings of both philosophers, such as Robert Brandom’s reading of Hegel, and more textually faithful interpretations. After all, as Longuenesse notes, such an extension would lead to a position that bore a family resemblance to Brandom’s interpretation.³ This is a further motivation for extending to Hegel Longuenesse’s focus on the “capacity to judge” (Vermögen zu urteilen) in Kant.

Despite the fact that many view Kant as at least partly successful in his articulation of the contours of the so-called “human standpoint”, it is argued that if there is anything deserving this name it ought to be viewed as historically grounded and mediated by a complex process of the kind detailed in both the Phenomenology of Spirit and the Science of Logic, therefore, that it—“the human standpoint”—is more accurately accounted for by the conception of (self-) consciousness implicated in Hegel’s dialectical logic, rather than the egological conception of subjectivity recommended by Kant’s transcendental logic. The basis of this claim is essentially the same as that which grounds enthusiastic interpretations of the post-Kantian Hegel: whilst Kant’s Critical Philosophy shifted

¹ It is not necessary to here exhaustively catalogue extant and otherwise possible Christian interpretations of God. It is sufficient to say that Hegel does not endorse knowledge of the “God” of which Kant grants rational faith since it is this God which more or less fits with the traditional metaphysical, or Transcendental Realist, conception. Part of the point is to see that even though Hegel allows for “knowledge of “God” he is not thereby committed to knowledge of something that would be similar to knowledge of medium-sized dry goods, such as gumboots, possums, and roof tiles. Appreciating this point is fundamental to understanding Hegel’s “cognitive contextualism”: according to him not all consciousness, intentionality, or knowledge has the same dialectical-logical form. (The term “cognitive contextualism” is from Redding (2007a).)


³ Longuenesse (2007, xix).
metaphysical questions from the level of “being qua being” to that of “being qua thought”, he nevertheless stopped short of adequately deducing and expositing the logical functions of judgment and the categories, as well as the nature of reason, and it is first and foremost these shortcomings that Hegel sought to remedy in his own theoretical philosophy.

In particular, Hegel saw Kant’s neglect of such exposition as particularly urgent in the case of the ideas of reason, “God”, and the infinite; an attitude expressed strongly in *Faith and Knowledge* and later in the *Science of Logic*, most memorably in his equation of the content of the latter work with the “realm of truth” (understood as the realm of logic), as “an exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and a finite mind.”¹ In fact, this work should be read as a meditation on the implications of that difficult remark, itself supported by one of Hegel’s comments made elsewhere: “[P]hilosophy has no other object but God and so is essentially rational theology.”²

Two brief sections follow the present one. In §II I respond to quietism about matters theological by considering the significance of this kind of talk for idealist logic. This is crucial, since if one is to defend either Kant or Hegel one must understand how their philosophies amount to varieties of philosophical theology, however radical that project might be for them.

This discussion feeds naturally into a brief cataloguing of the range of prominent and relatively recent interpretations of Hegel’s metaphysics, in §III. In this section I make explicit some of the key conceptual distinctions upon which interpreters rely when taking a stand as to whether Hegel’s critique of Kant’s Critical Philosophy is either sound, or viable as a philosophical view on its own terms.

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¹ Hegel (1969, 51).
II The question of quietism

I take it that those interpreters who feel sympathy with the outlook of Kant or Hegel (or both) also recognise that the distinctive feature of modern philosophy is a concern with subjectivity. If one thinks both that Kant and Hegel were concerned to promulgate a metaphysics of subjectivity, and also that something like such a project is viable, then one is inclined to locate them within the landscape of possible positions such that they are assessable.

It is easy to see that Kant was committed to a certain theory of finite, conditioned cognition; unfortunately, less attention is expended on the fact that he was by implication committed to a view of what the idea of “God” was, given his view of what “unconditioned” thought would be. This is simply a way of saying that for Kant—and Hegel also—the metaphysics of subjectivity is committed to a certain position within philosophical theology. It follows that anyone who takes seriously Kant’s or Hegel’s metaphysics of subjectivity must also take seriously their philosophical theology. However, to those interpreters of Kant and Hegel who are also mindful of certain philosophical developments that have occurred since then—i.e., Left-Hegelianism, Nietzscheanism, Logical Positivism, and Late Wittgensteinianism—the idea that one should tie issues connected with theoretical and practical subjectivity to theology is bound to seem egregious.

If one notices the connection between the metaphysics of subjectivity and philosophical anthropology the connection is clearer.

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1 It would be misleading to say that philosophical theology is connected with objectivity in the same way as philosophical anthropology is connected with subjectivity. There is nevertheless something to this. We come to the issue in Chapter 2, §II.iii when discussing symbolic representation in Kant, as well as Hegel’s view of the role of rational norms (ought-to-dos and ought-to-bes) in imparting objectivity.

For a contemporary attempt to defend the centrality of “ought-to-dos” and “ought-to-bes” in a theory of normativity, see Sellars (1963, 1969).

2 For early dissent, see Schopenhauer (1958/1966, xxvi): “my philosophy is certainly not so ordered that anyone could live by it. It lacks the first indispensable requisite for a well-paid professorial philosophy, namely a speculative theology, which should and must be the principal theme of all philosophy—in spite of the troublesome Kant with his Critique of Reason; although such a philosophy thus has the task of for ever talking about that of which it can know absolutely nothing.”
Once anthropology itself becomes a philosophical inquiry, rather than an empirical investigation into human culture, one cannot avoid the question of how the finite thinker and agent, which an anthropomorph presumably is, is to be related to what it is said to not be able to know (the unconditioned; how things look from spatio-temporally uninhabitable points of view) or do (the morally perfect; be everywhere in the universe simultaneously). Suppose that the account of subjectivity given in philosophical anthropology does not pertain so much to the species *homo sapiens*, which is, after all, a biological concept, but rather to persons: beings capable of knowing as well as acting purposefully. It is clear that one’s views in this arena will entail certain dialectical opposites: what the agent cannot know and what the agent cannot do (presuming persons are agents). I think both Kant and Hegel saw that this minimal commitment is at the core of the project of modern philosophy, if such philosophy is concerned with the metaphysics of subjectivity.

This is a way of saying that being concerned with the metaphysics of subjectivity commits one to a contrast between the subject’s point of view and the idea of that which is not conditioned in this way. One way of dealing with this issue is to claim there is no single contrast between a conditioned subjective point of view and the unconditioned; one can say there is a simply a plurality of possible perspectives whose conditions are environmental, or linguistic, or whatever. However, it is clear that both Kant and Hegel are committed to the binary distinction, albeit indifferent versions, and they express it in terms of the contrast drawn above between “the human standpoint” and “knowledge of God”, or “the finite” and “the infinite”.

In order to be convincing, rather than merely dogmatic, one needs to consider why philosophy should regard religion and theological claims as more than the manifestation of psychological delusion; one needs to take seriously the idea that they *might* say something about what it means to be a self-conscious agent.\(^1\) It is worth noticing, however, that if the anthropological stance is taken toward religion this does not invalidate the worth of studying its philosophical significance: not all explanations are debunking explanations. Such a stance might nevertheless recommend to investigators a more

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\(^1\) I acknowledge the possibility of doing this, although it is not to the point here. See, for example, Freud (1989), or the New Atheism of Harris (2005), Dawkins (2006), Dennett (2006), Hitchens (2007a). The latter work, especially Hitchens’s, builds on the classic Russell (1957/2004). Cf. the range of views in Hitchens (2007b).
empirical methodology than hitherto practiced. Importantly, such an approach might be closer to the individual-focussed methods of psychoanalysis than quantitative methods encountered in social psychology, for instance. Even were this the case it is not clear that a defender of a philosophically anthropological account of “God” would be immediately committed to saying the idea of “God” is under such a view a mere “projection of human essence” in the manner of Feuerbach.1 After all, therapists who prefer conversational treatment over sheer medical prescription are thereby committed to thinking such treatment works and that it is somehow superior, and perhaps not simply because sufficiently fine-tuned chemical treatments haven’t yet been synthesised. It is hard to see on what grounds such individuals could think this without thinking expressed ideas have causal power much as chemical substances do; indeed, that in some cases the former, suitably employed, are a more appropriate medicament than the latter.

Another consideration here arises. One must also ask how the idea of “the human being” is to be established: by a priori or a posteriori methods (i.e., philosophically, or, for example, biologically)? If it is the former, can this stipulation escape triviality on pain of deciding what counts as an actual or valid human experience? And in any case, shouldn’t such a stipulation rest on thorough empirical investigation into what conditions human beings flourish? Or, into what conditions that lead human beings to become mindful of certain existential concerns, such as ethics and religion themselves?

Even if this approach were taken, it seems it would amount to no more than a description of the circumstances under which such forms of human life emerge. One possible attitude toward such a topic is quietism. Such an attitude is motivated by the questions: “Why talk about “God’ anyhow? Being, say, an atheist, can I not simply say that I have no response to so-called ‘religious’ matters?” Further: “What kind of concept is ‘religion’ anyhow—upon what basis is one grounding philosophical investigation into certain language-games or social tendencies? Why should I be forced into taking a position on something in which I take little interest and whose dogmatic presuppositions I reject?” And additionally: “Why should I be told dogmatically that the idea of my being self-conscious, and the idea of me responding to norms, and having a picture of myself as a free rational agent who is also finite, requires an appeal to theology?

1 See Feuerbach (1957).
Chapter One: Theology, Anthropology, and Metaphysics

Why, in short, insist that theological and anthropological discourses come in dialectical pairs? Notice that the sentiment expressed here might also motivate rejection of a systematic philosophical account of finitude (human and otherwise), to which the Hegelian claims the idea of “God” is wedded.

What gives bite to such an objection to the supposed necessity of an idea of “God” or “religion” is that opponents of the objection cannot escape forcing onto it a thought it regards as foreign; that is, the quietist can seem convincing because it may appear very reasonable to say: “I don’t have opinions about all possible language-games one might play, or all possible cultural practices one might engage in; consider the fact that one does not typically define one’s worldview by whether or not one believes in the Green Cheese Moon, or whether or not one chooses to say the concept of the Cthulhu is significant, or whether a certain ineffable emotion felt at

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1 One can think this if one wants, but a thorough explanation is called for. Just because Kant set up an epistemic, semantic, and ontological dichotomy on its basis does not mean it must be accepted. Further, one can be recognisably Kantian or Hegelian without buying into the specific conception of the language-game proposed in these terms. The issue boils down to this: if one has insufficient reason to believe the entities spoken about in a certain vocabulary are doing any serious work that could be better done in another fashion, one can say the discourse should be viewed in other terms. Note that whilst one might characterise this appeal to “work” as an appeal to “evidence”, the latter term can be epistemologically neutral: it can very well refer to the general process of finding out if what one is talking about makes any sense. One does not need to be saddled with an empiricist epistemology in order to find the objection compelling.

Here the explanation would be a debunking one which could not be resisted by exclaiming that it doesn’t matter, if one has no compelling reason to speak about the entities the discourse refers to, because the “proper methods” for ascertaining if they exist have shown they do not. If one does this (as some expressivists and pragmatists have), one can say that the discourse should be understood “from inside” in terms of the forms of life in which it occurs, and perhaps therefore be appraised for the consequences it has. But then one is giving a pragmatic defence of it. Now, Kant indeed offered a pragmatic defence of the pure concepts of reason in the Appendix to the Dialectic, yet he there spoke only of the idealist logical employment, for theoretical inquiry, of the concepts of the soul, world-whole, and God. There is at this level no talk of religion. I shall restrict this thesis to speaking about these entities, rather than religion per se, since the former is philosophically more fundamental and, indeed, grounds the latter.
II - The question of quietism

sunset on the third day of every month is worth taking seriously as a guide to life.”

Here are two broad responses which the Hegelian or Kantian opponent of the quietist position can choose:

(1) Note that varieties of what are called “religions” are widespread phenomena that occur in most human communities in some form. Concede that they might share family resemblances without being expressions of some identical underlying phenomenon. Insist that studying theological and religious claims nevertheless has some philosophical and “anthropological” value: it reveals to us certain natural needs. (“Natural” here can be regarded as equivalent to whatever one can, in principle, study empirically. Notice that studying something empirically is not at the outset claimed to involve any particular research methods, other than the obvious requirement for hypothesis testing, which includes falsification as an “in principle” possibility; the matter is much more complex.) Notice that this response need not advocate a theory of “human nature”. It simply needs to point out that the investigation is grounded in our shared natural, biological heritage: this is all the reason we need for investigating a set of phenomena in a uniform manner and expecting to discover rules or laws. But saying the investigation is grounded on this is far from saying the topic of investigation is necessarily reducible to its ground. This is blatant confusion. The basic claim the Hegelian is making here is as follows: “Not all studies of things that we ought to call ‘natural’, in the broad sense just mentioned, are to be conducted in the manner of what is called ‘natural science’. The possibility, in principle, of falsification via hypothesis testing is present in historical and interpretive work, although in a different way: interpretation of the significance of human actions in the past or present is subject to rational evidence—what claims one can make and be seen to be on solid argumentative ground. This latter variety of inquiry is the relevant one for philosophy; therefore, for explaining the idea of ‘God’ in philosophical theology and religion.”

Or, somewhat more strongly:
Insist dogmatically that the idea of a conditioned/finite view of the world for us humans is intrinsically connected to its antithesis: an unconditioned/infinite view. Then say that our finite view of things is necessarily to be contrasted with the antithesis, represented by “knowledge of God”.

Now, if this is insisted upon dogmatically, the quietist can ask what is meant by “the human standpoint” and “knowledge of God” and then judge whether either of these would ever apply. Yet if they decide that some version of “the human standpoint” is to be accepted, they can go on to suggest that this idea needs to be employed in the right kind of investigation, i.e., in some empirical study of “human nature”, in order to be roughly intelligible.

The quietist’s view here is that we cannot simply say there is some coherent conception like it in “ordinary” usage. This appears to repeat the mistake of the theists/atheists that hold to a transcendental realism, since the post-Kantian agnostic looks like they are stipulating that everyone has some idea of “the human standpoint” and “God” and that, therefore, these ideas are innocent and therefore up for theoretical grabs. Yet the post-Kantian has only so far pointed to the empirical fact that a statistically significant portion of individuals believe that there is some viable version of either of these two ideas. But, as always, believing, even in the case of ideas, does not make it so: a single individual could claim to guide their life with an idea yet fail to be convincing as to why such an idea was indispensable; the question is whether the issue is merely statistical. Moreover, we can be misled and judge poorly in our case as to what causes us to be as we are and think as we do.

In any case, the error is demonstrable in this case by showing the lack of a coherent meaning for the idea of “God” or “the human standpoint.” Do these ideas have “meaning” in anything but a trivial sense? I.e., one that is tied to confused metaphysical assumptions?

Again, the Hegelian will insist that the issue is a priori, not a posteriori; the claim will be that understanding our own epistemic situation requires some ideal (which Kant insisted was merely regulative) which is to be regarded as an essential part of what it means to have a point of view at all. The Hegelian would most likely go on to say that failure to accept this is a consequence of failing to understand the dialectical character of consciousness. For Hegel, the quietist would
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simply be in denial, or, insufficiently aware of the presuppositions grounding the dialectic inherent in their own thinking.
The basic response to the quietist would go this way: “Whilst you recognise that there might be some statistically significant proportion of individuals who have some religious or theological beliefs in “God”, you fail to recognise that the appropriate method of studying such a phenomenon is not necessarily the method of natural science (assuming this is sheer dogmatism). Rather, the appropriate method is a priori reflection of the logical structure of the ideas involved and the data for this reflection can be garnered from particular empirical instances where alternate conceptions of “God” are manifest. Once you acknowledge that there is an interesting phenomenon to be studied you have only to decide what the appropriate way of studying it is. I claim that philosophical reflection is an essential feature of well-formed inquiry into the idea of “God” because a priori reflection consists in clarifying ideas that are actually employed.”

The common view expressed by both responses is that some basic distinction is at play when making claims about the metaphysics of subjectivity and one way to frame this is in terms of a contrast between “the finite” and “the infinite”. We now need to consider the attitude to metaphysics one can plausibly impute to Hegel, such that the present question of what it might mean to speak of “God” can be rendered a little clearer.
III Interpreting Hegel's idealist metaphysics

Much recent Hegel scholarship has concerned itself with the nature of his metaphysics. Some nod at current conventions in saying¹ this is justifiable due to the revival of analytical metaphysics in the past forty years or so; others acknowledge the issue is important given both the Hegel revival and his recent warm reception in some analytical circles.² Given the opaque and contested character of both metaphysics and Hegel’s writings it is important one draw attention to certain general obstacles to an unambiguous account of either.³ This is here done in a summary fashion and not intended as an exhaustive guide to either enormous topic; we here focus on elements relevant to the core of the present work.

One can cover the basics quickly; there are disputes as to whether:

(1) Hegel is/is not a metaphysician
(2) Hegel is/is not post-Kantian
(3) Hegel is/is not a historical relativist
(4) Hegel is/is not a hermeneuticist
(5) Current analytical philosophy is/is not a chapter within Hegel’s dialectic

Clearly, these disputes presuppose answers to the questions:

(1*) What is metaphysics? Namely, how should we characterise it? (One’s answer to such a question reveals a lot about one’s attitude to the nature of inquiry. “Does it have an essence? And what would that be?”)

(1**) What does Hegel think metaphysics is? Are there not merely different metaphysical theories (e.g., Platonism,

¹Stern (2009b, 2). See Stern (1990, 114-119) for an account of Hegel’s appropriation of Aristotle’s noesisnoeseosnoesis(which is tied to the former’s account of “God”) distinct from the approach here.

²For a critical perspective on the revival of metaphysics see Chalmers (2009). The Hegel revival in analytical philosophy is usually attributed to scholarly work such as Pippin (1989) and Pinkard (1994), as well as reconstructive work that pays lip service and actual debt in different measures: Brandom (1994), McDowell (1996).

³I here express agreement with Kreines (2006) as to the importance of removing verbal disputes from Hegel interpretation.
nominalism), but different ways of being a metaphysician; some better (post-Kantian) and some worse (pre-Kantian)?

(2*) What is it to be post-Kantian? (What is the nature of Kant’s philosophy?)

(3*) What is it to be a relativist about ontological matters?

(4*) What is hermeneutics; what theory of subjectivity and objectivity does an interpretative stance toward human thought and action itself presuppose? What success of this is a consequence of the success of Kant or Hegel in some area of another?

(5*) What is the project of analysis itself about (i.e., what are its semantical and epistemological presuppositions)?

This range of highly general questions provoke controversy, and it is by no means clear exactly how they all bear, or ought to bear, on one’s reading of Hegel. This is the case especially given the concessions made in our Preface as to the question of interpretation itself (especially of a philosopher not of one’s time). I do not presume to respond to the questions themselves, but here rather sharpen the significance of one’s responses to them by pointing to jargon frequently employed in current Hegel scholarship.

Some of these pieces of jargon are contained in the claims above (metaphysics, post-Kantian, relativism) and some are not (mind-in/dependent, real, limit, finite, infinite, condition, un-conditioned, etc.). I take it that jargon in the first group is best clarified by saying a little about the kinds of terms in the second. I think the most problematic of these in the current context are “mind (in)dependent”, “real”, and “condition”; therefore I shall focus on these three terms and say what I think needs to be said in order that a general picture of the main issues can emerge.

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1 See for example Stern (2009a, 75). Stern recognises the possibility of a verbal dispute where it is presumed by some that realism (in the current sense; whatever that means) and idealism (in the classical German sense; indeed, whatever that comes to, exactly) are opposed. Unfortunately, Stern capitulates the confusion by insisting the appropriate way to frame the issue is as one concerned with Platonism and nominalism, but this issue is for Kant and Hegel (and for any philosopher with a keen nose) inextricably tangled up with the question of “mind-dependent”/“mind-independent” entities, precisely because the metaphysical and epistemological issues cannot in their eyes be separated.
In recent work, Kreines, Redding, and Stern have engaged in explicit attempts at clarifying some of the issues I have so far raised.\footnote{Kreines (2006, 2007, 2008a), Stern (2009a), Redding (2010).} The basic issue seems to be this: once one takes seriously Hegel’s claim to be completing Kant and yet still doing metaphysics one feels bamboozled and is inclined to insist: “Kant dispensed with such inquiry by showing how it was confused!” Yet this answer is clearly superficial since both Kant and Hegel professed to be doing metaphysics; thus disputes over the attribution of a metaphysical project to either philosopher turn out to be verbal. This immediately leads one to ask whether the metaphysical project endorsed by either Kant or Hegel is satisfactory on its own terms; this in turn leads one to clarify the basic terms upon which their philosophical vision depends. The full measure of this task is as big as explaining both of their entire philosophies, although one can immediately rule out what one should not say these terms mean to either of them. It is upon these generalities that the framework for the rest of the work builds.

A natural way to illustrate the meaning of “mind-independent” is to apply it to things one thinks would exist whether or not anybody thought of them. Obvious candidates are objects like rocks, trees, and possums. Contrariwise, a natural way to characterise “mind-dependent” is to include under its heading things such as values, secondary qualities, numbers, and norms. But it is immediately clear that both sides of the distinction presuppose a correlated explanation from the other side: trees, rocks, and possums are things about which one can have thoughts and are accessed by things with minds in their being thought about; therefore one’s grasp of what these things are is dependent upon the nature of one’s mind (and the minds of others with whom one discourses about such things).

On the other side, it is obvious that one can give an account of what the mind is doing in a way that does not depend simply on one’s own mind: one can study from a behavioural, neurophysiological, and socio-psychological standpoint the correlations which values, secondary qualities, numbers, and norms bear to other things. Clearly neither of these one-sided attempts needs to capture the whole story; it is sufficient if they tell at least some of the story which cannot be told in the same way from any other standpoint.

A common way to frame this issue is to draw a contrast between “natural facts” and “institutional facts”,\footnote{Cf. Anscombe (1958), Searle (1995, 121) and Williams (2000, esp. 6).} but this sharpens the
instrument to deal with the problem, rather than constituting a solution; the sharpening, if combined with a certain metaphysical dogmatism, can result in equating the former with things about which one is a “realist”, the latter with things about which one is not a “realist” (say, an “anti-realist”). But this is unhelpful, since it presupposes an unambiguous explanation of what these two so-called philosophical positions amount to.

If one reflects upon the reason for this distinction the general issue emerges: inquiry begins by assuming there is something whose universal type or individual token merits explanation. One then attempts to formulate an explanation on the basis of an ad hoc assumption that the thing exists. Consider the assumption within biology that animals are to be spoken of as if they were beings some of which are conscious and emotional, unique categories meriting the employment of certain explanatory structures, and not to be thought of merely as masses of electro-chemical activity no different from things that are not conscious and emotional. The distinction between “human science” and “natural science” may be rough and ready rather than sophisticated, but it marks a more basic and important difference: the distinction between the first- and third-personal perspective that is ineliminable for a self-conscious being.

Once one gets this far one sees how Kant and Hegel could be committed to some kind of ontological difference at this level, regardless of what one thought the metaphysical flavours of their projects are. Indeed, Kant’s metaphysics is that of an “a priori judging reason” (roughly correlated with “institutional facts” insofar as such things are the product of thinking and reasoning). One must then ask if the “metaphysics of being” makes sense as a project, for it does not in any way coordinate with “natural facts”, in either Kant’s or Hegel’s view. Indeed, the “metaphysics of being”, in Kant’s view, is a confused project that is committed to transcendental realism.

In Hegel’s view, such a project can initially be shown to be radically confused by thinking through the dialectic of “Being” and “Nothing”, as he does in the Logic. Moreover, and most advantageously, in Hegel’s view the logic of “Being”, along with the logic of “Essence”, finds its truth in the fully-fledged dialectical logic of subjectivity: The Subjective Logic. In other words, in Hegel’s view, talking about “Being” turns out to presuppose self-consciousness, as well as a whole system of thinking, the form and content of both of which, taken together, is to be identified with “God”.
Hegel’s view can therefore turn out to sound like a radical anti-realist about all facts; as if all facts were institutional facts. But one need not buy this simplistic distinction; it may work for some cases, but there is no reason to accept it as a one-size-fits-all distinction. For his part, Kant can certainly sound like an anti-realist that insists thought itself has an essential structure; Kant can seem like a metaphysical realist about the structures of subjectivity and a metaphysical anti-realist about the world. This is unhelpful, however, since Kant often sounds like a metaphysical sceptic: he insists that one can talk about certain universal and necessary structures of which thoughts possessed, but is careful to deny that one can draw inferences about empirical matters from them (except insofar as such matters can only be thought of in terms of said universal and necessary structures). Clearly the most pressing case here is that of the judging subject, insofar as it may also be thought of as a natural object.

As a consequence of this, “mind-(in)dependent” does not seem to be a useful label to apply when speaking about Kant and Hegel because both philosophers reject the metaphysical dogmatism upon which it is based: that one can make a distinction between what is “Really Real” and what is “real, but not Really Real”. This follows from a rejection of transcendental realism: the idea that there is some single vocabulary within which all metaphysical truths can be stated.

Given the foregoing discussion, the concept of “real” merits no further brow sweat, because it least initially requires a more detailed explanation in terms of the concept of “condition” (or “limit”). We turn now to this latter concept.

It is accurate, to an extent, to portray Kant as a philosopher of conditions; his transcendental philosophy, after all, is based upon the idea that one can enumerate “conditions of the possibility of experience” as well as “conditions of the possibility of a systematic, unified reason”. Yet in speaking of conditions one invites talk of that which is unconditioned, hence Kant’s commitment to talking about rational entities such as the pure concepts of reason, and the necessity of speaking of something which appears if one can speak of “appearances”.

1Bxxvi-xxvii: “even if we cannot cognise these same objects as things in themselves, we must at least be able to think them as things in themselves. For otherwise there would follow the absurd proposition that there is an appearance without anything that appears.” Boldface in translation. Below this Kant draws his distinction between “thinking” about “cognising”,

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Hegel sees how this dualism is self-defeating. As early as 1802, in *Faith and Knowledge*, he claims that since by Kant's own lights the rational entities necessary for guiding the understanding in its systematic joining of judgments into unities, as well as rational concepts of “moral perfection” purportedly required for moral action, are limited by the possibility of their empirical actualisation, the realm of the unconditioned is as phenomenal as the realm of the conditioned.\(^1\)

Another one of Hegel’s ways of stating this is to say that Kant’s “infinite” is actually rendered “finite”; that his philosophy is “an idealism of the finite”.\(^2\) One could say that empirical realism is never adequate to the non-empirical and this may be partly correct, but also deeply misleading. It is misleading because it creates the illusion of two separate realms that do not come into contact and yet somehow are in harmony. In thinking this through one seems the common theme in Western metaphysics in everything from the mind/body problem to Platonism/nominalism, to free will/determinism: some phenomenon (consciousness; the relation of the universal to the particular; the relation of action as cause to action as caused) is separated in two and then viewed as problematic, but problematic in a way that is guaranteed, given the terminology, to defy solution.

One way to view Hegel’s solution is to see him as saying that *Geist* is a phenomenon that needs to be understood as containing certain complex structures that can reflected upon by a self-conscious being, and that this can be done in a way not dependent upon the empirical results of natural science. Or rather, there is no need to assume that empirical science is the appropriate area of inquiry within which to deal with such issues.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Hegel (1977a, esp. the Introduction).
\(^2\)Hegel (1977a, 64).
\(^3\) Sometimes I do not translate Hegel's term “*Geist*”. In other cases, I translate it as either “mind” or “spirit”, depending on context. Although consistency is usually ideal, the plastic nature of the term warrants special treatment.
Chapter Two: Metarepresentational Structure in Kant and Hegel
I Preamble

This chapter has two complementary expository aims: (1) key features of both Kant’s and Hegel’s theories of “representation” are explained such that, (2), the significance of their views regarding the representation of the idea of “God” can reveal some deep structure in their respective idealisms. This deep structure is that to which we referred in Chapter 1 when signalling Kant’s and Hegel’s different views of the way in which reason is “unconditioned”, the sense in which it does or does not have “limits”, and, therefore, the sense in which we can speak of an “inner” and “outer” of the realm of the “thinkable” or “knowable”.

It will be explained what is meant by “representation” as our discussion progresses. Because it bears a distinct sense depending when it is used by Kant, Hegel, or contemporary philosophers, one cannot presuppose a given definition at the outset.

We explore some of the key structures that, according to Kant and Hegel, are involved in “thinking” and “knowing”; specifically, we explain what their accounts of the related structures reveal about their general views regarding conditions and limits. As we shall see, examination of the divergence in their interpretations of certain logical forms of judgment and inference is the key moment in this enterprise.

Speaking more broadly, an investigation into forms of representation and inference demonstrates how Kant and Hegel held different views of what I shall call, borrowing Brandom’s phrase, the “metaphysics of intentionality”. The representation of “God”

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1 See B146 for an explanation of the difference.
2 This phrase seems so apt it would be unscrupulous to not employ it. It forms part of the title of Brandom (2002). It should be clear that, suitably conceived, this phrase refers to a tripartite structure (as in Brentano and Husserl, for instance) of intentional acts, contents, and objects; so there is no special favouritism here toward any particular reading of Kant or Hegel since regardless of whatever else they were interested in, and regardless of the precise spin they would put on the phrase itself, they certainly were interested in something like this topic. The key, especially in Hegel’s case, is to remember that intentionality does not simply refer to the existence, at the level of psychological reality (subjective spirit), of a certain structure involved with knowing. Speaking of intentionality necessarily also involves speaking of intentional contents and objects, not simply intentional acts of knowing.
provides a key case study for their would-be interpretations of that phrase, since “God” is that idea or concept which, traditionally conceived, was believed to be “unconditioned”, “unlimited”, and “most real”; therefore, scrutiny of the way in which Kant and Hegel thought that idea was supposedly represented by human thought and cognition reveals the structure of their fundamental disagreement. The paragraphs below provide a synopsis of the topics treated in each subsequent section of this chapter.

§II is devoted to an examination of the significance of Kant’s contrast between three forms of what I shall call “metarepresentations”. With “metarepresentation” I refer to structures that are of a higher level than judgments. And whilst it may be proper perhaps to say of a judgment that it is a “metarepresentation” because it is a “representation of a representation” 3, I take it this is misleading since judgments fall under Kant’s account of representation itself. Thus I focus on certain high-level structures in Kant’s philosophy that cannot be accounted for in this way: the Schematism of the Categories, the schema of the

1 The idea of the ens realissimum (“most real being”, Kant (1998, 556 n.a)). Kant also explains some related terms that pick out the Transcendental Ideal, when he says that “the object of reason’s ideal, which is to be found only in reason, is also called the original being (ens originarium); because it has nothing above itself it is called the highest being (ens summum), and because everything else, as conditioned, stands under it, it is called the being of all beings (ens entium).” Of course, “all of this does not signify the objective relation of an actual object to other things, but only that of an idea to concepts, and as to the existence of a being of such preeminent excellence it leaves us in complete ignorance.” (A578-579/B606-607)

2 Recall, from Chapter 1, that Kant and Hegel were both committed to the conjunction of two claims: an unconditioned knower has absolutely unconditioned knowledge and knowledge of the unconditioned is possible only for an unconditioned knower. This is why “knowledge of God” is co-extensive with “Godly knowledge”. See Longuenesse (1995/2007, 175) for her explanation.

3 A68/93: “Judgment is the mediate representation of an object, hence the representation of a representation of it.” See also A69/93: “All judgments are functions of unity among our representations.”

4 His taxonomy is at A319-320/B376-377.

5 A problem therefore arises for our arrangement of §§II.i-iii: since symbols have an imagistic structure they are apparently akin to intuitive representations, so they are not “metarepresentations” in the way schemata are. This claim could be modified by insisting that insofar as
ideas of pure theoretical reason, and the symbolic representation of ideas in both moral judgments guided by practical reason and in aesthetic judgment.

There it is argued that the conjunction of two claims of Kant’s philosophy forbids him sufficient resources for making such contrasts in an unproblematic way: (1), his insistence upon a unity of theoretical and practical reason and, (2), his claim to provide a “critique of pure reason”. For although (2) is more often and more easily interpreted as an admonition against claims to speculative knowledge through pure reason alone, it should readily be seen that (1) negates an interpretation limited to this aspect. After all, Kant commits himself to a form of projectionism in with both theoretical and practical uses of reason, and it is clear such projectionism leads directly to a questioning of the source of its products. With “projectionism” I refer to the idea that reason contains within it certain epistemic demands and moral commands which it “projects” onto the world when either viewed from either an epistemic or moral standpoint.

Notoriously, Kant’s account of rational autonomy is tied a problematic formalism whereas Hegel insists upon a broadly social and historical basis for reason—even if he acknowledges an element of necessity in that social and historical substratum—and hence develops a theory of the intersubjective conditions of rational freedom and autonomy. At this high level of generality Hegel’s basic symbols are “indirect” representations of ideas, they are metarepresentational in the sense that they contain a semantic condition on how they are to be integrated into our thinking beyond just their being instanced in our cognition: they are to “guide” our thinking, albeit in a different way to that in which principles, for Kant, are meant to “guide” our thinking. This would be so even if we admitted that other forms of representation contain semantic conditions, since only ideas “guide” our thinking in this unique way that warrants the qualification. The case is more complicated with schemata, since they not only involve particular judgments but recommend the idea of a unity among families of judgments, which is a condition of the categories playing the role they are meant to play as conditions of the possibility of empirical knowledge.

1 A137-147/B176-187.
3 The systematic explanation of this form of representation in the latter case is found in §59 Kant (2000); in the former case the most direct explanation of such a function occurs in the section entitled “Of the typic of pure practical judgment”, in Kant (1996f, 5:67-71, 194-198).
criticism of Kant is already in view: if, as Kant says, the real use of reason is the source of the transcendental idea of “God”, and if one can argue that this source is socially and historically mediated, namely that the terms in which ideas are to be understood are dictated by the practices within which they are embedded, then the idea of “God” can be said to have social and historical conditions (thus it does not as a concept have necessary and sufficient conditions; a concept is a form of continuity in normatively mediated practices, they “rest on” “functions” 1 for Kant. Moreover, he claims concepts are essentially for judging, and therefore, gain their cognitive significance through being instanced in a judgment that could function as premise of conclusion of an inference).

Our second charge mentioned above, regarding Kant’s failure to provide a “critique of pure reason” that meets its own standard of criticism, arises as a consequence of an extension of the former criticism, (1), which thereby encompasses a claim for the apparently self-defeating justification of the “as-if” function of ideas in both theoretical and practical uses of reason: the analogical role of ideas is to be regarded as grounded in a pattern of reasoning referred to by Kant in the Jäsche Logic as an “inference of analogy”, 2 and resembling what in the Science of Logic Hegel calls the “syllogism of analogy” 3.

This is the theme to be explored in our discussion of the forms of metarepresentation. Kant’s denial that cognitive employment of objects of reason constitutes knowledge appears to many, including Hegel, to be a failure of nerve, for the judgmental determination of analogical cases depends upon a rational knowledge of the goodness of an inference from one case to another. And such inferences are true “inferences of reason”, not mere “inferences of the understanding” 4: the rightful encompassment of symbols into reasoning constitutes knowledge of those symbols and therefore knowledge of what they symbolise; it constitutes rational reflective capability of the kind necessary for proper knowledge of things reasoned about. To say this is to deny that there is a difference between knowledge involved with employment of a symbol and

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1 A68/B93.  
2 Kant (1974 §84).  
4 A303/B360. Kant there also calls such things “immediate inferences” as opposed to “mediate inferences” which are enacted in a syllogism.
knowledge of that symbol itself. At a very general linguistic level, it is to deny that there is a difference between knowing a linguistic item and knowing something through that linguistic item; it is to deny that there is any difference between “knowing a word” and “knowing how to use a word”.¹

The basic conclusion that follows from these criticisms is that Kant’s philosophy makes a mystery of the “rational will” by characterising reason as “unconditioned”, and therefore characterising it in a way that makes it seem as if it were extruded from actual human practices.

An examination of how the forms of Kantian metarepresentations we discuss differ allows for a more subtle and sympathetic phrasing of the standard objection levelled against Kant’s supposedly “formal” account of practical reason.² Moreover, it allows for a detailed explanation of exactly how Hegel improved upon Kant’s attempt to ground normative force in a non-supernatural,³ rational dimension. These refinements of the standard objection to Kant’s purportedly “formal” conception of reason notwithstanding, it is acknowledged that Hegel, like most post-Kantians, was nevertheless not sufficiently sympathetic or attentive to Kant’s explanations of the so-called “finite” elements required for ethics.⁴ That is, Hegel did not

¹ Clearly this does not entail a conflation of, on the one hand, etymological knowledge of a word’s entire history as well as its phonetic and phonological properties, and on the other, the ability to use that word in the appropriate, normatively constrained sense (all relevant caveats considered). I take it that to “know” a word or symbol is primarily to know what that word or symbol means (one could also say “signifies”, yet we need to acknowledge both direct reference and inferential implication).

² See, for example, Sedgwick (1988a, 1988b).

³ To say “natural” would of course be misleading; to say “supersensible” would actually contradict some of Kant’s pronouncements, since he does after all argue for a regulative role for the supersensible in dissolving the dialectics of both aesthetic and teleological judgment. Clearly, one must take care with terminology here; I employ “supernatural” to evoke the pre-Critical and traditionally religious sense of a God that grounds the concept of truth, in moral and epistemic cases.

⁴ Louden’s excellent (2000) book provides a guide for this aspect of Kant. At various places (esp., 168, 173, 175) Louden claims that the standard formalist objection, of which Hegel was an early proponent, must be reconsidered in light of the empirical dimensions of Kant’s ethics. In addition, such tempering of the criticism leads to a reduction of the difference between Kant and the post-Kantian idealists. Nevertheless, Louden does recognise the tension between “this-worldly and otherworldly
Chapter Two: Metarepresentational Structure in Kant and Hegel

acknowledge sufficiently the extent to which Kant himself saw that placing reason “outside” human thought and action would render it “finite” instead of “infinite”. Kant’s concern is on this count expressed by his regard for the empirical elements required for ethics (knowledge of the human subject in moral anthropology) and for the role of symbolic examples required to make unconditional imperatives sensibly apprehensible and so represented as conditioned.

It is important to recognize the value of these concessions made by Kant, since they have the same motivation as that which impels him to make claims regarding the symbolic representation of ideas of practical reason. For Kant, it is a condition of the possibility of symbolic representation having any import for our knowledge or thought that both nature\(^1\) and human artefacts bear intelligible (even if “analogical”) connections with the conceptual structure of both. We might say however that, from Hegel’s perspective, Kant simply did not pay sufficient attention to this point and did not develop it adequately.

Examination of these elements of idealist logic allows a key divergence between Kant and Hegel to emerge: Hegel argues much more doggedly than Kant that all judgments are ultimately evaluative, that they therefore include an irreducibly normative dimension, and thus contain a suppressed premise about how something ought-to-be. Part and parcel of Hegel’s position here is that the typical examples of “judgments” in philosophical literature such “The rose is red” (a “judgment of existence” which Hegel says does not demonstrate an “impressive” power of judgment)\(^2\) are precisely untypical: they suggest the possibility of pure description strands in the second part of Kant’s practical philosophy”, and he sees “their co-presence constitutes an unresolved tension in his [Kant’s] thought.” (182) Hegel manages to develop Kant’s thought in a congenial way in many senses. One significant point, however, is that Hegel never reflected on the fact that Kant put to work a notion of symbolism in his philosophy, yet the function it fulfilled was restricted by Kant’s conception of reason generally.

\(^1\) The Analytic of the Sublime of the 3\(^{rd}\) Critique (esp. §29) contains poignant references to the sublime and the similarity between the simultaneously humiliating and elevating feeling in such cases evoked, and that which arises in us upon reflection on the moral law “within us”, (recall Kant’s epitaph, quoted from the 2\(^{nd}\) Critique (see the Conclusion in Kant (1996b, 5:162, 269)). The case of “beauty” is distinct, as we shall below.

\(^2\) Hegel (1991b, §171, Addition, 249)
having import for our cognitive economy where no such purity exists. This attitude parallels Hegel’s attitude (which Kant actually shares) that judgments, unlike sheer propositions, are essentially “difference makers”: they contribute pragmatic import to our way of thinking rather than add atoms of information to our stock.\(^1\)

All of this has the consequence that Kant, if he were to be more consistent, really ought to have acknowledged a deeper role for symbolic representation in our thinking, because such an acknowledgment would not only have resolved internal tensions in his position, yet would also have arguably been the proper step towards a more plausible theory of mindedness. Yet his conception of reason restricted its scope to analogy, where one term of the analogy was an intuited empirical item and the other an uncognisable idea (according to Kant, we can “think” ideas but can’t “know” them; one of the consequences of his rationalist sense of possibility at the level of pure concepts of reason). Hegel’s own theory of symbolism demonstrates the integration between the traditionally so-called “empirical” and “rational” elements that are inextricably linked in any plausible theory of the mind, and the social basis of reason and language.

In articulating the broader context of Hegel’s response to this Kantian problem, we are led in §§V and V.1 to an evaluation of Hegel’s theorising about the commonalities between certain of what he calls “shapes of consciousness” (feeling, representation, and thought) and certain “shapes of spirit” (religion, philosophy). Of particular interest there is the aforementioned symmetry between the structural transformations that Hegel believed occur in the emergence of linguistic consciousness—specifically, that from symbolising to sign-making consciousness—and those Hegel thought are involved with the formation of religious imagery itself.

§VI compares Kant’s and Hegel’s views about the role of the idea of “God” in our cognition, the way it manifests in our conscience, and some of the function it fulfils in the structure of self-consciousness. It therefore examines some of their writings on religion, although only for the purposes of elucidating the representational character of theological phenomena. In this section some of the reasons for Hegel’s intense interest in the model of the triune God of Christianity (which Hegel refers to as the “absolute religion”) are examined and their relevance is connected with the other structures discussed.

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\(^1\) See Hegel (1991b, §167, 246).
II Kant’s transcendental philosophy

It was mentioned above that the deep problem for Kant’s transcendental philosophy, of interest here, was his differentiation between three forms: the Schematism of the Categories, the schemata of the ideas of reason in its speculative use, and the symbolic representation of ideas of reason in moral and aesthetic judgment. Since the division between the former one and the latter two is entailed by Kant’s distinction between the understanding and reason, respectively, this section shall begin with an outline of the judgmental and inferential structure which, in Kant’s view, distinguishes these two faculties.

First, recall Kant’s proclamation that the understanding is the faculty of rules (or the faculty of judgment), whilst reason is the faculty of principles (or the faculty of inferring). Further, note that the rules of the understanding are essentially those for judging, just as concepts are formed for the same reason. Given that concepts rest on “functions”, as well as the fact that a function prescribes a rule that makes possible “ordering different representations under a common one”, concepts themselves dictate the rules of the understanding by virtue of being elements of judgments. The understanding is the capacity to judge—whilst the principles of reason are those that unify and systematise the understanding and ensure its “thoroughgoing connection” with both itself and the goals of rational thought.

The former case of connection pertains to reason’s “formal” use in inferences made on the basis of the coupling of relevant judgments

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1 A69/B94.
2 A299/B356. The second characterisation occurs at A330/B386.
3 Cf.: “All intuitions, as sensible, rest on affections” (A68/B93).
4 A68/B93. I say “prescribes a rule” because Kant identifies functions with the “unity of the action” of the ordering of different representations under a common one. Thus, the function is the unity of the action of applying the rule (across all cases), where the rule is the concept in question. One notices how Carnap derived from Kant his empirical criterion of meaning when one reflects that a concept (qua intension) can be conceived as the rule that defines the set of entities that fall under it (qua extension).
5 A305/B362. Note here “thoroughgoing” is a translation of “durchgängig” which I have been rendering as “complete”, as in the “principle of complete determination”.
whose juxtaposition constitutes a syllogism: reason ensures the understanding does not make illogical (inconsistent) judgments. The “real” use involves the positing of transcendental ideas, which function as regulative ideals and serve as the unconditioned guide for inferences to conditioned cases, and thus one may characterise this as reason ensuring the understanding’s agreement with “the goals of rational thought” because if this phrase means anything it surely means that the understanding thereby judges in a way that allows for a systematic unity to emerge.¹

Some immediate qualifications are in order. Not only are there such things as “inferences of the understanding”,² but also instances of judgment which depend upon the real use of reason. This real use is instanced in two main cases: the regulative employment of transcendental ideas of reason in its speculative use is one; the constitutive use of symbolic representations of ideas of reason in its practical and aesthetic uses another.³ Both these cases involve the real use of reason, insofar as in such usage “reason itself contains the origin of certain concepts and principles, which it derives neither from the senses nor from the understanding.”⁴ Importantly, “cognition from principles” is for Kant “that cognition in which I cognise the particular in the universal through concepts.”⁵ Thus, he says, “every syllogism is a form of derivation of a cognition from a principle.”⁶ Here Kant is referring to the synthetic, ampliative function of reason, whereby it can generate a conclusion on the basis of subsuming the predicate of the minor premise of a syllogism under

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¹ The contrast between “real” and “formal” uses is drawn at A299/B355. At A310/B366 Kant says: “concepts of pure reason...are not merely reflected concepts but inferred concepts.” Concepts of the understanding, meanwhile, “contain nothing beyond the unity of reflection on appearances, insofar as these appearances are supposed to belong necessarily to a possible empirical consciousness.” (A310/B367) The former are never a part of empirical synthesis (A311/B367-368).
² A303/B360.
³ See Longuenesse (2005c) for an exploration of the idea that a moral judgment is a “judgment of reason”.
⁴ A299/B355.
⁵ For an insightful perspective on this theme, see Ginsborg (2006c).
⁶ A300/B357.
the conditions of the logical subject of the major premise, as expressed by its predicate. Observe Kant’s example from the First Book of the Dialectic, “On the concepts of pure reason”,1 put into sequence:

Major premise: Every human is mortal.
Minor premise: Caius is a man.
Conclusion: Therefore, Caius is mortal.

Here, “in the conclusion of a syllogism”, “we restrict a predicate to a certain object [Caius], after we have thought it in the major premise in its whole domain [every human] under a certain condition [mortality].” Crucially, Kant then writes:

This complete magnitude of the domain, in relation to such a condition, is called universality (universalitas). In the synthesis of intuitions this corresponds to allness (universitas), or the totality of conditions. So the transcendental concept of reason is none other than that of the totality of conditions to a given conditioned thing. Now since the unconditioned alone makes possible the totality of conditions, and conversely the totality of conditions is always itself unconditioned, a pure concept of reason in general can be explained through the concept of the unconditioned, insofar as it contains a ground of synthesis for what is conditioned.2

Note how a predicate is a kind of condition. With respect to our citation, if something is human, then it is mortal: if the logical subject of a judgment (represented by an intuition of that thing) can be subsumed under the concept “human”, then it can be subsumed under the concept “mortal”. Kant’s remark here regarding the “transcendental concept of reason” will be unpacked in the next chapter when the principle of complete determination is discussed, yet for now we must heed his insistence that the ideal of reason is the “absolutely unconditioned”, whatever that might turn out to be. Kant believes reason having such a character makes possible the claim

1A321/B378 & ff.
2A322-323/B379. The italicisation of the third sentence is mine. In Chapter 3 I argue that Kant’s principle of complete determination should be considered as the basic principle of the “transcendental concept of reason” mentioned here. At A308/B364-365 Kant says the “logical maxim” of there being articulable conditions for things can only be a “principle of pure reason” if the idea of the unconditioned is “not contained in” the idea of the conditioned, even if related a priori to it.
that individual things being thus-and-so have in each case explicable conditions.

What is the significance of this for our discussion? Notice that insisting that the aim of reason is to provide the totality of conditions for conditioned things is not to claim that one can actually know such a totality, for this would amount to knowing a particular thing in an unconditioned manner and thus amount to having both “unconditioned knowledge” and “knowledge of the unconditioned”, which according to the basic thesis of transcendental idealism is impossible. Instead, syllogistic inferences of reason are steps toward greater determination of things, made possible first through the subsumption of objects under logical subjects in judgments, and therefore under the predicates of such judgments, and second, by the subordination or superordination of concepts instanced in judgments in their role as minor premise under concepts instanced in judgments in the guise as major premise.

Importantly, whilst episyllogistic, deductive series of inferences “on the side of the conditioned” are the only syllogisms involving properly determinative, specificatory judgments in Kant’s view, syllogisms can proceed in the opposite direction also. Syllogisms involving inferences “on the side of the conditions” are prosyllogistic and involve reflective, classificatory judgments whose import is ultimately subjective and functional for the unification and systematisation of cognition.¹

The latter direction of syllogising is the one that in rationalist metaphysics leads ultimately to the pure concepts of reason (the soul, the world whole, and God), where the major premise of the syllogism is a “judgment of relation”: categorical, hypothetical, or disjunctive (where these correspond to the transcendental ideas just listed). In Kant’s words, the operation of reason at this level is to be regarded in the following way: Firstly, with reference to the three judgments of relation,

There are...just as many species of syllogism, and in each of them prosyllogisms proceed to the unconditioned: one [categorical], to a

¹ See A331/B387-388. At A323/B379 Kant says “prosyllogisms proceed to the unconditioned”. Although one cannot correlate episyllogistic chains of inference with the making of analytic judgments, such a similarity exists since, for Kant, analytic judgments explicate a concept. A similar point holds for prosyllogistic chains of inferences: synthetic judgments involve attributing a predicate to a subject that is “not contained in it”, and therefore amplify a concept.
subject that is no longer a predicate, another [hypothetical] to a presupposition that presupposes nothing further, and the third [disjunctive] to an aggregate of members of a division of a concept.¹

He continues:

Hence the pure rational concepts of the totality in a synthesis of conditions are necessary at least as problems of extending the unity of the understanding, if possible, to the unconditioned, and they are grounded in the nature of human reason, even if these transcendental concepts lack a suitable use in concreto and have no other utility than to point the understanding in the right direction so that it may be thoroughly consistent with itself when it extends itself to its uttermost extremes.²

Such syllogistic inferences of reason move regressively from the conditioned up a chain of conditions to ultimately posit the unconditioned. This process can be likened to what Kant conceives of in the Critique of the Power of Judgment as a process of classification in virtue of the postulation of rational entities (Kant calls ideas “inferred concepts”). This makes the contrast with determinative judgments involved with specification appear somewhat peculiar, for Kant insists that reflective judgment does not determine its objects, yet insists that the final concept arrived at in such a process—the ens realissimum—both serves as the ground of the complete determination of things, whilst being simultaneously indeterminate and unable to do more than regulate such a process.

The basic point of Kant’s relevant here is that not only would a claim to know the unconditioned constitute a metaphysical fallacy by his own lights, yet it would also make nonsense of the idea of the search for the totality of conditions for given things, since the search for such a totality is that which takes place in empirical investigation. The growth of empirical knowledge in such an enterprise entails that inferential connections between new judgments made in experience (in Kant’s terms: through mediate, syllogistic inferences of reason, or in immediate inferences of the understanding) lead to the subsumption of concepts under further concepts. Therefore, the totality of conditions for given things is not only never discovered, approximations to it are enacted in empirical investigation as aided

¹A323/B379-380.
²A323/B380.
by the rational framework of inferences between judgments, rather
than determined at the outset by the real use of reason.

In sum, the *termini* of syllogisms are for Kant either instances of
synthetic, amplitiative cognition, or analytic, explicative cognition.
And the former acts of judgment, in place at the conclusions of
syllogisms, are the paradigm of goods secured in the advance of
knowledge, whereas the latter are merely acts of clarification,
unification, and systematisation. The question is whether the latter
by contrast should be denied the status of “knowledgeable”
advances, and if not, why and in what sense not.

It is important to at this point be reminded that the
understanding, on its own, is not capable of providing knowledge.
Kant insists that sensibility and the understanding are together
necessary for contentful, non-blind cognition, and he attributes the
possibility of synthetic cognition to sensibility; temporal succession
and spatial juxtaposition are necessary for such synthetic advances
in knowledge.

Notoriously, Kant conceives of mathematics as formulated in
synthetic a priori judgments and mounts his argument upon the
supposed dependence of geometry on spatial cognition (outer sense).

The understanding’s actions are restricted to analysis of concepts,
which is the proper form for philosophy, in Kant’s eyes. It is for this

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1 One must take care with terminology here. We cannot say
“conclusion”, since that implies the result of a deductive inference, where
the termini of prosyllogisms are not strictly conclusions in the formal sense
because they do not follows deductively from their premises, but rather are
postulated as hypothetical conditions (where hypothetical judgments are
the major premise of hypothetical syllogisms of relation).

2 A51/B75.

3 See the transcendental and metaphysical “expositions” of space and
time in the Aesthetic, especially Kant’s remarks about time at B48-49.

4 B40-41.

insofar as it is opposed to the synthetic, is something completely different
from a collection of analytic propositions; it signifies only that one proceeds
from that which is sought as if it were given, and ascends to the conditions
under which alone it is possible. In this method one often uses nothing but
synthetic propositions, as mathematical analysis exemplifies, and it might
better be called the *regressive* method to distinguish it from the synthetic
or *progressive* method. Again the name analytic is also found as a principal
division of logic, and there it is the logic of truth and is opposed to dialectic,
without actually looking to see whether the cognitions belonging to that
logic are analytic or synthetic.” (§5, 4:277, 28, n.4)
reason that inferences of the understanding can only take the form of a logical unpacking of a concept; they are inferences permitted merely on the basis of analytical relations among concepts.\(^1\) Such examples include the inferences below:\(^2\)

1. All humans are mortal. \(\therefore\) 2. Some humans are mortal.
3. Some mortal beings are human beings.
4. Nothing immortal is a human being.

Of course, these immediate inferences are from one logical concept to another, and the understanding is also able to infer from one non-logical concept to another, yet again on the basis of its “content”.\(^3\)

Kant’s example of the concept of a “body “ in the Introduction is intended to draw attention to the ability of the understanding to arrive on its own at conclusions about experiential objects:

If I say: “All bodies are extended,” then this is an analytic judgment. For I do not need to go outside the concept that I combine with the word “body in order to find that extension is connected with it, but rather I only need to analyse that concept, i.e., become conscious of the manifold that I always think in it, in order to encounter this predicate therein…\(^4\)

Thus, if one is told

“X is a body”,

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\(^1\) Insofar as arriving at new information typically seems like coming to know something one didn’t know, rather than being reminded of something one already knew, we are tempted to say that the understanding allows a kind of growth of knowledge. Yet we quickly see that once the lesson has been learnt as a logical principle, we realise we have simply become aware of the structure of our thought once and for all, rather than being able to say that with every new application we come to some new knowledge.

\(^2\) A303-304/B360. See Kant (2005, R 5553, 1778-79, 18:221-9, 224) for an anticipation of his distinction between reason and the understanding.

\(^3\) The idea that logical concepts have “content” is difficult to explain, although one way of justifying such a claim would involve the appeal to the notion that they “express” the structure of the discourse in which they occur (Sellars and some of his heirs, i.e., Brandom, take this line and attribute some version of it to Kant).

\(^4\) A6-7/B10-11.
one can infer from it that

“X is extended”,

without needing to consult experience. This is therefore another case of an immediate inference; one only needs to grasp the “content” of the concept “body”. One can also infer immediately to a synthetic a priori judgment, although these involve sensible conditions and are the product of principles of reason.¹

Attention to the example motivates one to question the difference between relations among sheer concepts, and the relations among conceptualised intuitions and concepts predicated of them. The relation between the former can be captured by the relation of “subordination” of one concept under another, whereas the latter involve the act of “subsumption” of an object under a concept. It is interesting to note that Kant here provides the bare skeleton of a theory of reference here, on which we will not elaborate. It is useful to be reminded that the difference between these relations clarifies Kant’s containment metaphor: concepts subordinated to higher concepts can be said to be contain them (the universal in the particular), whereas objects subsumed under concepts can be said to be contained in the extension of those concepts. Some writers have argued that this inverted structure of concepts and intuitions forbids the reading of Kant as a “conceptualist” (or, “propositionalist”, say in Frege’s sense), although the issue awaits, among other things, a clarification of the operant sense of “intension” and “extension”.²

The point of the “body” example is that such an immediate inference of the understanding from one concept to another is possible on the basis of the content of those concepts alone: it does not require the mediation provided by the minor premise of a syllogism to demonstrate that one concept can be subsumed under the condition of another by way of an inference; neither does it require recourse to the nature of experience itself; it simply requires competent participation in “linguistic practice”, insofar as that practice makes possible the knowledge of meanings of words.

²See Wilson (1975, esp. 254) on the mereological structure of intuitions and concepts, and Thompson (1972) for an exemplary attempt at connecting Kant’s account of conceptual content with Frege’s. Another prominent line of defence of Kant as a “non-conceptualist” can be found in Hanna (2005, 2008b, 2011a, b), Hanna and Chadha (2011).
IIi The Schematism of the Categories

Kant begins the Schematism chapter by contrasting the way in which empirical concepts differ from pure concepts, insofar as the former can be “encountered” in intuition. He then poses the question of how intuitions can be subsumed under the categories and assigns the task of explaining how this is possible to the “transcendental doctrine of the power of judgment”. Note how this doctrine is elaborated later in the 3rd Critique.

Note that objects are subsumed under concepts by way of their being encountered in intuition. Recalling the remarks about Kant’s containment metaphor above, we can say that subsumption is to be understood such that predication involves the attribution of properties to singular representations of empirical intuitions through the employment of conceptual functions. And whilst such attribution requires logical subjects to be expressed conceptually as particular instances of a universal, as in “this dog”, it is essential to Kant’s view of the epistemology of predication that the objects of predication are singular intuitions. An extremely important divergence between the German idealists and modern analytical philosophy occurs over precisely this point: singularity and particularity are not to be equivocated over.

Roughly, singularity is the mode of representation when one judges “This (or, that) A is B”, where the intuitive matter (X) subsumed under A is also, by virtue of this, subsumed under the concept B (which in turn is superordinate to A). Particularity is the

\[\text{A137/B176.}\]

\[\text{2 Note the connection between intuitional representation and demonstrative reference. Of course, one can refer to singulars that are not within one’s perceptual purview (one can refer with proper names), although Kant would appear to be committed to the idea that intuitional representations are always themselves perceptual representations. There is then a divergence between the merely conceptual operation of proper names in one’s cognitive economy, and the intuitional representation of items referred to by either proper names or names of particulars. The consequence is that although the transcendental-logical form of intuitions is singular, the items represented in intuition can be regarded as universal, particular, or singular, depending on their use. Kant (1974) makes this point: “It is mere tautology to speak of general or common concepts, a mistake based on the wrong division of concepts into \textit{general, particular,} and \textit{singular}. Not the concepts themselves, only \textit{their use} can be divided this way.” (§1, 96)\]
mode of representation when one refers to “This (or that) A”, and insodoing marks out an object by characterising it as an instance of a kind: as a particular instance of a universal.

The above point is relevant only to empirical concepts, however. Pure concepts are not “contained in the appearance”,¹ but rather only contain “the unity of reflection on appearances, insofar as these appearances are supposed to belong necessarily to a possible empirical consciousness;”² they cannot be “intuited through the senses”;³ are “entirely unhomogeneous, and can never be encountered in any intuition.”⁴ And as a consequence of this, one must show how the categories can be applied to appearances at all; let alone a priori; thus, one must expound what Kant calls the “transcendental doctrine of the power of judgment in general”.⁵

The 3rd Critique extends and specifies this idea with regard to certain types of judgment (aesthetic and teleological). The questions that are raised with regard to these specific forms are: “How can a standard of taste be grounded in an object, qua intuition, rather than only in the subjectivity of the thinker who finds his own taste in the world simply because he has put it there?” and “How can purposes be represented in an object, qua intuition, rather than only in the subjectivity of the thinker who envisages a final cause?” The case of the categories is different since the 3rd Critique discusses the role of guiding ideas in judgment rather than pure concepts; the parallel is nevertheless clear: it must be shown how certain non-empirical rules necessarily apply to the empirical. Note this general problem is the main topic of the Transcendental Deduction, where Kant characterises it as that of establishing “how subjective conditions of thinking should have objective validity”.⁶

¹A138/B177; my emphasis.
²A310/B367; my emphasis.
³A137-138/B176-177.
⁴A137/B176.
⁵A138/B177.
⁶A89-90/B122. Note that Kant says “objective validity” and not “objective reality” (the difference between these is first drawn at A27-28/B44). Kant’s latter phrase is the basis for him being called a “verificationist”: concepts which have objective reality can be given ostensive definitions, and be shown to have actual intuitional content. According to Hanna (2008a, 11-12) the former phrase signals the “logico-syntactic well-formedness (grammatical correctness) and logico-semantic well-formedness (sortal correctness)”. So a judgment is “objectively valid if and only if it is logically well-formed and all of its constituent intuitions and concepts are objectively valid (A155-156/B194-195).”
Chapter Two: Metarepresentational Structure in Kant and Hegel

For our purposes, the fact that transcendental schemata mediate between the categories and appearances in virtue of the homogeneity of both with the “transcendental time-determination”\(^1\) can be bypassed. Nevertheless, note that since the categories themselves are not homogeneous with appearances the identity is intransitive; namely, Barbara

All As are Bs. (All categories are \textit{represented as} schematic time-determinations.)

All Bs are Cs. (All schematic time-determinations are \textit{represented as} sets of empirical intuitions.)

\[
\therefore \text{All As are Cs. (All categories are \textit{represented as} sets of empirical intuitions.)}
\]

is inapplicable here; the inclusion of the phrase “represented as” forbids such straightforward transitivity.\(^2\)

Instead, the categories “must...contain \textit{a priori} formal conditions of sensibility (namely of the inner sense) that contain the general conditions under which alone the category can be applied to any object.”\(^3\) Whether Kant means that the “general conditions of sensibility under which alone the category can be applied to any object” are either a subset of the “formal conditions of sensibility (of inner sense)”, or synonymous with them, is irrelevant. The lesson is that this feature of them is precisely what forbids them from being homogeneous with any intuition; equivalent lessons are that one should not mistake a rule for a case in which it applies, or mistake an intension for an extension, because one then is trapped in a realm of representation without a distinguishable conception of what constitutes its order.

The transcendental schemata exist by virtue of the pure understanding in its guise as the “\textit{a priori imagination}”, and can be distinguished from any particular “\textit{image}” that is, so to speak, part of its conceptual order. The particular images which cohere with such schemata are products of the “\textit{empirical faculty of the productive imagination}”.\(^4\) This is because the synthesis of the imagination “has

\(^1\)A138-139/B177-178.
\(^2\)This is a different version of the same problem with doxastic contexts; if Hannah believes that A is B and Alex believes that B is C one cannot infer from these two facts alone that either of them believe or ought to believe A is C.
\(^3\)A139-140/B178-179.
\(^4\)A141/B181.
as its aim no individual intuition but rather only the unity in the
determination of sensibility”. Schemata for concepts can be
understood as the “representation of a general procedure of the
imagination for providing a concept with its image”;
moreover, it is these schemata that “ground our pure sensible concepts.”

With this last remark Kant offers a counter-proposal to the
erroneous empiricist recommendation that all rules for thinking can
be derived by abstraction from cases. Clearly that which governs
most of our individual, empirical concepts can in each case be
expressed in the form of a rule which has come about through
reflection, comparison, and abstraction from individual cases, yet for
Kant certain concepts are presupposed by us in our attempts to
attribute to experience the power of constraining our thought. These
concepts are the pure concepts of the understanding. Kant’s
geometrical example of a triangle coheres with his defence of a non-
formal conception of mathematics as a synthetic a priori enterprise
that is a “science of space”, and is intended to demonstrate that no
given intuition of a triangle can be understood to ground its rule,
since this constitutes a conflation of a singular representation with a
universal one: “No image of a triangle would ever be adequate to the
concept of it.”

The key point is that there is more to singularity than the
distinction between a kind and its instances. For although one might
say that “Socrates” is an “instance of the kind ‘man’”, the fact that
there is an analogue of this in the case of the universal-particular
distinction, itself expressible in terms of genus and species, does not
yet allow a complete parallel. At the level of determination of
content, the concept of singularity in Kant is attended by the concept
of a certain inexhaustibility of content that has consequences for his
theory of judgment in the 3rd Critique; in aesthetic judgment not only
can we always say more about aesthetic qualities in virtue of the
complexity of the effects aesthetically praised objects have on us (in
virtue of sensible affection, whose possibility a priori is based on
structures shared by all rational human subjects),
but the standard
of taste can be debated on this same basis: the possibility of
multifarious effects on other subjects with whom one can debate in a
common, quasi-objective language of standards, without having
recourse to sheer subjective affectivity.

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1 A140/B179-180; my emphasis.
2 A140-141/B180.
3 A141/B180.
4 Cf. the “sensuscommunis” discussed in Kant (2000, §40).
More can be said. This feature of judgment is found in the logical character of the conjunction of two theses: the simultaneous (1) indivisibility and (2) infinite divisibility of the structure of singularity. The former refers to the fact that intuition itself is presented under two conditions whose form is indivisible: there is only one space and one time; the latter refers to the fact that an infinite number of marks can be predicated of an intuition, a fact taken account of in Kant’s theory of aesthetic judgment. It is this latter character of “infinite divisibility” that undergirds the possibility of infinite aesthetic appraisal, as well as the logical irreducibility of singularity to a bundle of particulars.

When returning to the divergence mentioned above, between the images represented in intuition and the transcendental schemata that are the transcendental time-determinations of the categories, we notice that Kant says:

The schema of a pure concept of the understanding...is something that can never be brought to an image at all.2

What is he committing himself to? We can at least see that pure concepts are distinct from empirical concepts to the extent that the former are “reflected”, whereas empirical concepts are arrived at through “comparison” and “abstraction”, in addition to “reflection”. It is clear that the reflection involved with pure concepts is unlike the reflection enacted to produce empirical concepts: reflection upon any possible appearance yields the categories, whereas empirical concepts are adduced given the individual character of the phenomenon in question as well as its similarity to other relevant phenomena. In the former sense, reflection reveals the categories to be intellectual conditions of experience, and in the latter, reflection on the synthesised manifold made possible by the imagination brings forth empirical concepts.

Kant tells us that pure a priori concepts (the categories) by definition cannot be “abstracted” from experience, since they first make it possible; they also cannot have their instances “compared” precisely because they, so to speak, do not have instances. Further, that the schema of a pure concept

1 Cf. (3) & (4) at A24-25/B39-40, (5) at A25/B41, the First and Second Antinomy (A426-443/B454-471), and the section at the end of the Antinomies entitled “Resolution of the cosmological idea of the totality of division of a given whole in intuition” (A523-527/B551-555).
2 A142/B181.
is rather only the pure synthesis, in accord with a rule of unity according to concepts in general, which the category expresses, and is a transcendental product of the imagination, which concerns the determination of the inner sense in general, in accordance with conditions of is form (time) in regard to all representations, insofar as these are to be connected together a priori in one concept in accord with the unity of apperception.¹

And here he is simply restating the point that the “schema” is something over and above the family of images which are correlated with it by virtue of the cooperation between pure faculty of a priori imagination and the empirical faculty of the reproductive imagination; only schemata of empirical concepts can be construed as instanced in intuition, whilst transcendental schemata are to be regarded as functions (although in a different sense than concepts) consequent upon the marriage of the conditions contained in the categories with the conditions contained in inner sense.

In short, Kant is required to introduce schemata because he insists that the categories do not take into account the pure form of intuition; that they could somehow require mediation by a form that was amenable to both sides of the divide he finds simply because he put it there. In the Schematism Kant is required to show that the categories necessarily cohere with the temporal (not spatial) form of pure intuition: the transcendental time-determination is that which is shared between a category and instances where it is empirically discernible by virtue of the transcendental schema.

After running through a brief account of the schemata of the twelve categories (which are not germane to our concerns just now), Kant says:

From this it is clear that the schematism of the understanding through the transcendental synthesis of imagination comes down to nothing other than the unity of all the manifold of intuition in inner sense, and thus directly to the unity of apperception, as the function that corresponds to inner sense (to receptivity).

This is a way of repeating the point that the categories express in a singular fashion—in the form of a synthetic unity—that which is necessarily instanced in cases of empirical cognition, the discovery of whose shared structure, or transcendental conditions, are made

¹A142/B181.
possible by reflection upon the mediating representation of the relevant transcendental schema.¹

The question to be pursued in the next section is whether Kant can sustain the distinction between the schemata corresponding to the categories and the schemata corresponding to the transcendental ideas.² We must ask whether the idea of a mediating representation (a transcendental schema) between empirical instances and a pure concept that represents a unity of reflection upon experience is sufficiently distinct from a “schema” that mediates between the actual unity of the understanding and a rational ideal of that unity.

We can redress this as an inquiry into whether there is a defensible difference between “unity of reflection” and “guiding principle”. The obvious suggestion is that the former is intended to express a unity that is discovered, whereas the latter suggests a unity that is sought. But surely the latter unity is nevertheless “found” insofar as it is “found in our reason” as a result of reason being brought to bear on the pure understanding’s articulation of experience, whereas the former unity is “found” in experience as a consequence of the understanding’s reflection upon experience.

Apart from the triple-tiered structure here (sensibility, the understanding, reason), the contrast appears to be a distinction between what is “found” in the pure understanding and what is “found” in the real use of reason. But the distinction between the Schematism of the Categories and the schema of the ideas cannot rest on this prior distinction, because then the only thing stopping the assimilation of the two faculties is that reason is said to be the faculty of inferring and that is precisely its formal function. But this

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¹Cf. Kant’s examples of the schemata at A142-147/B182-187, which he presents “according to the order of the categories and in connection with these” (A142/B181).
²Kant does not put his phrasing in exactly this manner, although I exploit the intelligibility of such a rendering in order to demonstrate the difficulty involved. He refers to the “schematism of the pure understanding” (A140/B179) and to a “schema” of the ideas (A670/B698), yet the former pertains the “procedure” of the understanding that is involved with the employment of schemata, whereas the “schema” of the ideas is confusedly phrased in the singular, whereas the fact that there are principally three “ideas” of traditional metaphysicaspecialis implies the plural “schemata” ought to be used.

That this is not a terminological perversion of Kant can be argued on the grounds that Kant himself does not make the issue plain enough to forestall the objection by simply stipulating an inconsistent employment of the grouping principle of nouns.
is a stipulation. We can press further by claiming that since the understanding is already the faculty of judgment and already capable of immediate inferences based on both logical and non-logical conceptual content (as noted above), why not extend that capacity by admitting that valid inference is no more than that which occurs between judgments ordered in an appropriate form? And since the understanding is the capacity to judge, is it not also the capacity to judge well in particular cases, which is often (but not always) the outcome of what was formerly called “inference”? We can lay these additional concerns to the side, however, since it is not our purpose to question Kant’s entire framework.

At bottom it is the real use of reason—its being the source of principles—that is in question here; the formal use of reason as a faculty of inferring is left intact by the main objections above. However, if one is consistent one must admit that the two uses are co-dependent: when performed in all its variations, and ad infinitum, the subsumption of the minor premise of a syllogism under the conditions of concepts in the major premise leads to a search for the conditions of conditions; i.e., leads to a search for a totality of conditions, which Kant refers to as “the unconditioned”. So whilst we might question Kant’s explanation of “unconditioned” we seem bound to admit the real use of reason, if we are to justify its formal use.

II.ii The schemata of the transcendental ideas

The second section of the Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic, entitled “On the final aim of the natural dialectic of human reason”, is one of the most important in Kant’s corpus for understanding his theory of reason in its speculative use, and therefore serves as a key textual basis for understanding some of his most fundamental divergences from Hegel. Here Kant extends the discussion from the preceding section of the Appendix (“On the regulative use of ideas of pure reason”) by attempting to defend what he refers to as the “schema” of pure concepts of reason. This justification is called by Kant the “transcendental deduction” of the transcendental ideas, and is honoured with being characterised as “the completion of the critical business of pure reason” (presumably not as a consequence of Kant’s argument occurring at the end of the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements).

The parallel with the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories consists in the fact that in both cases Kant is attempting to vindicate the a priori employment of the thought-entities in question. He does this, in the Deduction of the Categories, by demonstrating that the synthesis, in objective judgments of experience, of the empirical manifold of intuition necessarily depends on their employment. In the deduction of the ideas, themselves ultimately inferred to on the

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1A669-670/B697-698.

2 I employ this phrase in a way that is intended to be neutral between Kant’s and Hegel’s philosophies. Hegel’s equivalent formulation would be “thought-determinations”. Kant employs the phrase “thought-entities” in The Amphibology when discussing different versions of the concept of “nothing” (A292/B348).

3 “One cannot avail oneself of a concept a priori with any security unless one has brought about a transcendental deduction of it.” (A669/B697)

4 I will not discuss the import of the distinction between judgments of perception and judgments of experience, although an account of it would contribute to the arguments offered here. See Kant (1997/2004, §18).

5 Longuenesse understands the categories to be the expression, in terms of a pure concept, of the act whose form is the corresponding logical form of judgment, where it is the synthesis made by possible by the logical functions of judgment that make the unity of consciousness expressed by the categories possible in the first instance (Longuenesse (1998)). For criticism, see Allison (2000) and Sedgwick (2000); for a response see Longuenesse (2000).
basis of the three judgments of relation, which in truth are the major
premises of their respective syllogistic forms, he does this by arguing
for the impossibility of our having systematised, unified cognition\(^1\)
without them (the soul, the world-whole, God) to guide our thinking
in a regulative fashion.

It is important to recognise that whilst in both cases Kant would
appear to be insisting upon our *a priori* warrant for employing pure
concepts,\(^2\) only when these pure concepts have their origin in the
understanding does Kant refer to them as “transcendental conditions
of the possibility of experience”. So Kant is caught in ambiguity,
since he denies pure concepts of reason this status in stating that
with them one never gets beyond possible experience\(^3\) where an
intuitional representation of them is impossible, yet insists upon
their pragmatic necessity, insofar as ideas—purely *rational*
entities—allow for systematised, unified cognition of *empirical*
matters. This insistence upon pragmatic necessity does appear to
constitute an appeal to another kind of “condition” of our having the
experience we do have, or if ideas can be said to be unnecessary for
our thinking, at least in the epistemological case of the scientific
enterprise of searching for conditions of conditions, this can have
appeal only on the same grounds that would place the theoretical
security of the categories in doubt: scepticism about whether all
rational subjects would need to think precisely this way in order to
have a “rational”, “systematic”, “unified” “experience”.

Of course, one does not get beyond possible experience when one
employs the categories either, yet the categories can be said to be
“satisfied” insofar as they represent the reflective unities of
judgments.\(^4\) Ideas, meanwhile, are never “satisfied”; they are
inexhaustible. They must have this character if they are to function
as principles and thereby “guide” cognition in the way Kant insists.

As we just noted in §II.i, this much is so far insufficient to distinguish

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\(^1\) Or even approximating to it, which might be all he means given his
claim for the impossibility of knowing the unconditioned.

\(^2\) Given Kant’s terms this sounds tautologous, although a careful
empiricist might insist that there are certain “pragmatic” kinds of apriority
on offer and that the concepts so employed are still nevertheless empirical
(cf. Lewis (1923), Sellars (1953/1991)).

\(^3\) A702/B730.

\(^4\) See A310/B366-7: “Concepts of the understanding are...thought *a priori* before experience and on behalf of it; but they contain nothing
beyond the unity of reflection on appearances, insofar as these appearances
are supposed to belong necessarily to a possible empirical consciousness.”
the pure understanding from the real use of reason; the real use of reason thereby being placed into question as a distinct function.

The objection, put in a manner sympathetic to Hegel’s idealism, is that by denying us “knowledge” of ideas, Kant would seem to lose the courage of his convictions. He already insists on the necessity of, and pragmatic justification for, their employment, so why not allow our employment of them to constitute knowledge of (at least) our own rational capabilities, and therefore reason itself? (One might think this is trivial if we can only be said to know our capabilities through actualising them, and if actualising them is thought of as no more than doing as we do.) In any case, to equate “knowledge of ideas” with “knowledge of the rational capabilities possessed by oneself and the group of knowers to which one belongs” appears to be a great stretch of Kant’s position. Yet perhaps if pressed on the point Kant would not have denied this; perhaps such a position is implied by this remark:

metaphysics, according to the concepts we will give of it here, is the only one of all the sciences that may promise that little and unified effort, and that indeed in a short time, will complete it in such a way that nothing remains to posterity...For it is nothing but the inventory of all we possess through pure reason, ordered systematically. Nothing here can escape us, because what reason brings forth entirely out of itself cannot be hidden, but is brought to light by reason itself as soon as reason’s common principle has been discovered. The perfect unity of this kind of cognition, and the fact that it arises solely out of pure concepts without any influence that would extend or increase it from experience or even particular intuition, which would lead to a determinate experience, make this unconditioned completeness not only feasible but also necessary.

Tecum habita, et noris quam sit tibi curta supellex. – Persius.¹

Presumably “reason’s common principle” should be taken to be equivalent to the “transcendental concept of reason”: the “totality of conditions to a given conditioned thing.”² In the passage above, Kant appears to characterise metaphysics as being concerned with the

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¹Axx. The translation of the Latin, provided at the bottom of the page—Kant (1998, 104)—is: “Dwell in your own house, and you will know how simple your possessions are” (Persius, Satires 4:52). The italics in the second sentence are mine.

²A322/B379.
II.i ~ The Schemata of the Transcendental Ideas

topic of *being-thought*, or *being-qua-thought*,\(^1\) yet if we can impute this to him we can impute further conclusions which he may not have accepted readily and which would have caused him more grave difficulty. The most important of these is that we may well be said to have knowledge of ideas if we can claim to do metaphysics in Kant’s intended “scientific” sense, and indeed for basic *Hegelian* reasons; therefore, that we can have “knowledge of (the idea of) God”, in Hegel’s sense, where the idea and actuality cannot be separated.

Kant distinguishes between objects given to reason “absolutely” and those given “in the idea” and says in the former case, unlike the latter, “my concepts go as far as determining the object”.\(^2\) In the latter case, there is “only a schema for which no object is given, not even hypothetically”, which is to insist that our postulation of ideas is precisely not a hypothetical claim that something we can nevertheless not know might still exist: recall that ideas are the paradigm of things-in-themselves. (This tells us Kant is no mere indispensability theorist about ontology; thus he is not a pragmatist even if he appears to have certain pragmatist leanings when he insists upon the primacy of the practical dimension of reason.) The restriction therefore follows from Kant’s refusal to allow claims about things-in-themselves, of which the purported referents of the pure concepts of reason, envisaged when in the grip of transcendental illusion, are taken to be archetypes. This should be taken to mean that no judgment can ever furnish one with an occasion to infer to the existence of an “object given in the idea” in the terminus of a syllogism; rather the “schema” of the idea (and then, the idea as its singular representation as a unity) shall be inferred to on the basis of a unity which it represents among judgments and under whose assumption the shared structure of such judgments can be revealed.

Note this way of putting the point suggests the “schema” of an idea is precisely a *representation of a distributive unity among judgments* (where the inference to the existence of a collective unity

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\(^1\) Cf. the assessment of Hegel’s reading of Kant in Longuenesse (2007, xvii). A make the, admittedly small, amendment to Longuenesse’s phrase in order to stress the fact that it is not only “something being thought” but also, equally, “being *in its shape as thought*”; and thus I mean also to imply that the question of matter and form ought to be in the forefront of our minds.

\(^2\) A670/B698.
is that which must be resisted)\(^1\) that is occasioned by the use of the judgments of relation in their role of the major premise of syllogisms. When it was said earlier that schemata of transcendental ideas were "metarepresentations" this is what was meant.\(^2\)

In cases where objects are given to reason "absolutely" one has occasion to infer, according to Kant, in a syllogistic fashion that leads to the further determination of both the things and the concepts contained in the major and minor premises. Recalling the comments above regarding the opposite directions in which one might syllogise (episyllogistically on the side of the conditioned or prosyllogistically on the side of the conditions), we can note that such determination terminates on the prosyllogistic side once the conditions employed in the syllogism can no longer be encountered in possible experience; one cannot encounter the *summum genus* in experience. On the episyllogistic side determination never terminates, due to the infinite divisibility of singular representations as evidenced in the fact that more "marks" can always be applied to objects of intuition. Nevertheless, given that intuitions are singular representations of fully determinable things (objects with properties/substances with accidents) an intuition is the paradigm of a representation of an *infima species*.

As we shall see in §II.iii, this point about determination is relevant to the structure and function of symbolic representation of ideas of pure practical reason.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) See the contrast between "the distributive unity of the use of the understanding in experience" and "collective unity of a whole of experience" at the end of the Transcendental Ideal (A582-583/B610-611).

\(^2\) Clearly "representation" can only be employed in an extended sense here; cf. the taxonomy at A319-320/B376-377.

\(^3\) Recall that not all prosyllogisms are reflective: some are simply determinative judgments of objects of possible experience and therefore moreover require no deduction, since their being instanced is explained by the power of judgment, itself not further analysable (although such a capacity can be acquired, one either has a sound faculty of judgment, or does not). In his analysis of the Schematism in (2004, Chapter 8), Henry Allison points out that Kant's apparent insistence that there "can be no rules for applying rules" (2004, 206) in some respects resembles Wittgenstein's account of following a rule. See Bell (1987), to which Allison refers, for an account of this aspect of the Kant-Wittgenstein relation.

The text to which Allison appeals is the following: "[A]lthough the understanding is certainly capable of being instructed and equipped through rules, the power of judgment is a special talent that cannot be taught but only practiced" (A133/B172).
For Kant, pure concepts of speculative reason enable the systematic unification of other objects by way of their “schema”; speculative use of transcendental ideas is only heuristic and not ostensive: they show “not how an object is constituted but how, under the guidance of that concept, we ought to seek after the constitution and connection of objects of experience in general.” I presume the words from “how” onwards express the meaning of Kant’s term “regulative”.

Kant here seems to be saying that the pure concepts of reason can only be represented in the form of a schema, itself having the form of a principle, or set of principles, for the direction of cognition. Michelle Grier captures Kant’s point succinctly by condensing the expression of the transcendental illusion to the improper move from a sound epistemic injunction to an erroneous metaphysical hypothesis; that is, from

\[ P_1: \text{Find for the conditioned knowledge given through the understanding the unconditioned whereby unity is brought to completion.} \]

To:

\[ P_2: \text{If the conditioned is given, the whole series of conditions, subordinated to one another—a series which is therefore itself unconditioned—is likewise given, that is, contained in the object and its connection.} \]

And of course, in this most general case, the transcendental illusion leads ultimately to the postulation of an erroneous form of the Transcendental Ideal: the ens realissimum in its guise as the anthropomorphic “God” of monotheism. In the cases of the pure concepts of reason, we have three interrelated forms of this same error, instanced as the soul, the world-whole, and God.

We must now address the transcendental ideas proper; what, then, are the equivalent principles? Kant outlines these on A672-673/B700-701, and the passage is worth quoting in full. He begins by outlining the task of transcendental psychology.

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1A671/B699.
2Grier (2001, 119). The numbered propositions (\( P_1, P_2 \)) are Grier’s invention. Both statements are from A308/B364.
Following the ideas named above [those of rational psychology, cosmology, and theology] as principles, we will first (in psychology) connect all appearances, actions, and receptivity of our mind to the growing thread of inner experience as if the mind were a simple substance that (at least in this life) persists in experience with personal identity, while its states—to which the states of the body belong only as external conditions—are continuously changing.

The immediately following comment expresses the central task of transcendental cosmology:

we have to pursue the conditions of the inner as well as the outer appearances of nature through an investigation that will nowhere be completed, as if nature were infinite in itself and without a first or supreme member—although, without denying, outside of all appearances, the merely intelligible primary grounds for them, we may never bring these grounds into connection with explanations of nature, because we are not acquainted with them at all.

And, in a transcendental theology:

we have to consider everything that might ever belong to the context of possible experience as if this experience constituted an absolute unity, but one dependent through and through, and always still conditioned within the world of sense, yet at the same time as if the sum total of appearances (the world of sense itself) had a single supreme and all-sufficient ground outside its range, namely an independent, original, and creative reason, as it were, in relation to which we direct every empirical use of our reason in its greatest extension as if the objects themselves had arisen from that original image of all reason.1

Kant then reminds us of what this entails:

That means: it is not from a simple thinking substance that we derive the inner appearances of our soul, but from one another in accordance with the idea of a simple being; it is not from a highest intelligence that we derive the order of the world and its systematic unity, but

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1 The italics in the final clauses are mine.

In view of the liberal dosage of the “as-if” epithet, note Erich Adickes objection to Kant on the grounds that he propounded an “as-if philosophy”. See Bielefeldt (2003, 35 n.73), and his reference to Eric Adickes’s (1927) *Kant und die Als-Ob-Philosophie*. This objection recalls Vaihinger’s objection to this same “as-if” character, which he claimed “indicates the merely fictitious nature of the ideas of reason”.

rather it is from the idea of a most wise cause that we take the rule that reason is best off using for its own satisfaction when it connects up causes and effects in the world.

Kant admits that the psychological and theological case are distinct from the cosmological case, where the latter does run into contradiction in the Antinomies if it assumes a transcendental realist response to them. The former two do not run into a contradiction when applied in the transcendental realist’s sense, so must be resisted on the grounds that a mere lack of hindrance to their postulation does not provide them a permit; to think such a presumption was thereby warranted would not only amount to losing the world in the Meinongian Jungle, but would also rob the appeal to them of any significance.

Kant’s next step provides grist for Hegel’s mill, for he admits that since the ideas of reason are unconstrained by the understanding, where the latter is necessary “for us to be able to have a determinate concept of any thing,”¹ in thinking of them we are therefore thinking of a “Something about which we have no concept at all of how it is in itself, but about which we think a relation to the sum total of appearance, which is analogous to the relation that appearances have to one another.” Before moving to acknowledge Kant’s pronouncement that the greater “connectedness” among objects provided by the postulation of the ideas is their ultimate import, we must ask whether the “somethings” providing this could really be indeterminate in the way Kant is saying.

The relevant lesson from Hegel to be borne in mind here is that “being” and “nothing”, “reality” and “negation”, and other similar categorial pairs cannot be separated from one another. In his discussion of “Something” in the “Determinate Being” chapter, he says:

> Reality itself contains negation, is determinate being, not indeterminate, abstract being. Similarly, negation is determinate being, not the supposedly abstract nothing but posited here as it is in itself, as affirmatively present [als siend], belonging to the sphere of determinate being.²

For Hegel, “Something is the first negation of negation”. Further, that the “negative of the negative is, as something, only the

¹A674/B702.
²Hegel (1969, 115).
beginning of the subject [Subjekt]—being-within-self, only as yet quite indeterminate.” That is, “something” must be determined to a greater degree in order to play the role it is called upon to play in Kant’s account. Hegel explains the point this way:

something...determines itself further on, first, as a being-for-self and so on, until in the Concept it first attains the concrete intensity of the subject. At the base of all these determinations lies the negative unity with itself. But in all this, care must be taken to distinguish between the first negation as negation in general, and the second negation, the negation of the negation: the latter is concrete, absolute negativity, just as the former on the contrary is only abstract negativity.¹

And although Hegel is, in the examples he gives in this context, referring to finitude, the point holds for “something” in general, and the point is crucial for understanding Hegel’s distinct view of the idea of “God”. Even positing the idea of “God” as an abstract “most real being” (ens realissimum) as Kant does, regardless of the function he attributes to it, is to be led into great error, for in such a conception “God” becomes finite, like an abstract singular that simply cannot be known. Thus, the idea of “Something” cannot be determined without a sense of its negation as phrased in Hegel’s implicit inversion of Spinoza’s dictum omni determinatio est negatio.²

And, since functioning “regulatively” as an ideal is akin to functioning as a limit (recall that “Limitation” is the category corresponding to infinite judgment), to employ a regulative ideal is to place a limit as a negation of a determinate concept and therefore involves determining the limit itself.³ Hegel therefore would say that if the transcendental ideas play any role in thinking at all, they are

¹Hegel (1969, 115-116).
²See Hegel’s (1969) discussion in the chapter on “Determinate Being” esp. the section on “Quality” (111-114). Hegel cites Spinoza’s phrase at 113. Note here also the remarks in the introduction to “Objectivity”, Section Two of The Subjective Logic, where Hegel recalls his discussions of the “totumrealitatis” from Doctrine of Being and Doctrine of Essence. He claims such an idea is mistaken if thought to exclude negation.
³Cf. Hegel (1969, 132): “In order that the limit which is in something as such should be a limitation, something must at the same time in its own self transcend the limit, it must in its own self be related to the limit as to something which is not.” Cf. the distinction between boundaries (which necessarily imply two sides) and limits (which, according to Kant, do not) in Kant (1997/2004, §57).
not mere “Somethings”, but rather, in virtue of their negative function, “Everythings”. That is, they are the negative unity of all determinations (both logical subjects and predicates) of the class in question. Further, the Transcendental Ideal, the *ens realissimum*, is the negative unity of all possible classes.\(^1\) They are therefore the ground of all determination and, in a peculiar sense, the most “determinate” thought entities, but now *qua* unities, not *qua* things.

On this basis we might form the slogan that, for Hegel, “God” is the most determinate principle, or unity, of rational thought. Although given the points we’ve just made, it may be better to say “God” is that which is most “concrete”, because the term signifies the negative unity of all phenomena. Put in words more familiar to Kant, “God” is that concept that expresses the form and content of a rational system.\(^2\) In fact, such an interpretation would cohere with Hegel’s notorious claim that the content of his entire *Logic* is an exposition of “God”, since the Absolute Idea *is* the form and content of the entire system as articulated in the dialectical logic of philosophy.\(^3\)

But what kind of “principle” would this be? If we buy Kant’s distinction between the understanding and reason, as reformulated by Hegel in a way that insists families of contrary determinations arise only in certain shapes of thought, which is as much as saying that they are relative to a given categorial framework. If sound, we would then say that “God” is the most determinate “metajudgmental” (or, perhaps, “metanormative”) principle that expresses the ground of the connections between all possible categorial frameworks which arise from “thought thinking itself”. This is not a clear explanation, but it is perhaps getting closer to what Hegel meant.

These points can be brought to bear on Kant’s own explanation of the nature of ideas. He writes:

We remove from the object of an idea those conditions that limit our concept of the understanding, but that also make it possible for us to be able to have a determinate concept of anything.\(^4\)

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1 On the distinct senses of “being” as ontological (Aristotle) and henological (Plato), see Henrich (2003, Ch. 6, esp. 85-86 & Chs. 20-21).


3 Hegel (1969, 51).

4 A674/B702.
And by connecting the concept of “limit” with “determination”, betrays an implicit sympathy with the idea of a limit functioning to determine.¹ For if the “conditions that limit our concept” “make it possible to have a determinate concept” such limiting conditions do function to determine; therefore, that which a thing is not serves to determine that thing.

Now, Kant is unwilling to grant the status of objective reality to the thought entities that serve to determine our cognition in this way unless they are formulated as schemata, as explained above. And yet he allows that a schema is a principle, or set of principles, whose status as such is justified by the greater systematic unity for thinking achieved through its postulation. No specific details beyond these regarding how a schema must be constructed in order to allow for the idea for which it is a schema to count as subjectively valid are provided, and the justification seems to rely on the idea of success in practice to an unacceptable extent, for a justification in pragmatic terms of the ideas of metaphysica specialis is based on a petitio principii. Kant finds them useful because they allow for a systematic unity whose structure he has already argued for on their basis. Of course, this objection is not necessarily devastating—Kant’s circle may perhaps be seen as virtuous—yet it prompts one to entertain alternate possible accounts of rationality.

A question that recommends itself here is whether Hegel has a way of overcoming this difficulty, perhaps through his employment of a conception of reason that itself is not open to the charge of “abstractly (rational) grounding of postulated highest concepts”. As recent scholarship has argued,² Hegel does in fact seem to provide a solution to Kant’s formalism with his key concept “recognition” (Anerkennung).³ Such literature usually claims that Hegel’s social and historical account of reason is to be grounded on this basic concept. Part of the problem to which Hegel’s account of this concept is an answer⁴ is that of demonstrating the conditions of thinkers coming to

¹ Cf. the distinction in the Appendix to Maimon (2010), entitled “Symbolic Cognition and Philosophical Language”, between a “limit” and a “boundary”, where it is only in the latter, in its geometrical instantiation, that properly functions to determine.
² See, for example, Williams (1992) and Redding (1996).
³ One of the cognates of the term is a performative: “anerkennen”. This would be a key mode in which to explicate Hegel’s theory, since it focuses attention on the performances of acknowledgment themselves.
⁴ Cf. the title of Pippin (2000).
be reasonable in the first place; the very possibility of such a thing as reason or rationality and, therefore, rational ideas and ideals of the kind to which Kant appeals. We will come to that issue later, and for now will restrict ourselves to details in the following paragraphs and come to a summary of Kant’s overall position regarding the schemata of the transcendental ideas.

Kant had said that ideas are not “mere figments of the brain”, but rather useful parts of our cognitive economy. This commits him to a distinction between illusory rational phenomena that presumably do not have a proper role in cognition, and other rational phenomena whose employment is secured by pragmatic considerations. This is equivalent to a distinction between helpful and unhelpful illusions and reminds one of current fictionalist positions, for if we cannot claim to “know” the objects of ideas and ideals they too must be dubbed speculative and must not be thought of as objects of “knowledge”; they simply aid knowledge. But on what basis can we claim they do this? Kant is in deep water here since the distinction between “helpful” and “unhelpful” illusions presupposes we know antecedently how to distinguish the two. But if we have no access to the “objects” of ideas and ideals (the “object given in the idea”) then we have no way of knowing if supposedly “helpful” illusions really are helpful. In other words, we must grant that we do know something about these entities, via their effects, and it must be admitted we only ever know anything in virtue of its effects, whatever these may be (a triviality).

Again, Kant’s basic self-defence is that the reward is not an extension beyond possible experience, but an extension of “the empirical unity of those objects” of possible experience, primarily afforded by the syllogistic connections between judgments about empirical phenomena, whose interconnections are guided by reason’s ideal of systematic unity. Recall that this basic ideal expresses the commonality between the real and formal uses of reason and their interaction in theoretical contexts. Now, Kant’s position can be revealed as unsatisfying, and Hegel’s motivation for characterising transcendental idealism as a “subjective idealism” understood, for Kant says further that

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1 A569/B597.
2 In fact, Kant’s transformation of the principle of sufficient reason has been read as an argument for the exhaustive application of the causal principle to appearances. See Longuenesse (2005a).
this [the above paraphrased view] proves it is *reason's speculative interest* and *not its insight* which justifies it in starting from a point lying so far beyond its sphere in order to consider its objects in one complete whole.¹

This is a weak attempt at justification. In this context, Kant proposes “relative” and “absolute” presupposition, which simply pushes the argument a further stage back, and one is prompted to raise anew the question of how reason could have a “speculative interest” that was radically divorced from “insight”, not only into the basic structure of its own activity (which is, after all, worldly), but also into the world about which one reasons. After all, reason’s activity occurs in the empirically real world, even if it is only comprehensible as such given the perspective of transcendental idealism.

Some additional criticisms recommend themselves. It must be noticed that Kant does not vindicate the regulative employment of just any metaphysical ideas, but specifically those traditional objects of *metaphysica specialis*, where the sheer systematic unity granted by them for our thinking is that to which Kant appeals in his justification for their employment. This seems insufficient, for might there not be an infinite plethora of “ideas” which could play this function? One could ask whether there might not be alternate rational functions which might supersede them; one could be sceptical about the very idea of “systematic unity” on Wittgensteinian or anti-essentialist grounds, although it is not clear what the alternative to (some kind of) systematicity is apart from nihilism.

Although Kant argues for the transcendental employment of the ideas of rational psychology, cosmology, and theology on the basis of his theory of judgment of relation, the point just made above still stands: the distinction between helpful and unhelpful illusions presupposes a way of distinguishing the two. And claiming that it is in reason’s “interest” rather than its “insight” to employ such ideas presupposes that it is a sound principle of rationality to do so; and this is an instance of the same error. How can it be in “reason’s interest” to employ certain principles, unless those principles are truly sound, and bear some intrinsic connection with that to which they apply, or that to which they are brought to bear upon (in

¹A676/B704; my emphasis.
psychology, cosmology, theology)? Longuenesse signals her interest in answering this question:

It would be desirable to specify in the case of each idea (the soul, the world, God, or the ens realissimum) what its specific regulative role is, and how it relates to the form of systematics expounded in the first section of the appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic (A642–68/ B670–96). Within the limits of this chapter, my goal was only to clarify the role of the idea of a totum realitatis and the related ideal (hypostatized singular object, ens realissimum).

Kant does say, after all, in the expression of an ambiguous attitude to his, on other occasions, clearly expressed position regarding rational possibility (non-contradictoriness = conceivability = possibility) at A673-4/B701-2:

we cannot be allowed to introduce mere thought-entities that transcend all our concepts, though they contradict none of them, as real and determinate objects merely on credit, just so that speculative reason can complete its business as it likes.

_We should ask what the logical structures of the schemata of each of the pure concepts of reason are. We have already noted that the ideas arise from the thoroughgoing [durchgängig] employment of the judgments of relation, yet it seems more can be said. The “schema of God”, for instance, is arguably the “principle of complete determination”, as extended to the omnitudorealitatis and onto the ens realissimum, prior to the tripartite transformation (mentioned by Kant at A583/B611, n.*) that ends in the postulation of an anthropomorphic God. But what about the “schema of the soul” and the “schema of the world-whole”? Since these three schemata are together necessary for the systematised, unified character of possible experience the articulation of each is only coherent in the context of the others (cf. the quote from A672-673/B700-701 above).

For a clue regarding the basic structure of the suggested “schema of a world-whole”, from the Antinomies, see the table of the “four cosmological ideas, according to the four headings of the categories,” that arise “if one selects those that necessarily carry with them a series in the synthesis of the manifold.” (A415/B442 & ff.)

On this basis we might speculate thus: the schema of the “world-whole” is the abstract unity in virtue of which spatio-temporally conditioned, indexical, judgments, can be thought of as being “held together” in one possible experience.

And this seems perfectly sound if one construes speculative reason as entirely unconstrained by empirical considerations. Namely, rationalist metaphysics should be denied its claims to know anything about merely speculated entities. But now one must ask, given Kant’s self-assigned task to offer a critique of metaphysics, why is he defending the pure concepts of reason at all? Why does he offer revised, “critically-reduced” versions of them? We can forestall this objection by first noting that simply because Kant employs the same words for these ideas as the tradition he may nevertheless envisage them differently from the tradition, yet the distinct functionality does not on its own necessitate a different word.

The different version Kant might have offered would have been close enough to be almost a terminological variant, and Kant is not in the business of making a name for himself with unnecessarily novel terminology, as he tells us, in speaking of the term “idea”, and having made reference to Plato:

In the great wealth of our languages, the thinking mind nevertheless often finds itself at a loss for an expression that exactly suits its concept, and lacking this it is able to make itself rightly intelligible neither to others nor even to itself. Coining new words is a presumption to legislate in language that rarely succeeds, and before we have recourse to the dubious means it is advisable to look around in a dead and learned language to see if an expression occurs in it that is suitable to this concept; and even the ancient use of this expression [“idea”] has become somewhat unsteady owing to the inattentiveness of its authors, it is better to fix on the meaning that is proper to it (even if it is doubtful whether it always had exactly this sense) than to ruin our enterprise by making ourselves unintelligible.¹

We note now that Kant’s accordance of objective reality to the schema of the transcendental idea (from which follows its objective validity) rests upon the possibility of showing that “all rules of the empirical use of reason under the presupposition of such an object in the idea lead to systematic unity”.² Kant says strongly that if this is possible, “then it is a necessary maxim of reason to proceed in accordance with such ideas”. Specifically, it is the greater cultivation and correction of the “systematic unity of the manifold of empirical

¹A311-312/B368-369. One is pushed to speculate as to whether Kant would have approved of Hegel’s linguistic innovations and, if so, what in them he would have approved of. (Part of what he would have disapproved of is clear from this remark alone.) On this compare Kant (1996b, 5:10, 145).
²A671/B699.
cognition” afforded by the transcendental ideas that vindicates them; that is, such advantages they have over the “mere use of principles of understanding.”

If the line of argument thus far is cogent, we can say that the success of the employment of such principles is due to the fact that they tell us something about the multiplicity of elements of the empirically actual world of sense, and the appropriate manner of investigating them; namely, that they do actually have the “form of a system” of the kind that reason does, as argued for by Kant in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, and that this is the reason for the success of the application of the principles. The implication is therefore that Kant is wrong to deny the possibility of hypothetical existence claims about them; for even if Hegel’s claims regarding “knowledge of God” are to be denied, this does mean one can say *nothing at all.*

Rather, since Kant does after all grant that the schemata of the pure concepts of reason represent forms of unity among judgments of relation (categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive), perhaps he ought to have allowed that the pure concepts of reason themselves (the soul, the world-whole, God) are the *proper names* of the sets of judgments represented as a unity by the relevant schemata.

Recall that Kant is here signalling the potential for thought-entities that *are not*, and *cannot* be, imagistically represented to extend and improve cognition and attributes such actions to reason. From what does this conviction stem? The basic thought depends first on the fact that singular instances, as of empirically given individuals, cannot possibly “extend” cognition because their cognitive value is insufficiently general; cognition can only be extended through entities that are abstract and general and, therefore, express laws or rules for the application of concepts. Yet Kant’s distinction between “ideas” and “ideals” (the Transcendental Ideal) and *a priori* concepts cannot rest on this, because, as we’ve

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1Kant (2000, First Introduction, see esp. IV, 20:208-209, 13 and V, 20:216, 19). See also A680/B708: “The unity of reason is the unity of a system, and this systematic unity does not serve reason objectively as a principle, extending it over objects, but subjectively as a maxim, in order to extend it over all possible empirical cognition of objects.”

2 It is peculiar that Kant speak of “ideals” in the plural at the beginning The Ideal of Pure Reason, yet in the section “The Transcendental Ideal” insists that there is “only one genuine transcendental ideal of which human reason is capable” (A583/B611).
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noted, Kant insists that the schemata of the categories, let alone the categories themselves, can never be instanced in experience.

Indeed, the contrast here seems to rest on a further distinction between what is “contained” in the pure understanding and what is “contained” in reason. Unlike the fortune of the understanding, occasion never arises where one can say that reason’s pure concepts are “found” in experience, even as a “reflective unity of the manifold”; ideas are inferred concepts and therefore by definition collectively constitute a “beyond” of experience, albeit one that has some bearing on experience itself.

Therefore, the answer stems partly from the prior distinction between the understanding and reason;¹ a distinction which in this case involves claiming there are concepts whose application can be vindicated a priori simply because experience cannot be knowledgeable (cannot be “experience” in the philosophical sense intended) without them. Reason, meanwhile, is conceived of by Kant as necessary for “comprehension”² in the sense which implies the formation of a systematised, unified body of thought whose empirical investigations are, to restate Kant’s apparently contradictory view, “guided” by that which is not instantiated in them.

Kant says that the objective reality of pure concepts is “founded solely on the fact that because they constitute the intellectual form of all experience, it must always be possible to show their application in experience.”³ And recall that the demonstration of the application of the categories in experience occurred through demonstration of the “import” of their “transcendental time-determinations”, as schemata. The schemata of the ideas of pure reason admit of no such validation, however. Again, this sounds suspiciously similar to Kant’s claim that the schemata of the pure concepts of the understanding are never instanced in experience.⁴ We are thus impelled to question if and how Kant can make a consistent and clear distinction between the schemata of the categories and the schemata of the transcendental ideas; that is, between the pure concepts of the understanding and the pure concepts of reason.

Putting the proper names of the entities in the latter form draws attention to the commonality at a superficial level, yet we are pushed to ask whether the similarity may be more than superficial. Or at

¹ Which Hegel, at (1971, §467 Z, 226), says, Kant was the first to recognise and for which he was to be applauded.
³ A310/B367.
⁴ A142/B181.
least we cannot rule such a possibility out in considering how else one might formulate the distinction between the two faculties. Our question then is whether Kant’s distinction between reason and the understanding is appropriate; not that it might be discarded, but that it might be reconceived in order to capture the idea that there can be categorial structures employed in the garnering of empirical knowledge (experience) that are transformed and guided by rationality. Put thus, it is clear that this is at least part of what Hegel attempts to exposit in his dialectical logic: the transitions from one categorial framework to another, which can be termed “rational” insofar as such transitions to successor frameworks are motivated by explanatory failures necessitated by the structures of predecessor frameworks.

To take a related but slightly different angle, notice that our most basic guiding question so far can be put this way: “How is Hegel’s conception of reason different from Kant’s?” So we must now ask: “What would the equivalent be in Hegel’s philosophy (if there is one), of Kant’s transcendental deduction of the pure concepts of reason?” More narrowly: “Is there an equivalent in Hegel’s philosophy of Kant’s transcendental deduction of ‘God’, qua pure concept of reason?”

As mentioned above, if one takes Hegel’s remarks in the Introduction to the Logic seriously, and is sympathetic to an interpretation of Hegel as a transcendental philosopher (conceived very broadly), then one might be tempted to suppose that the Logic, as a whole, is itself this transcendental (rather, for Hegel, dialectical and speculative) deduction of the idea of “God”. Yet what that means

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1 “Now if one can show that although the three kinds of transcendental ideas…cannot be referred directly to any object corresponding to them and to its determination, and nevertheless that all rules of the empirical use of the understanding under the presupposition of such an object in the idea lead to systematic unity, always extending the cognition of experience but never going contrary to experience, then it is a necessary maxim of reason to proceed in accordance with such ideas. And this is the transcendental deduction of all the idea of speculative reason, not as constitutive principles for the extension of cognition to more objects than experience can give, but as regulative principles for the systematic unity of the manifold of empirical cognition in general” (A671/B699).

2 Hegel (1969, 50).

3 To get some idea of the suggestion, and its difficulties, see Williams (1985).
is not clear when so stated and much more detail would have to be added to make the comparison even slightly illuminating.

The role of negation here must be stated more clearly, in order that the present point can be clarified. Kant's remarks about the systematic unity afforded by the transcendental idea of “God” at A672-3/B700-1 provide some starting points for comparison. In short, Kant says it is necessary to (1) consider everything belonging to possible experience as if it was part of an “absolute unity” qua “world of sense”; (2) consider the “sum total of appearances” qua “world of sense”, as if it had “a single supreme and all sufficient ground outside its range” to be understood as “an independent, original, and creative reason...in relation to which we direct every empirical use of our reason in its greatest extension”; (3) consider “objects themselves” as if they had “arisen from that original image of all reason”.

We might indeed ask whether the fact that all cognition is “regulated” by reason means that comprehension of objects does in fact arise from the “original image of all reason”. In other words, we must ask whether one can distinguish the phrase

“comprehension of objects, qua objects about which one can reason”,

from the phrase

“comprehension of objects, qua objects given to reason”.

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1 At A677/B705, when referring to the idea of a world-whole, Kant says “I can nevertheless assume such an incomprehensible being, the object of a mere idea, relative to the world of sense, though not in itself.” Clearly the point follows for the concept of “God”, and therefore the ens realissimum. This is just one piece of text that recommends Longuenesse’s “critically-reduced” interpretation of the ens realissimum to the purely rationalist, metaphysical interpretation.

2 This phrasing calls to mind Kant’s distinction between objects given to reason as “an object absolutely” and those given only as an “object in the idea” (A670/B698). The present point is that that distinction is not as straightforward as Kant assumes. Although Kant uses “given” in both cases here, it seems clear that objects “given” “in the idea” are not strictly “given” from anywhere, but postulated as a rational ground for systematic, unified cognition. The way this has been phrased in the two examples draws attention to the fact that reason itself has no way of distinguishing the origins of objects given to it; this is only possible with the understanding and through the refinement of the capacity to judge well.
where the former makes no distinction between an “inner” and an “outer” of the “materials” available to rationality, and the latter characterises “reason” as that to which “material” is “given” to work on. Notice that the apparent difficulty disappears once one clarifies what it means for something to be “available” or “given” to “reason”. Presumably all that is required is that that thing is in a form amenable to processes of rationalisation, and clearly material presented in judgmental form is precisely that, regardless of its sources (experience, or pure reason).

Importantly, Kant’s conception of human reason is formulated as a “weak copy” of the “self-sufficient reason” of the being possessing “highest perfection (“God”).”\(^1\) Hegel, meanwhile, conceives of this relation differently, due to his conception of the transformative power of the dialectically negative moment of reason. Free self-consciousness is truly infinite, due to it not consisting in any particular, abstract, finite moment, but rather in the capacity for self-creation.\(^2\) This is not to reduce the “True Infinite” to self-actualisation, a-la Sartre, because each of the slew of appearances is to be thought of as “moments” of the “Idea”, or “Concept”.\(^3\) Namely, self-consciousness is capable of self-transformation through the emergence of linguistic, sign-making consciousness (the intelligence in action) and thereby also the transformation of the phenomena implicated in such “shapes of consciousness”.

According to Hegel, Kant would therefore be in error in saying: “I can never assume the existence of this thing-in-itself, \textit{because} none of the concepts through which I can think any object determinately will attain to it, \textit{and} the conditions for the objective validity of my concepts are excluded by the idea itself.”\(^4\) Hegel can simply ask why the “existence” of a transcendental idea, i.e., the \textit{ens realissimum}, would depend on it being determined \textit{positively} through concepts; why could it not be determined \textit{negatively} through the kind of structure that is schematised by infinite judgment?\(^5\) It is important to clarify what is meant by “existence” here.

Note first that two broad senses of “existence” are in play in the philosophical tradition which Kant and Hegel inherit. The first of these is an Aristotelian notion of “being” which, despite its range of

\(^1\)A678/B706.
\(^2\) Cf. Wallace (2005) on the “True Infinite”.
\(^3\) Cf. Aquila (1985).
\(^4\)A676-677/B704-705; my emphasis.
\(^5\) See Chapter 3, §\textit{III.i}. 

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uses,\(^1\) essentially amounts to the sense of “existence” to which Kant refers here: something determinable. The second sense is that of Platonic “unity”. One could capture Kant’s argument regarding the transcendental ideas by saying that one should not confuse rational unities with existing objects. After all, since one cannot find occasion in possible experience to point to their “existence” one cannot make existence claims about them. But Kant, being an acute and deep thinker, realises that the road to nominalism is a rough one; one that turns out to be other than it seems at the first step. So he does commit himself to a theoretical claim for Platonic unities, conceived in an “ideal” sense. And as we’ve seen, Hegel’s alternate inheritance of Plato through the neo-Platonic tradition of Proclus allows him a careful criticism of this Kantian resistance to knowledge of “ideas”, qua unities.\(^2\)

Put in more contemporary terms, Kant’s sense of “existence”, as pertaining to the Aristotelian sense of “being”, belongs to an empiricist, verificationist sentiment; recall Hegel’s repeated criticisms of Kant’s “empiricist” tendencies.\(^3\) Kant does, after all, say that we do not find the object of the idea in possible experience represented by the “sensation”, qua “matter of appearance”, therefore we cannot make determinate claims about its “existence”; it being therefore urgent to recall that the ens realissimum itself, on Kant’s account, is the ground of determining anything completely. Yet Kant is therefore faced with what appears to be a contradiction:

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\(^1\) Cf. Brentano (1862/1975) on the four basic senses of “Being” in Aristotle.

\(^2\) Observe Kant’s remarks in his *Geography Lectures*: “we have to know the objects of our experience as a whole so that our knowledge does not form an aggregate but rather a system; in a system it is the whole that comes before the parts, whereas in an aggregate the parts are first...The idea [Die Idee] is architectonic; it creates the sciences. For example, he who wants to build a house first creates for himself the idea of a whole, from which all the parts will be derived. So our present preparation is an idea of the knowledge of the world. Here we make for ourselves in a similar way an architectonic concept, which is a concept wherein the manifold is derived from the whole. (9:158; cf. A832/B860; cited in Louden (2000, 23); the emphases are mine).

\(^3\) Hegel’s mature view of this aspect of Kant is expressed most clearly See “The Second Position of Thought with Respect to Objectivity” in Hegel (1991b, esp. §§40-60 on “The Critical Philosophy”).
(i) It is a condition is completely determining any thing ($X$) that one compares it with “the whole of possibility”,¹ which is the same thing as “the sum total of all predicates of things in general”. This is conceived of here as a singularity, the Transcendental Ideal in *individuo*, “an individual thing which is determinable, or even determined, through the idea² alone”;³ the *ens realissimum*. This conception is a dialectical transformation of the idea of a “storehouse of predicates” (conceived of as an “All of reality”: *omnitudo realitatatis*)⁴ that are applicable to all objects of possible experience. Such a dialectical transformation seems to be comparable to what Kant later characterises as that from the “distributive use of understanding in experience, into the collective unity of a whole of experience.”⁵ Those which do not apply to the thing in question therefore serve as limiting predications, for they are those predicates which are not satisfied by that thing.⁶

(ii) But, some predicates are therefore negative determinations or “limits” of $X$, and this ought to imply that the negative determinations (failures to satisfy) of the thing in question necessarily admit of comparison with, by contrast, the positive determinations (satisfactions) of the predicates as applied to the *ens realissimum*.⁷

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¹ A572/B600.
² The idea which Kant refers to here seems to be the *omnitudo realitatatis*, as mentioned in the Transcendental Ideal.
³ A568/B596.
⁴ Recall that “singularity” is the form of judgment corresponding to the category of “totality”. Recall also that no judgment can have the form of singularity, except under the qualification that one conceive of the form of a so-called “singular judgment” on the model of a universal judgment; the predicate applied to the subject in question “applies to all of it” in the way that the predicate applied to a universal applies to it in its status as universal; that is, “to all of it”.
⁵ A582/B610.
⁶ “...in order to cognise a thing completely one has to cognise everything possible and determine the thing through it, whether affirmatively or negatively.” (A573/B601)
⁷ Cf. Hegel’s remarks in his discussion of “Determinate Being”: “In connection with the term ‘reality’, mention must be made of the former metaphysical concept of God which, in particular, formed the basis of the so-called ontological proof of the existence of God. God was defined as the
(iii) But, no predicates can be positive “determinations” of the *ens realissimum*, against which the thing is being compared transcendentally, because the latter cannot be determined at all, given that of it we cannot have an objective cognition.

(iv) Therefore, Kant’s argument fails, at a basic level, by failing to explain adequately how the contrast between something satisfying a predicate, or failing to satisfy it, *is possible* at the level of the principle of complete determination; therefore, Kant fails to provide the bare minimum that ascertainment of truth requires.

This is, however, unless Kant has some other way of explaining the contrast between satisfying, or failing to satisfy, a predicate at this level of abstraction.¹

sum-total of all realities, and of this sum-total it was said that no contradiction was contained in it, that none of the realities cancelled any other; for a reality is to be taken only as a perfection, as an *affirmative* being which contains no negation. Hence the realities are not opposed to one another and do not contradict one another. Reality thus conceived is assumed to survive when all negation has been thought away; but to do this is to do away with all determinateness.” (112) And further on: “When reality, taken as a determinate quality as it is in the said definition of God, is extended beyond its determinateness it ceases to be reality and becomes abstract being; God as the *pure* reality in all realities, or as the sum total of all realities, is just as devoid of determinateness and content as the empty absolute in which all is one. If, on the other hand, reality is taken in its determinateness, then, since it essentially contains the moment of the negative, the sum-total of all realities becomes just as much a sum-total of all negations, the sum-total of all contradictions; it becomes then straightaway the absolute *power* in which everything determinate is absorbed; but reality itself *is*, only in so far as it is still confronted by a being which it has not sublated; consequently, when it is thought as expanded into realised, limitless power, it becomes the abstract nothing. The said reality in all realities, the being in all determinate being, which is supposed to express the concept of God, is nothing else than abstract being, which is the same as nothing.” (113) In this last sentence Hegel seems to be implicitly denouncing Kant’s concept of God.

¹ Kant says the “aim of reason with its ideal is...a complete determination in accordance with *a priori* rules; hence it thinks for itself an object that is to be thoroughly determinable in accordance with principles, even though the sufficient conditions for this are absent from experience, and thus the concept itself is transcendent.” (A571/B599) There is here an ambiguity: by saying the concept is “transcendent” (which suggests a conditioner outside or inaccessible to cognition) Kant seems to commit
The argument just presented is in effect Hegel's argument against the rationalist conception of a “sum-total of all realities”, which he denounces in each of the books of the *Logic* in his discussion of “Determinate Being” in the Doctrine of Being, in his remark on “The Law of Contradiction” in the Doctrine of Essence, and his preamble to the “Objectivity” section of the Doctrine of the Concept. This critique of a rationalist conception of a “sum-total of all realities” goes hand in hand with Hegel’s reformulation of the idea of “God”.

Note, however, that Kant draws a distinction between “logical negation” and “transcendental negation”, where the former is “indicated solely by the little word ‘not,’” and “is never properly attached to a concept, but rather only to its relation to another concept in a judgment, and therefore is far from sufficient to designate a concept in regard to its content.”¹ Recall that by “content” here Kant is referring to intuitional content: the presence to consciousness of something empirical to which a concept is applied; this suggests that for Kant “logical negation” is purely truth-functional, since it is determined solely by the validity and truth of judgments.

Transcendental negation, on the other hand, “signifies non-being in itself, and is opposed to transcendental affirmation, which is a Something, the concept of which in itself already expresses a being, and hence it is called reality (thinghood), because through it alone, and only insofar as it reaches, are objects Something (things);² the opposed negation, on the contrary, signifies a mere lack, and where this alone is thought, the removal of every thing is represented.”³

It is clear how Hegel’s response to this claim would go: The distinction between “non-being” and “something” is, for idealist

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¹ A574/B602.
² The Aristotelian flavour of this paragraph must be noted. Recall the remarks above regarding the contrast between “being” and “unity”.
³ A574-575/B602-603.
logical purposes, parallel to that between “being” and “nothing”, and both of these duos of categories are entirely inadequate attempts to think something much more complex that cannot be thought in such abstract terms; moreover, not only are these categories not thinkable in such terms, but they are identical when so thought: “non-being” is equivalent to “something” as much as “being” is equivalent to “nothing”.\(^1\) Kant should have realised this, since he does say that “no one can think a negation determinately without grounding it on the opposed affirmation”;\(^2\) where there is in this statement nothing to preclude that affirmations and negations are simply relative contraries.

Of course, Kant means that “realities contain the data, the material, so to speak, or the transcendental content, for the possibility and the thoroughgoing \([\text{durchgängig}]\) determination of all things.”\(^3\) But this can’t be quite right, since “thinking about something” is usually not conceived of as static state,\(^4\) but instead usually implies an alteration in consciousness and therefore an alteration of the relationship between the relata of the relation; there is no “given” material \(qua\) cognitive, only “given” material \(qua\) physically conceived processes in nature. That Kant knows this is evident in his admittance in the \textit{Critique of Practical Reason} that freedom depends upon the (sound) possibility of thinking of oneself

\(^1\) An argument of this form is presented in Volume One, Book One, Section One, Chapter One, of Hegel (1969). See also Hegel’s discussion of “Something” at the level of “Determinate Being” at 114-116 & ff.

\(^2\) A575/B603.

\(^3\) A575/B603.

\(^4\) We might say, insofar as one is not making progress or changing one’s state of mind one is \textit{not thinking at all}. If accurate, this would give credence to the idea that people with “fixed ideas” \textit{do not think}. From Hegel’s perspective, the confusion is to equate an episode of sheer \textit{feeling} with \textit{thinking}; thought and rationality are hereby paired. However, one might advance a criticism here along the lines that much thinking is unconscious and there is no uncontentious way to divide “conscious” from “unconscious” thought processes, simply because the exact relationship between “having a thought” (at the cognitive, unarticulated level) and “expressing a thought” (at the communicative level) is theoretically problematic. One way out is to stipulate that the ineffable is, as such, to be excluded from the realm of “thought”; this is simply to stipulate that thinking is inherently communicable, and this seems fairly agreeable. As stipulations go, this one seems as good as any, especially in a domain where one seems necessary.
other than as a natural object;¹ it is also the basis, in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment* for his Dialectic of Teleology where he admits that it is necessary to conceive of oneself as both an object in mechanistic nature as well as a purposive subject whose action is to be conceived in teleological terms.

So, when Kant equates “reality” with the presence of sensation, he seems merely to be flagging a necessary condition of thinking of oneself as affected by the objects one knows in their guise as phenomena; in so doing, however, he is misconstruing the meaning of “reality”, since for the same reasons that “being” and “nothing” are not only dialectically contrary but, upon reflection, *equivalent*, the presence of the world to thought in the guise of sensation is equivalent to the absence of the world to thought; thought only emerges through the negation of sheer sensation and the development of more complex categorial distinctions.² Kant knows this as well as Hegel does, although the latter believed himself to taken better account of this.

Kant recognises the extension of reason in its “opening up new paths into the infinite”,³ and this seems to be part of what Hegel’s claim about the self-transforming character of spirit, qua “True Infinite” involves. According to Kant, one cannot determine objects of reason through the understanding, so one cannot make judgments about them, even if reason is intimately bound up with the actions of the understanding’s capacity to judge, because synthetic a priori judgments are a product of the principles of reason.⁴

Given this, and the fact that Kant was trying to secure a place for ideas and ideals in our thinking, one must characterise them in a distinct way, unrelated to judgment proper. It is tempting to then characterise their respective roles as both “meta-judgmental”. But what does this mean? An equally alluring expansion of this idea is formulable in terms of the recently re-ignited term “metavocabulary”, which originated in Rudolf Carnap and was developed by Sellars and, more recently, Brandom. Perhaps there is

¹ See his compatibilist explanation of freedom in Kant (1996b, 5:6, 141, n.*). Cf. the remarks regarding the need for a theoretical account of freedom is forestalled by the metaphysical orientation of his practical account of it in Kant (1996c, 4:448, 95-96, n.*).
² The dialectic in Chapters 1-3 of Hegel (1977b) seems to take this form. Notice that this same argument is employed by Hegel in his account of the emergence of free self-consciousness (cf. Hegel (1969, 37)).
³ A680/B708.
something to this line of thought, yet at present little can be said in way of elaboration; nevertheless, a comment can be added to make the point clearer. Ideas and ideals evince certain designs we have on our own way of thinking; when explicated and, in the practical cases, symbolised, they reveal to us certain convictions adopted or accepted by thinkers which “guide” their more critical cognitive endeavours. We therefore now discuss the role symbolic representation plays for Kantian order to develop this critique in greater detail.
II.iii The symbolic representation of ideas

Defenders of Kant’s conception of practical reason are saddled with a problem: how does an individual consciousness come into contact with, and comprehend, the moral law? Notoriously, Kant conceived of ethical imperatives as unconditional commands of reason which we, as finite and conditioned, can only apprehend as being fulfilled in experience indirectly via symbolic representation; our only way of approaching to the unconditioned is through the formation of symbols or images that we employ as guides when we act as if pure concepts of reason such as “the highest good” could be instanced in the empirically real and thus be rendered accessible to us.¹

Notice that I’ve just contrasted comprehension of the moral law with apprehension of symbolic representations. Typically the former mental act of standing in an epistemic relation to something emphasises the conceptual or rational character of that relation, whereas the latter act tends to highlight sensory (and perhaps causal) features of the relation in question.

Thus, Kant employs a set of semantically related concepts in his scattered reflections on symbolic representation: “archetype”,³ “exemplar”⁴, “example”⁵, and “analogy”. One definition of this last concept is offered in the 3rd Critique:

¹ The “as-if” character that pure concepts of reason are meant to have for us is elaborated most clearly in the section entitled “On the final aim of the natural dialectic of human reason” (A669-704/B697-732). Note the apparently problematically metaphorical character of this locution insofar as it presupposes the usefulness of a distinction between literal (essential) meaning and figurative, metaphorical or analogical (accidental) meaning.

² Kant (2000, §29, 5:274, 156) refers to the “sublime passage” from the “Jewish Book of the Law” which states: “Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image, nor any likeness either of that which is in heaven, or on the earth, or yet under the earth, etc.” He adds that the “very same thing holds of the representation of the moral law and the predisposition to morality in us.”

³ See A315/B372, where examples are contrasted with the idea or “archetype” of virtue and moral perfection.

⁴ For a nice discussion of exemplars and their philosophical import in this connection, see Ferrara (2008).

⁵ See O’Neill (1986) for a discussion of the role of examples in moral philosophy in general and Kant in particular.
Chapter Two: Metarepresentational Structure in Kant and Hegel

Analogy is the identity of the relation between the grounds and consequences (causes and effects) insofar as it is present despite what difference in kind there is between the things...or between those properties themselves that contain the ground of similar consequences.¹

We unpack this below. For now, note that the diffuse character of Kant’s theory of symbolic representation and the concepts it employs are both more than idle curiosities: together these facts reveal the theory’s incompleteness. Indeed, the incompleteness of Kant’s theory of symbolic representation is merely one of many criticisms that can be made about Kant’s failure to engage with empirical considerations in his moral philosophy. One result of this shortcoming is that Kant’s moral anthropology as a whole is lacking.²

Moral anthropology—empirical considerations relevant to ethical theory—must be understood here as germane to the form and content of symbols. This general idea is upstream from the more specific claim that the form and content of symbols should demonstrate a basic connection between linguistics and anthropology. Kant says the following about moral anthropology:

The counterpart of a metaphysics of morals, the other member of the division of practical philosophy as a whole, would be moral anthropology, which, however, would deal only with the subjective conditions in human nature that hinder people or help them in fulfilling the laws of a metaphysics of morals.³

The two portions of text where Kant comes closest to offering a theory are §59 of the 3rd Critique and in the section of the 2nd Critique entitled “Of the typic of pure practical judgment”. In the former case,

¹Kant (2000, §90, 5:464, 328, n.*). Cf. Kant (1997/2004, §§57-58), where he mentions the role of symbolic representation of the idea of “God” in theoretical uses of reason. In that context he claims the analogical employment of the idea does not suggest “an imperfect similarity between two things, but rather a perfect similarity between two relations in wholly dissimilar things.” From this it is supposed to follow that symbolisation of ideas of the supersensible does not involve “falling into that anthropomorphism which transfers predicates from the sensible world onto a being wholly distinct from the world”. We raise problems with this claim here. Cf. the discussion of medieval sense of “analogy of imitation” and “analogy of participation” in Ashworth (2009, 2-3).
²Cf. (2000, 74) on the “incompleteness” of Kant’s moral anthropology.
Kant offers a brief but systematic explanation of the difference between schematic and symbolic forms of representation; in the latter, he explains why the nature of practical reason entails that we require concrete examples to guide us in moral judgment. The former is discussed directly in §IV. The latter provides a text for the most common and basic case in Kant’s writings: that of subsuming human actions, in their guise as phenomenal, under practical laws, which can never be apprehended in the phenomenal world, and its lesson therefore pervades our text.

Our aim is to exploit both the fact that Kant’s theory is incomplete and the fact that he employs the insufficiently explored concepts mentioned above. As such, I will here attempt to develop some implications of Kant’s use of these concepts, especially “analogy”.

Regarding the concept mentioned above, note that “exemplar” denotes archetypical instances of symbols which as such reveal a significant portion of their core meaning already signals a problem. Notice that ideas, when represented symbolically, are conditioned representations of the unconditioned (or, the unconditional); it therefore being easily seen that some of these symbolic representations could exemplify more of the core meaning of an unconditioned idea than others, but if so, only by being in accord with more of the demands of the idea of practical reason than other instances. And presumably it is these archetypes which we should

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1 Necessity in aesthetic judgments from the 3rd Critique is “exemplary” rather than “practical” necessity. In these contexts, as Louden says, “agents are not supplied with a rule or principle by means of which they can make the judgment” (see the reference in Louden (2000, 112)). We will come back to this issue of interpretation; it has however already been foreshadowed in our discussion of the inexhaustibility of the singular character of empirical intuition and the aesthetic, evaluative dimension of perceptual judgment.

2 I am using “idea” in the singular here because it is the idea of pure practical reason in general which, for Kant, is that to which our actions must ultimately answer. Once plurality is introduced we have descended to the level of duties enacted in accord with this idea. Notice that even the Categorical Imperative is too specific, since it is expressed in a range of forms Kant (1996c, 4:421, 73 & ff.); for whilst the Categorical Imperative is the key expression of the idea of pure practical reason, pure practical itself can only be wholly expressed as “rational, transcendental freedom”.

3 Yet see the * footnote in Kant (1996f, 6:480, 593): “Instance [Beispiel], a German word, is commonly used as synonymous with ‘example’ [Exempel], but the two words really do not have the same meaning. To
emulate (ought to will), rather than actions, when conceived as symbolic, that satisfy less of the demands of the idea of pure practical reason. The fact that exemplary instances of moral action can be emulated, whereas the idea or archetype of moral perfection can only be approximated to, reveals the need for the former to function as symbolic representations of the latter.

Given the above remarks, it seems as if the idea of pure practical reason is a unified principle of moral action\(^1\) which, when coupled with detailed specifications of particular imperfect duties,\(^2\) is employed to signal a unity existing among certain kinds of moral behaviour; a \textit{unity} which, given the force of “ought” in moral contexts, one must attempt to bring about.\(^3\) If this is right, exemplars would therefore be empirically real examples that approximate most closely to moral perfection as is possible, under the finite conditions of experience (recall actions are empirically real and thus appearances, and therefore subject to aesthetic and transcendental-take something as an \textit{example} and to bring forward an \textit{instance} to clarify an expression are altogether different concepts. An example is a particular case of a \textit{practical} rule, insofar as this rule represents an action as practicable or impracticable, whereas an \textit{instance} is only a particular (\textit{concretum}), represented in accordance with concepts as contained under a universal (\textit{abstractum}), and is a presentation of a concept merely for theory.”

\(^1\) I’ve just equated “idea” with “a principle of action”. This strikes a discord. If we recall the distinction between “being” and “unity” from §II.ii it is clearer what is meant: an idea is a unity existing among actions; it is that upon which the actions are grouped together and that upon which the actions are conducted in the first place (if we are being moral and acting from duty in Kant’s sense). Another way of conceiving of this contrast is as structurally similar to that between extension and intension: the extension is the things to which the principle applies, the intension is that which applies to those things (a principle, concept, description, etc.). We return to this below.

\(^2\) I say “imperfect” because perfect duties are connected more tightly with the Categorical Imperative and are, moreover, unconditional. Imperfect duties involve a greater degree of empirical information than do perfect duties, according to Kant. There is then, however, a sense in which the representation of unconditionality in perfect duties is more difficult because less mediation is involved and we are therefore closer to the supposed schism between rational demands and empirical circumstance.

\(^3\) “‘Ought’ expresses a kind of practical necessity and connection with grounds which is found nowhere else in whole of nature…When one has the course of nature alone before one’s eyes, ‘ought’ has no meaning whatsoever [\textit{ganz und gar keine Bedeutung}](A547/B576).
logical conditions). Exemplars thus serve as unifying empirical functions for a set of moral behaviours that are both intuitional and conceptual; other examples of moral actions would count as being less satisfactory instances and would constitute the remainder of the set of actions that fell under the duty being considered.

Note that this gives us a way of comparing the characterisation of perfect duties with imperfect ones: fulfilment of an imperfect duty can be regarded as an action, or set of actions, that has been more completely described than a perfect duty such that it is regarded as less pure, even if still moral. One wishes Kant had considered this point more seriously when discussing the moral status of lying; one wants to ask: “Are all lies the same?” Notice that the more detail contained in the description of a duty, or the greater explanation of one’s moral action, the more specific and thus the more conditioned it is; the specification of one’s action is shaped by the salient features of one’s context, for example, from:

“Do A.”

To

“When in C do A.” (Note that the specification of a circumstance need not initially rob an action of its moral perfection: by putting “C” here one might be understood as simply acknowledging that certain actions only become possible, or called for, in certain circumstances. One cannot, for example, respect a person by saving their life if their life is not in danger. Yet the point of a perfect duty is that one need not specify that one must be in a relevant circumstance for it to become a point of consideration. The famous example here is Kant’s claim that truth telling is a perfect duty: “Tell the truth”, never “If in circumstances C, tell the truth; and therefore, if not in C, tell, or don’t tell, the truth.” Yet note that, in harmony with our initial observation, we can say that truth telling is not relevant if one is not in a position to speak—one’s current beliefs do not simply issue in truthful avowals in absence of either relevant speech contexts or, more pressingly, relevant speech partners; one also is not typically pressed to issue truthful reports on things one sees for no reason at all other than that one sees them. Such is folly and in no way morally imperative.)

“When in C, and when C contains obstacle $O_1$ to satisfying duty $D$, do $A_2$. “
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To

“When in C, and when C contains obstacles \( O_1, O_2, O_3 \ldots O_n \) to satisfying duty D, do \( A_{n+1} \).”

And so on. Notice how a richer description of the circumstances issues in a “maxim of an action” that must describe the moral difficulties of the situation. It is not so much that Kant was ignorant of this as he thought of it as dealing with empirical matters, and so of less philosophical interest and importance.

We are now concerned with the sense in which (1) symbolic representation is meant to be indirect; (2) it encompasses material apparently external to reason; and (3), whether Kant’s theory of it can be deemed successful. We must, however, first address (1), the issue of indirectness, and therefore we must cite Kant’s taxonomy of representations from the first book of the Dialectic:

We are not so lacking in terms properly suited to each species of representation that we have need for one to encroach on the property of another. Here is their progression: The genus is representation in general (representatio). Under it stands the representation with consciousness (perceptio). A perception that refers to the subject as a modification of its state is a sensation (sensatio); an objective perception is a cognition (cognitio). The latter is either an intuition or a concept (intuitus vel conceptus). The former is immediately related to the object and is singular; the latter is mediate, by means of a mark, which can be common to several things. A concept is either an empirical or a pure concept, and the pure concept, insofar as it has its origin solely in the understanding (not in a pure image of sensibility), is called notio. A concept made up of notions, which goes beyond the possibility of experience, is an idea or a concept of reason. Anyone who has become accustomed to this distinction must find it unbearable to hear a representation of the colour red called an idea. It is not even to be called a notion (a concept of the understanding).¹

Kant’s theory of symbolic representation depends, at its core, on the possibility of an analogical inference² made from a conceptualised

¹A319-20/B376-7. In the last two sentences Kant is referring to the British Empiricists; particularly Locke.

² Of course one typically will not perform this inference, although the informal validity of such an inference is implied by the possibility of employing symbols as if they were analogous to the idea/s they supposedly
empirical intuition that is, as such, an objective, immediate, direct perception, and a singular representation, to an idea, that is, as such, subjective, mediate, indirectly applicable to experience, and a universal representation. Explaining how such an analogical inference is possible will require us speaking to the second concern above, so we ask: “How does symbolic representation allow for the encompassment of material apparently external to reason (intuitively represented/-able individuals) to be taken as analogous to material internal to reason (ideas in their guise as universal, subjectively valid maxims of pure reason)?”

We do well to commence our argument by acknowledging Kant’s insistence in the Groundwork that examples cannot, on their own, ground morality:

one [could not] give worse advice to morality than by wanting to derive it from examples. For, every example of it represented to me must itself first be appraised in accordance with principles of morality, as to whether it is also worthy to serve as an original example, that is, as a model; it can by no means authoritatively provide the concept of morality.¹

¹Kant (1996c, 4:408, 63); my emphasis. He says a few pages later that “the question of how the imperative of morality is possible is undoubtedly the only one needing a solution, since it is in no way hypothetical and the objectively represented necessity can therefore not be based on any presupposition, as in the case of hypothetical imperatives. Only we must never leave out of account, here, that it cannot be made out by means of any example, and so empirically, whether there is any such imperative at all, but it is rather to be feared that all imperatives which seem to be categorical may yet in some hidden way be hypothetical.” (4:419, 71) Note the use of the word “model”(Vorbild).

With this same goal in mind, Kant provides an explanation of the “typic of pure practical judgment” to guard against “empiricism of practical reason” in Kant (1996b, 5:70, 197). In that context Kant is effectively anticipating an objection to utilitarianism on the grounds that the empirical phenomenon of happiness cannot be one’s sole guide in moral judgment: “empiricism…destroys at its roots the morality of dispositions…and substitutes for it something quite different, namely in place of duty an empirical interest, with which the inclinations generally are secretly leagued” (5:71, 197).
Bear in mind that Kant’s theory of symbolic representation is concerned with the subjective conditions of morality, one branch of which is the impure, empirical part of ethics known as moral psychology.\textsuperscript{1} It is also helpful to recall that Kant’s moral psychology is an element in his general theory of intentionality: it addresses the question of what the conditions of the possibility of the rational mind standing in a relation to the moral law are. The specific issue in this domain that is addressed by Kant’s theory of symbolic representation is as to what conditions there might be for (intuitively) apprehending acts, and comprehending them (with understanding), that are in accord with the moral law in actual cases. Clearly, understanding the moral law and being able to apply it are theoretically but not practically distinct abilities. In his moral psychology Kant’s concern is with the latter, insofar as such a theory must expound a “method of founding and cultivating genuine moral dispositions.”\textsuperscript{2}

We are now in a position to formulate the basic question to be directed at Kant’s theory of symbolism: “If one cannot derive morality from examples, what role can examples play in determining moral conduct?” There is no doubt that at the level of ordinary moralising such an activity takes place; what then are the conditions of its possibility? Note that this is precisely the way to formulate a Kantian transcendental question. Seeing this brings to one’s attention that Kant’s philosophical modesty is peculiar yet profound, insofar as he is concerned to defend the idea of a “common human reason”\textsuperscript{3}.

\textsuperscript{1}Louden (2000, 11) notes that even much of the \textit{Groundwork} failed to restrict itself to the rigorously “pure” elements of ethics, for Kant recognised very well that since morality and ethics are intrinsically connected with the actual actions of rational creatures they could never be conceived by us without examples. Kant says in the \textit{Collins Lectures}, the study of “practical philosophy without anthropology, or without knowledge of the subject…is merely speculative, or an idea [\textit{eine Idea}]; the human being must therefore at least be studied later on.” (27:244; cited in Louden (2000, 18)).

\textsuperscript{2}Kant (1996b, 5:153, 262).

\textsuperscript{3}“Here it would be easy to show how common human reason, with this compass in hand, knows very well how to distinguish in every case that comes up what is good and what is evil, what is in conformity with duty or contrary to duty, if, without in the least teaching it anything new, we only, as did Socrates, make it attentive to its own principle; and that there is, accordingly, no need of science and philosophy to know what one has to do
In addressing this question of internality/externality to reason we are required to evaluate the third of the connected concepts mentioned at the start of this section: “analogy”. First, we must explain the nature of Kant’s appeal to analogy. As a preface, note Kant’s reference to the “inference of analogy” in the Jäschje Logic:

In proceeding from the particular to the general in order to draw general judgments from experience—hence not a priori ([but] empirically) general judgments—the power of judgment concludes either from many to all things of a kind or from many determinations and properties in which things of the same kind agree, to the others so far as they belong to the same principle. The first manner of concluding is called conclusion through induction, the second, conclusion by analogy.¹

And in the relevant portions of his notes to this Kant writes:

In the conclusion by analogy...only identity of the ground (par ratio) is required. By analogy our conclusion only goes to rational inhabitants of the moon, not to men. Also one cannot conclude by analogy beyond the tertium comparationis...Every syllogism must yield necessity. Induction and analogy are therefore no syllogisms but only logical presumptions or empirical conclusions²...The said conclusions of judgment are useful and indispensable to the expansion in order to be honest and good, and even wise and virtuous.” Kant (1996c, 4:404, 58; cf. 4:405, 60).

Cf. his comments regarding the presumptuousness of providing concrete duties in a moral theory: “A reviewer who wanted to say something censuring this work [the 2nd Critique] hit the mark better than he himself may have intended when he said that no new principle of morality is set forth in it but only a new formula. But who would even want to introduce a new principle of all morality and, as it were, first invent it? Just as if, before him, the world has been ignorant of what duty is or in thoroughgoing error about it. But whoever knows what a formula means to a mathematician, which determines quite precisely what is to be done to solve a problem and does not let him miss it, will not take the formula that does this with respect to all duty in general as something that is insignificant and to be dispensed with.” (Kant (1996b, 5:9, 143))

¹ Kant (1974, §84).

² Notice Kant denies that analogical inferences can be instanced in syllogisms, simply because syllogisms are by definition valid, and analogical inferences are not valid. Cf. Hegel’s account of the syllogism of analogy in (1969, 692-695).
of our experiential cognition. Since, however, they give only empirical certainty, we must avail ourselves of them with care and caution.

The relevance of this passage rests on the fact that Kant is here claiming the import of analogical inferences is restricted to the “expansion of our experiential cognition”: such inferences “give only empirical certainty”, by which it can be taken to mean that their validity depends on the goodness of an inference from two (or more) objects having (some of) the same “determinations and properties” to these two (or more) objects being of a same kind.\(^1\)

Kant denies us transcendental knowledge of natural kinds (we have only “empirical certainty”), but insists we may be possessed of transcendental knowledge of the most general features of the “world of sense”.\(^2\) Our employment of analogical inferences therefore affords us reflective generalisations in an analogous way to that in which the pure concepts of reason do by directing us to unify and systematise judgments enacted by the understanding in its cooperation with sensibility. And of course, the judgments to which one infers by analogy are reflective judgments, as opposed to determinative judgments: they involve adducing a general concept which subsumes the object, rather than predicating a general concept of a particular object, where this implies the general concept picks out a perceived mark (Kant’s sensationalist account of concepts—his peculiar brand of phenomenalism—commits him to a strong distinction between perceived and unperceived properties of objects). The relevance of the fact that this is the case with aesthetic judgments will also emerge below.

In any case, it is more proper to say that the unification and systematisation of our knowledge of the empirical world of sense necessarily involves analogical inferences: where we cannot claim knowledge of natural kinds we are forced to systematise and unify our judgments about those empirical phenomena which we take to be natural kinds. And we do this for the reason Kant mentions in the text above: “[T]he said conclusions of judgment are useful and indispensable to the expansion of our experiential cognition. “We might of course press Kant on how such judgments can have this

\(^1\) We must employ the indefinite article, since we are not claiming that two objects can be said to be the same in all relevant respects.

character if we must deny they provide us with knowledge of the things they refer to; one is tempted to argue that there is no relevant contrast here with a kind of knowledge, say, of the very idea of “matter”, that is of a higher standard than that.

There is a nice question to be asked here, as to whether Hegel is right to insist that we do have knowledge of natural kinds in a more demanding sense,¹ although we will bypass that in order to focus on the question of how distinct Kant’s sense of analogy in practical contexts is, in contrast with theoretical contexts; more importantly, we will ask how distinct it can be. As a preface to that, we examine a text from the Doctrine of Method. We therefore turn to Kant’s reference—in the context of his discussion entitled “On having an opinion, knowing, and believing”—to the possibility of claiming certain beliefs about attaining moral ends to be necessary:

Taking something to be true is an occurrence in our understanding that may rest on objective grounds, but that also requires subjective causes in the mind of him who judges. If it is valid for everyone merely as long as he has reason, then its ground is objectively sufficient, and in that case taking something to be true is called conviction. If it has its ground only in the particular constitution of the subject, then it is called persuasion²...Taking something to be true, or the subjective validity of judgment, has the following three stages in relation to conviction (which at the same time is valid objectively): having an opinion, believing, and knowing.³

With reference to believing, he says

Only in a practical relation, however, can taking something that is theoretically insufficient to be true be called believing. This practical aim is either that of skill or of morality, the former for arbitrary and contingent ends, the latter, however, for absolutely necessary ends. Once an end is proposed, then the conditions for attaining it are hypothetically necessary. This necessity is subjectively but still only comparatively sufficient if I do not know of any other conditions at all under which the end could be attained; but it is sufficient absolutely and for everyone if I know with certainty that no one else can know of any other conditions that lead to the proposed end. In the first case my presupposition and taking certain conditions to be true is a

¹ This issue is treated in Kreines’s work, as cited above. See Stern (2009a) for a stronger reading of Hegel.
²A820/B848.
³A822/B850.
merely contingent belief, in the second case, however, it is a necessary belief.\textsuperscript{1}

When reading the first sentence of this passage, one should bear in mind the guiding role of examples in moral matters. Taken in this connection, and recalling Kant’s words about the danger of “deriving” morality from examples (a guise which symbolic representation takes), several things can be suggested:

(1) Moral ends are “absolutely necessary”, yet the “conditions for attaining them” can \textit{initially} only be claimed to be “hypothetically necessary”—that is, until one knows that these means are themselves the necessary means (read: practically best) to the necessary moral end in question. (Recall that for Kant moral imperatives are never hypothetical, but rather always categorical; what is hypothetical, at least in the initial stage of moral reasoning, is the appeal to the symbolic value of an exemplary action for the guidance of moral behaviour. According to the interpretation currently being recommended, in employing a symbol of a moral action we first hypothesise that the moral action satisfies the moral law, then determine that no other way of following the moral law is possible via confirmation that no-one could know of any other way of satisfying it (internal limits on practical reason).)

(2) The proper characterisation of the necessity of such conditions can be altered from “subjectively, and comparatively sufficient” to “absolutely sufficient” when it is determined \textit{to a certainty} that “no one else can know of any other conditions that lead to the proposed end.”

(3) Kant is therefore claiming that it is essential, in moral conduct where “absolutely necessary ends” are being considered, that one can determine \textit{to a certainty} that no other alternative means to a necessary end could be known. That no other means to a necessary end could be known is a necessary condition of the possibility that “my presupposition and taking certain conditions to be true” is a “necessary belief”.

(4) Establishment of necessary and sufficient conditions for attaining moral ends, qua necessary, requires that one determine that no alternative to the one being considered be knowable.

\textsuperscript{1}A824/B852.
(5) That establishing “my presupposition” and “my taking certain conditions to be true” as “necessary beliefs” requires that “no one else can know of any other conditions that lead to the proposed end”, demonstrates that practical rationality is conditioned by certain epistemic limits; that is, limited by theoretical as well as practical knowledge. Practical rationality is therefore conditioned in a manner unlike theoretical rationality, where the normativity operative in the latter involves not only what people can know, but what, transcendent of rationally guided epistemic goals, there is to be known.¹ For rationally guided epistemic goals do not, as Kant saw very clearly, need to specify the details of what will be known (in one respect this would result in an absurdity, and is moreover the ruse of an iguana ratio (lazy reason)² which fails to envision the nature of empirical inquiry correctly), but rather only why one should go on to seek such details: Kant’s famous claim is that reason demands one unify and systematise one’s knowledge to a maximum.

Now, the crux of the matter, put crudely, is that the empirically real world is there to be known independently of reason’s interests, whereas reason’s interests do determine what practical demands there are to be fulfilled.³ The point is that one can say that in the practical context, unlike the theoretical, the very idea of there being demands that are unknowable in principle is incoherent.⁴ (This must be taken to

¹ Recall Kant’s remark about “ought”: “Ought’ expresses a kind of practical necessity and connection with grounds which is found nowhere else in whole of nature…When one has the course of nature alone before one’s eyes, ‘ought’ has no meaning whatsoever [ganz und gar keineBedeutung]” (A547/B576).
² A689/B717 & ff.
³ Although Kant is a transcendental idealist he does not make the outrageous claim that humans “construct” the knowable empirical world; rather, perceiving the empirically real has certain conditions of its possibility. This of course does not rule out there being unperceived but nevertheless existent states of the world which would be just as they are in absence of being perceived.
⁴ Cf.: “it is understanding, not conscience, which judges whether an action is in general right or wrong. And it is not absolutely necessary to know, of all possible actions, whether they are right or wrong. With respect to the action that I want to undertake, however, I must not only judge, and be of the opinion, that it is right; I must also be certain that it is. And this is a requirement of conscience to which is opposed probabilism, i.e., the
mean that we are never in a position to know ahead of time what we have to find out about the world in order to have a perfect theory of it, except in the form of platitudinous generalities. This doesn’t mean we can’t know what additional information we would need to show a certain theory to be correct, but rather that we cannot know in advance what we would need to know in order to have the right theory: this would negate the very process of discovery through collection of evidence, since we would already be claiming to know that to which our hypothesis was to be applied and tested against; an absurdity.)

(6) There is another problem here, however, since one must contrast the demand of reason in both a theoretical and a practical context with the empirical actualisation of the demand. In theoretical contexts, the demand is to maximally systematise and unify one’s knowledge by employing the ideas of pure reason as guides for the formal use of reason in syllogisms of relation (categorical: subject and predicate; hypothetical: antecedens and consequens; disjunctive: community, reciprocity), and the actualisation of the demand is the actual judgings themselves; in practical contexts, the

principle that the mere opinion that an action may well be right is itself sufficient for undertaking it. – Conscience could also be defined as the moral faculty of judgment, passing judgment upon itself, except that this definition would be much in need of prior clarification of the concepts contained in it. Conscience does not pass judgment upon actions as cases that stand under the law, for this is what reason does so far as it is subjectively practical (whence the casusconscientiae and casuistry, as a kind of dialectic of conscience). Rather, here reason judges itself, whether it has actually undertaken, with all diligence, that examination of actions (whether they are right or wrong), and calls upon the human being himself to witness for or against himself whether this has taken place or not.” Kant (1996g, 6:186, 203). For a related discussion see “Casuistical questions” appended to “Article 1. On Killing Oneself”, in Kant (1996d, 6:423-424, 548).

1 Kant warns not only of a “lazy reason” but also a “perverted reason” (A692/B720), where the latter indulges in metaphysical speculation about the fundamental structure of transcendental reality. Such a reason is improperly scientific, since it claims to know before it can know and therefore negates the activity of properly scientific inquiry.

2 Here one must recall the possibility, signalled repeatedly by Sellars, of rendering “representation” as “represented” and “representing”, because a parallel distinction obtains between the content of a judgment (what is judged) and the act of judging itself. This is relevant when considering the
demand is to follow the moral law by bringing to bear unconditional imperatives on one’s conditioned circumstances, where such a demand is actualised through the modelling of one’s behaviour on certain symbolically represented/-able actions which would count as doing the morally best thing in the circumstances.¹

It is important to remind oneself at this point that Kant leaves it open how one is to determine or specify the content of an action. This is an important feature of his position that moreover harmonises with his defence of the idea of a “common human reason” which must, in accord with the philosophical modesty that Kant to his merit frequently demonstrates, be presumed to know its way about in its own domain; in fact, this is a presupposition of his transcendental philosophical method. And clearly, as Kant implies, determining the maxim of an action is not always a straightforward matter.

If the idea of a “common human reason” is sound and is to be employed, it must be admitted that “doing the right thing, given the circumstances” is something one comes to understand by having it brought to one’s attention that, in circumstances C, action A is the most rational (if moral: the best) of one’s options. Of course, one can only come to know this kind of thing by being in a situation with one’s fellows and having it pointed out that what so-and-so did was, or was not, the right thing to do. Here, as in the case of formation of empirical concepts by comparison, reflection, and abstraction, one abstracts the relevant universal character from the instance in question; unlike the case of empirical concepts, however, it is already rationally determined, to some extent, what the right thing to do is. Notice that abstracting from singular cases to derive universal concepts is an activity; there not being any pre-determined standard of correctness for this activity, namely one internal to reason. The latter claim is disputed by Hegel.

¹ He asks: “Is it murdering oneself to hurl oneself to certain death (like Curtius) in order to save one’s country?—or is deliberate martyrdom, sacrificing oneself for the good of all humanity, also to be considered an act of heroism?” Kant (1996d, 6:423, 548). The section from which this is cited, and which is entitled “Casuistical questions”, is appended to “Article 1. On Killing Oneself”. It includes some other interesting examples also.
Such practical necessity,¹ as just discussed, is to be contrasted with the theoretical status of “pragmatic beliefs”, where such items in one’s cognitive economy play the role they do in virtue of the connections they bear to already established knowledge (rather than mere belief).² In speaking to this point, Kant provides the example of diagnosis of an unknown medical condition:

The doctor must do something for a sick person who is in danger, but he does not know the illness. He looks to the symptoms, and judges, because he does not know of anything better, that it is consumption. His belief is merely contingent even in his own judgment; someone else might perhaps do better. I call such contingent beliefs, which however ground the actual use of the means to certain actions, pragmatic beliefs.³

In the context from which this remark is cited, Kant is telling us that there is a parallel to be drawn between the move involved with sound judgments about moral examples (and exemplars), and that involved with reasonable judgments about empirical facts. His point is that in practical cases it is enough that one can establish that “no one could know a better way of achieving a moral end, qua necessary”, whereas in the theoretical case, the possibility is left open that “someone else might perhaps do better”. And given the nature of empirical inquiry, inevitably somebody will. This seems to reflect the fact that the relevant empirical and practical knowledge in combination with sufficient rationality allows one to know what is morally (practically) necessary, whereas no amount of empirical knowledge combined with rational speculation allows one to know what is theoretically necessary in the empirical world, regarding the nature of empirical phenomena (excluding here the highly general analysis of matter that Kant offers in the Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science). Rather, according to Kant, we can only claim transcendental knowledge of necessity (of course, we may wish to

¹ One should here compare the statement of the “fundamental law of pure practical reason” as well as that of the “fact of reason” in Kant (1996b, 5:30-32, 164-165).
² Note that we are here talking about the contrast between “empirical knowledge” and “empirical belief”. This is clearly distinct from the transcendental knowledge which according to Kant we have, and of which knowledge of natural kinds and processes are not instances.
³ A824/B852. The italicisation is mine. As Menand (2001, 227) notes, Peirce employed this example of Kant’s in the same talk to the Metaphysical Club in which he “coined the term ‘pragmatism’”.

deny that there is a difference between knowledge of empirical
necessity and knowledge of transcendental necessity, insofar as we
reject the coherence of the latter).

On this point, note Kant’s remarks about our knowledge of
theoretical and practical necessity in the “Concluding Remark” from
the *Groundwork*:

The speculative use of reason with respect to nature leads to the
absolute necessity of some supreme cause of the world; the practical
use of reason with regard to freedom leads also to an absolute
necessity, but only of laws of actions of a rational being as such. Now,
it is an essential principle of every use of our reason to push its
cognition to consciousness of its necessity (for without this it would
not be cognition on the part of reason). It is, however, an equally
essential limitation of this same reason that it can see neither the
necessity of what is and what happens nor the necessity of what
ought to happen unless a condition under which it is and happens or
ought to happen is put at the basis of this. In this way, however, by
constant inquiry after the condition, the satisfaction of reason is only
further and further postponed. Hence it restlessly seeks the
unconditionally necessary and sees itself constrained to assume it
without any means of making it comprehensible.

And below this, the last sentence of the *Groundwork* reads:

thus we do not indeed comprehend the practical unconditional
necessity of the moral imperative, but we nevertheless comprehend
its incomprehensibility; and this is all that can fairly be required of a
philosophy that strives in its principles to the very boundary of
human reason.¹

One can make the point even sharper: Notice that the practical use
reason, conceived of as an idea, can be understood as unpackable into
the various forms of the Categorical Imperative. This itself goes
some way to showing the logical relationship of unity and being that
is at issue: the idea of pure practical reason unpacks into general
injunctions for perfect duties that follow from the Categorical
Imperative and these are particularised once additional relevant
information is added, and the precise maxim of an action rendered
specific enough to allow for it to conflict with other duties (issuing in
imperfect duties). In short, the idea of pure practical reason is the
unifying function of all the perfect and imperfect duties (which are

¹Kant (1996c, 4:463, 108).
expressed/represented) as judgments (and hence, as exercise of the *Vermögen zu urteilen*), much as the ideas of the *metaphysica specialis* Kant refers to in the Dialectic are systematic-unifying functions of the understanding’s use in experience (crucially, also as a *Vermögen zu urteilen*).

If this is sound, it is readily seen that the idea of pure reason in its practical use is the idea of there being certain *rational laws* for conduct; reason in its practical use is intrinsically connected with the specification of laws (and rules\(^1\)) for the behaviour of rational beings which may or may not be satisfied, depending on their ability to internalise the demands made upon them by those laws. Crucially, Kant sees the moral law as being analogous to a natural law, and upon this basis he makes a striking claim about what it means to envisage a moral world as being determined by the moral law, as through the wills of individuals who form the moral community Kant refers to as the “Kingdom of Ends”.

Kant here notes that moral maxims, the imperatives that contain a description of one’s action and thus also capture the situation of action if the description is appropriately detailed—as above “Do A!” or, “If in C, do A!”—have a *form* as well as a *matter*. He uses this contrast to explain why his three formulations of the Categorical Imperative are three versions of the same claim.\(^2\) Thus he says that (1) the “form” of a maxim is its universality, thus corresponding with what is often called the “Universal Law Formulation”; (2) that the “matter” of a maxim is “an end”, which is the rational being, which is for Kant “an end by its nature and hence an end in itself”, and which must moreover “in every maxim serve as the limiting condition of all merely relative and arbitrary ends”; finally, he offers a crucial explanation of how the Kingdom of Ends is to be envisaged; namely, as

*a complete determination* of all maxims...namely, that all maxims from one’s own lawgiving are to harmonise with a possible kingdom of ends as with a kingdom of nature. A progression takes place here,

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\(^1\) According to Kant, moral imperatives are categorical and therefore always have the status of *law*; non-moral employment of reason in its practical use is typically hypothetical and therefore involves *rules* for conduct: to judge well is to judge “thusly”.

\(^2\) The initial expression of the Categorical Imperative is in Kant (1996c, 4:421, 73). The Universal Law Formulation occurs at (4:421, 73), the “Humanity Formulation” at (4:429, 80), and the “Kingdom of Ends Formulation” at (4:433, 83).
as through the categories of *unity* of the form of the will (its universality), the *plurality* of the matter (of objects, i.e., of ends), and the *allness* or totality of the system of these.

And, to drive the point home, a footnote marked * reads:

*Teleology* considers nature as a kingdom of ends, *morals* considers a possible kingdom of ends as a kingdom of nature. In the former the kingdom of ends is a theoretical idea for explaining what exists. In the latter, it is a practical idea for the sake of bringing about in conformity with this very idea, that which does not exist but which can become real by means of our conduct.¹

The key point is that it is our moral vocation to bring about such a state of the world,² although given our finite, conditioned nature, and the empirically real self of appearance, we cannot within experience expect to encounter such a state of affairs; hence Kant’s requirement for his practical metaphysics that we envisage ourselves as an immortal soul that has infinite time to perfect itself and bring its actions into harmony with the divine will of “God”. We discuss the details involved in §VI.

Given the centrality of the point, we must ask: “What is involved with conceiving of the moral law as analogous to a natural law?” A clear way to envisage this is in terms of the moral law describing the actual actions of beings in a Kingdom of Ends, just as natural laws describe the actual (from which we can infer possible) behaviour of natural objects.³ One can therefore think of the vision of a Kingdom

² Note how Kant expresses this point in a slightly different context: “No rational principle prescribes specifically how far one should go in cultivating one’s capacities (in enlarging or correcting one’s capacity for understanding, i.e., in acquiring knowledge or skill). Then too, the different situations in which human beings, may find themselves make a human being’s choice of the occupation for which he should cultivate his talents very much a matter for him to decide as he chooses. – With regard to natural perfection, accordingly, there is no law of reason for actions but only a law for maxims of actions, which runs as follows: ‘Cultivate your powers of mind and body so that they are fit to realise any ends you might encounter,’ however uncertain you are which of them could sometime become yours.” (Kant (1996d, 6:392, 523))
³ Cf.: “moral laws... require a power of judgment sharpened by experience” (Kant (1996c, 4:389, 45)) and “the concept of freedom should make the end that is imposed by its laws real in the sensible world.” (Kant (2000, 5:176, 63)). These remarks signal Kant’s view of some of the
of Ends as that of a set of phenomena—the moral actions of rational beings—behaving in accordance with rational laws. This model, conceived of as an image of a particular action, or a series of images of particular actions, then serves to guide judgment as to what kinds of actions one should perform in order to bring it about that the group of phenomena (the moral actions of the rational beings in question in a particular circumstance) bears a close resemblance to what is demanded by the moral law. That is: what one ought to do to bring this about.

We can illuminate this by considering a common contrast. In contemporary philosophy a distinction is often drawn between descriptive and normative discourse, where the former is typically regarded as being articulated in terms of what “is”, the latter, involving reference to what ought to be. I will confine my comments here to the general orientation of Sellars’s Kantian views about natural laws. One of Sellars’s master thoughts is that the standard conception of this division between descriptive and non-descriptive discourse is ill-conceived. He emphasises the fact that statements of empirical laws do indeed have a normative flavour; and not only, qua linguistic, are they just trivially governed by norms; they also contain a claim about how the world ought to be if they are true. Crucially, failing transcendental realism, even natural laws will never get beyond the ought to be character attributed to moral imperatives.

Thus we can take Kant to be inviting us to envisage how the world would be were the action under consideration a member of a class of actions all governed by the same universal law; Kant is inviting us to envisage certain parts of the world as governed by rational laws by analogy with the way empirical phenomena are

requirements of the empirical part of moral philosophy; he says in the *Groundwork* that this concern is “for the will of the human being insofar as it is affected by nature” (4:387, 43). Louden takes this to commit Kant to a “weak naturalism” (2000, 8).

It is also noteworthy that Kant says that “it would not be a duty to aim at a certain effect of our will if this effect were not also possible in experience (whether it be thought as completed or as always approaching completion); and it is a theory of this kind only that is at issue in the present treatise.” (Kant (1996e)8:276-7, 280). This suggests the standard objection that Kant demands the impossible of rational beings is somewhat misguided; such a claim does not entail Kant’s theory of normativity is wholly sound, however.

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1 See, for example, Sellars (1958, see esp. §108).
governed by natural laws. And not only this; he is also insisting that it is implied by the force of the moral law itself that we ought to do whatever it takes to bring this about.

The divergence from natural laws consists primarily in the fact that, thanks to his transcendental idealism, Kant is able to insist that the phenomenal world is articulated in a way entirely harmonious with the transcendental-logical structure of the understanding; namely, the terms in which it is describable derive from the logical functions of judgment, the categories, and the synthetic a priori judgments which express the principles governing the physical world, qua phenomenal. Yet whilst the phenomenal is, for Kant, in some sense “rationally articulated”, insofar as acts of empirical judgment are guided by rational principles, it is not morally articulated; our representational capacities condition the possibility of our representations and acts of representings, yet since such representational capacities are non-moral (even if reason in theoretical contexts shares the moral of systematic unity as much as it does in practical contexts, reason does not itself constitute a representational capacity: only sensibility and the understanding are faculties of representation in the sense intended here), we can never claim to discover instances of the actual moral law in the empirical world.

We have noted that it is a condition of the possibility of this demand that (1) the unconditional demands of the moral law are represented in intuitional form in experience as conditioned symbols of moral behaviour, which rational subjects can attempt to emulate in order to approximate to the unconditional moral law. (It being crucial here that symbolic representations—qua imagistic—can always be determined further.)

Compare reason in its theoretical use. Kant provides no strict equivalent, although as a parallel we can conceive of the need to cultivate sound judgment in those to whom it did not come readily or naturally. Note that whilst such a point speaks to the act of judging, the same point stands for reason since presumably it takes either a sound mind or sound training, or both, to see that one should “unify and systematise” one’s thinking. And this need be no more nor no less demanding than simply, and initially, making one’s judgments in their form as both beliefs and as knowledge consistent.

There is a further demand, however, which follows from Kant’s claim that the Kingdom of Ends is formed as an intelligible idea by analogy with a Kingdom of Nature: (2) the moral character of the human being being refined by the aesthetic experience of the
beautiful\(^1\) as well as by commonplace moral instruction (the second of which does not require further analysis here), and then this moral character being prepared further through the experience of the sublime,\(^2\) where the latter issues in a feeling of simultaneous humiliation and elevation: the structurally similar feeling experienced when confronted with the moral law. Thus we are led to briefly consider Kant’s view of the moral character of the “finite” human, insofar as it shapes his theory of symbolic representation.\(^3\)

Kant’s discussion in the “Analytic of the Sublime” involves an appeal to the feeling of “awe”, experienced in face of the sublime, that is structurally similar to that experienced when one stands in a relation to the moral law. That structure is the two-tiered feeling of simultaneous “humiliation” and “elevation”.\(^4\) Confrontation with the

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\(^1\) Kant (2000, §60): “the true propaedeutic for the grounding of taste is the development of moral ideas and the cultivation of the moral feeling; for only when sensibility is brought into accord with this can genuine taste assume a determinate, unalterable form.” Cf. §42 “On the intellectual interest in the beautiful”.

\(^2\) Kant (2000, §29): “The disposition of the mind to the feeling of the sublime requires its receptivity to ideas…it is a dominion that reason exercises over sensibility only in order to enlarge it in a way suitable for its own proper domain (the practical) and to allow it to look out upon the infinite which for sensibility is an abyss...The beautiful prepares us to love something, even nature, without interest; the sublime, to esteem it, even contrary to our (sensible) interest...the intellectual, intrinsically purposive (moral) good, judged aesthetically, must not be represented so much as beautiful as sublime, so that it arouses more the feeling of respect (which scorns charm) than that of love and intimate affection, since human nature does not agree with that good of its own accord, but only through the dominion that reason exercises over sensibility.”

\(^3\) Cf. Guyer (1990a, 35). Louden (2000, 114 & ff.) discusses the “epistemological” dimension of the connection between the moral and the aesthetic.

\(^4\) Kant (2000) says that beauty and sublimity “are aesthetic modes of representation that we would never come across in ourselves if we were merely pure intelligences (or even if we were to transfer ourselves in thought into this quality)” (5:271, 153; cf. 5:233, 117). Louden (2000, 109) supports a reading of the 3rd Critique that employs it to illuminate Kant’s “impure ethics”.

Kant (1996d, 6:443, 564) words support this reading, where he speaks of a “feeling in [the human being]...which, though not of itself moral, is still a disposition of sensibility that greatly promotes morality or at least prepares the way for it: the disposition, namely, to love something (e.g.,
moral law issues in a subject being simultaneously humiliated by the impossible demand for perfection, and at the same time elevated by the possibility of moral improvement; an Augustinian rising out of the bonds of sensibility and servility to inclination. Note that Kant’s insistence that moral behaviour is always done from duty rather than inclination entails that “what one does”, or “what one might do” must always be at least assessed in light of the moral law, and more typically overcome and superseded by the commands that law issues.

In his discussion of the other aesthetic idea “beauty”, Kant claims such an experience can precipitate the cultivation of a moral character:

Beautiful arts and sciences, which by means of a universally communicable pleasure and an elegance and refinement make human beings, if not morally better [sittlich besser], at least better mannered for society, very much reduce the tyranny of sensible tendencies, and prepare humans for a sovereignty in which reason alone shall have power.¹

Note the distinct but related parallel Kant insists upon here between the possibility of a common emotive response and the responsiveness to rational demands. His famous defence of the quasi-objective character of aesthetic judgments depends on precisely this point: the appeal to a shared form of sensibility common to judging subjects with whom one engages in debate about aesthetic matters (sensus communis as discussed in §40 of the 3rd Critique). The basic claim is that just as reason embodies a certain standard, so too does feeling. In Louden’s words,

Aesthetic objects and experiences also make abstract moral ideas more tangible for human beings, and, precisely because we are at once both rational and animal beings (cf. 5:210), our mixed nature requires that we search for more palpable, concrete ways of representing moral ideas to ourselves.²

Thus, our capacity for recognition of ourselves as rational animals, that is, as bound by both the moral law (in the intelligible sense) as beautiful crystal formations, the indescribable beauty of plants) even apart from any intention to use it.”

²Louden (2000, 114). For a recent, systematic examination of Hegel’s critique of Kant’s formalism, see. For a development of this theme see Sedgwick (2012, Introduction, esp. 3-4 & ff)
well as natural laws (in the empirical sense), is a ground of our ability to manifest rational demands empirically. This is also a ground for our capacity for treating other rational beings in a way that respects their intelligible aspect, as the “Humanity Formulation” of the Categorical Imperative demands we do. (To treat other rational beings as mere appearances is to treat them as ordinary empirical objects that behave in accord with deterministic laws). Having acknowledged the importance of this point, we begin to see that reasoning itself requires us recognising other rational entities as the kinds of beings to whom we offer reasons, and from whom we also accept reasons. Thus we are forced to consider how rational demands can be understood as issuing not merely from an abstract moral law, but from the community of the Kingdom of Ends itself, in virtue of that community consisting of individuals who are able to will the maxims of their practical and theoretical judgments (how things ought to be and how they are) as universalisable; that is, as applicable to all other rational beings. We will come to a proper treatment of this in a moment (below in §III). First we must consider some additional points.

The parallel drawn by Kant between the moral law and natural laws reminds us of the fact that he envisages both as being governed by the same ideal (indeed, because reason is itself a unity). We saw in §II.i that Kant insists upon a schema for the ideas of pure reason in its theoretical use, where these ideas guide empirical knowledge to a maximally unified and systematised state through the joining of judgments in syllogistic inferences. Moreover, that it is their contribution to this end that justifies their employment. One must then raise the question: where does the idea of systematic unity come from? Indeed, what is the “idea” of “systematic unity”? It is true that Kant takes this idea for granted; it is fundamental to his philosophy. Yet since we are here committed to considering a Hegelian response we must be open to rethinking what it could mean. This response is not immediately forthcoming, however.

Consideration of Kant’s conception of the Kingdom of Ends reveals to us what “systematic unity” might mean in the moral sense: the actions of rational beings being in harmony with the moral law, qua basic rational law conduct. We can ask how coherent this idea is; we can also ask how useful it is as a demand.

Kant appeals to the real use of reason, which is the source of the transcendental ideas, and the formal use of reason, which is

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1For an excellent account of this theme see Henrich (1994).
actualised as the joining of judgments in syllogisms in order to systematise and unify our judgments about the world of sense. In accordance with his transcendental approach to philosophy, Kant does not allow for the principles of the framework of either moral action or possible experience to be counted as abstractions and generalisations from what one does, or what one knows, respectively. Such an allowance is part and parcel of the form of Lockean Empiricism, against which he is arguing. But one must nevertheless ask how the understanding might be understood to relate, to reason’s ability to form an idea of the soul, the world-whole, or God.

In the practical case, symbols allow unconditional demands for action to be represented as conditioned: as having empirical, intuitional content (objective reality). In the theoretical case one is only able to form the principle expressed by the following injunction: “seek to maximally unify and systematise one’s knowledge”. Now this general form, of the idea of reason in its theoretical use, certainly seems logically prior to, that is, to ground, the three transcendental ideas. Note we are not talking about temporal formation of the ideas. The point is that in the case of the practical use of reason one can form principles for action without yet knowing anything about their conditions of satisfaction, for this is the function of moral anthropology: to tell us how and under what conditions certain unconditional demands can be approximated to.

This is not the case with theoretical uses of reason. When Kant began the Transcendental Logic by saying that “although all cognition commences with experience, yet it does not on that account all arise from experience”,1 he was insisting that sensibility and the understanding have theoretically distinct roles in cognition, but also acknowledging that no cognition was possible prior to sensible affection. Reason does not strictly feature as an element of cognition, but rather of thinking; reason guides the actions of the understanding. Beyond this triviality of definition, Kant is committed to saying that regardless of what reason is it must be counted as coming on the scene, in the logical sense, after cognition has gotten going. Although Kant is committed to saying that the real use of reason directs the understanding’s making of judgments via the formal use of reason in its syllogising, one must ask how the transcendental ideas are able to connect up with the three important areas of the pure understanding’s function in delimiting the conditions of possible experience.

1 B1.
The question is how one can get from the idea of reason in its theoretical use to the three specific transcendental ideas without the pure understanding’s categorial framework of a possible experience (which again we must recall is inherently sensible). The problem is that the transition, or rather the grounding relation, is internal to reason itself: the real use of reason is meant to be the sole source of the transcendental ideas. But since the idea of reason in its theoretical use seems to express no more than the general idea behind the formal use of reason—“unify and systematise one’s judgments”—it is unclear whether the transcendental ideas follow from it without consideration of possible experience. And if the pure understanding and reason are connected at this level, then one must explain how and in what sense.

It is at this point that the deep importance of Kant’s theory of symbolic representation emerges. Given the foregoing discussions, it is clear that insofar as the faculties of the understanding and of reason interact an activity of symbolising must occur in empirical judgments insofar as such judgments presuppose, in the form of a principle, an idea of a world-whole to which they all belong (as a unity). This is, moreover, thought of as analogous to “God”, qua singular being (the distributive unity as the sensibilised omnitudo realitatis). Thus it is claimed that Kant was implicitly committed to allowing symbolic representation in theoretical uses of reason. And this can be taken as a consequence of, in addition, his recognition of the usefulness, albeit informal validity, of analogical reasoning about empirical matters. The key is that, given his empirical realism, Kant requires such analogical reasoning to play a central part in the improvement of the epistemic situation of human beings.

We are tempted to suppose this feature of human reason is also necessary, and not merely possible, because its limited character requires the kind of speculative assistance that symbolism and analogy supply. We will not comment further on this complication, although such a claim seems congenial to Kant’s thinking insofar as a scientific metaphysics makes claims about the necessary structure of reason itself.

This takes us quickly to the claim that Kant’s three transcendental ideas are related to the structure of regions of possible experience itself. That is to say, if reason in its theoretical use is to relate to possible experience at all, it must connect with the

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1 No extant works in English explore this possibility. There is one example in the German literature: Eichberger (1999).
transcendental logical structure that Kant argues for in the Transcendental Analytic, and in a way that ensures more than a non-contradictoriness in one’s set of judgments. More specifically, in actual cases, it must establish this connection by relating its guiding ideals to what is already known: it must model the empirical import of the ideas of theoretical reason on the phenomena they are meant to systematise and unify.

Here we say “empirical import of the ideas” because we cannot, after all, say that any such “modelling” involves the equation of the ideas with the models; rather, we must admit that we need to employ examples of what else we should look for in the world of sense to extend and improve empirical theories, and we can only do this on the basis of (1), what we know and, (2), the theoretical apparatus we employ (where (1) is available only within the purview of (2)). It is important that in attempting a clarification of Kant we do not radically violate his restriction against illusory transcendent metaphysics, for even if we disagree with him the present aim is to restate some of his claims such that they can be made more consistent.

Consider Kant’s remarks in the *Prolegomena* on this point:

we hold ourselves to this boundary if we limit our judgment merely to the relation that the world may have to a being whose concept itself lies outside all cognition that we can attain within the world. For we then do not attribute to the supreme being any of the properties in themselves by which we think the objects of experience, and we thereby avoid dogmatic anthropomorphism; but we attribute those properties, nonetheless, to the relation of this being to the world, and allow ourselves a symbolic anthropomorphism, which in fact concerns only language and not the object itself.¹

Kant here seems to be caught in an awkward position: he wants to insist that we can employ transcendental ideas symbolically such that we “attribute...properties”, presumably exemplified in a symbol, “to the relation of this [symbolised] being to the world”. This implies that the meaning of symbols, encountered in their guise as *objects of possible experience*, is determined by *the relation to that which they symbolise*, so symbolic representation of the supersensible represents *the relation* of the sensible to the supersensible. This is presumably what Kant means when he says symbolic representation

is “indirect”: symbols represent their relation to that which they symbolise.

This strikes one as odd, because ordinary concepts, unlike symbols, are usually understood to express the significance of *that which they refer to*, not *their relation to that which they refer to*. And, after all, the idea of something representing the relation of what it represents to the manner in which it is represented is not so perverse: symbolic representation exemplifies a mix of calculated rational and instinctive tendencies in a community and reveals part of the Not-Self that determines the Self.¹

That this has an air of mystery is no surprise: since we cannot know the supersensible we cannot know the relation it has to the sensible. Perhaps since we only have knowledge of our phenomenal selves, and not our noumenal selves, symbols should be taken to reveal some of our own ineffable character, and not merely the ineffable character of the idea of “God”. This is, of course, speculation, and is forbidden by Kant’s transcendental idealism. In any case, if symbolisation is to be contrasted with schematisation, and if the latter is to be identified with that which makes possible explicit claims about things whose concepts are schematised, it might be proper to construe the former as *demonstrating* paradigmatic (exemplary) instances of the concepts they express. In fact, this might be a way of recommending that schemata are the structures that allow one to *say* something, whereas symbols *show*: symbols reveal “reason’s interests” where what *ought to be* also *is*.

It is worth saying a little more about the idea of ineffability before moving on. Bielefeldt claims that Kant’s theory of symbolic representation and its role in practical philosophy provides a workable alternative to the libertarian uneasiness about normativity.

¹This suggestion is developed a little by Magnus’s (2001) Hegel. See §V.i. One of her basic contentions is that spirit’s determination by the symbolic is not a determination “from outside”, but rather, a self-determination by its “other”. I take it this is an appeal to a structurally similar idea: self-determination requires reference to what Kant refers to as the “noumenal self”, and even though Hegel rejects such a metaphysical view, he indeed retains the logical point that a dialectical self-othering process is involved with any determination whatsoever. In fact, this same process occurs in acts of knowing individual objects; a distinction is made between the object known and the subject knowing it, and then these are seen to be two poles of one the phenomenon of an instance of knowledge. Magnus takes her reading of Hegel on this count to save him from the criticisms of Derrida (1982).
This uneasiness can be captured best by thinking of it as a self-undermining attitude that assents to some set of normative propositions, whilst simultaneously denying that they need to be assented to by everybody, thus that they are not properly universal; further, that those who disagree with them need not be brought into agreement with oneself, this being more problematic in moral cases than in, say, aesthetic cases.

Bielefeldt suggests that, properly interpreted, Kant’s conception of symbolism is useful for understanding how one might, in a modern, individualist, secular society, retain a concrete connection with that to which one responds with normative considerations in mind. If this possibility is foregone, one might ask “What ought I to do?”, and lack examples which might be appealed to. I take it that part of the problem here is meant to be that the idea of “framework relative” truth (say, that is “phenomenal”, or of the “world of sense”), so easily concluded from Kant’s Copernican Revolution, leads quickly to anxieties about a whole gamut of relativisms, and that symbols unlike schematic “metarepresentations” can put a stop to this by providing concrete instances of what one’s “common reason” tells one what ought to be. That is, symbols are cases to which one points. Moreover, according to Bielefeldt, evincing one’s normative commitments by pointing to examples of what one thinks “ought to be” and “ought to be done” can allow for a “friendly irony” that simultaneously affirms one’s normative commitments as well as acknowledges the element of opacity in them: the moral law and the demands it makes on us are in a sense incapable of further analysis. This, I take it, impels many to nihilism.

It is interesting how from this opacity of the moral law some may infer its contingency, as if not being able to understand why reason has the power to command somehow undermined the fact that it ought to. Notoriously, Kant’s position is that moral demands have the force of necessity. However, the idea that the normative demands to which one responds, and for which one is partly responsible, involve either “opacity” or “contingency” allows one to

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1 Bielefeldt (2003, 3).
2 Note the different way in which this theme is developed by the Romantics.
3 On our comprehending the “incomprehensibility” of the moral law, see Kant (1996c, 4:463, 108).
4 Bielefeldt (2003, 5, cf. 32-33) comments on this theme: “human finiteness manifests itself in the fact that human beings cannot ultimately comprehend the unconditioned moral vocation under whose spell they find
acknowledge, in different ways, that one comes to have some certain set of attitudes about moral matters as a result of being born in a certain time and place, and that this heritage can seem puzzlingly contingent whilst simultaneously having a powerful shaping effect on one’s personal experience of the human condition. It seems fair to say that Kant’s analysis of morality, whatever else it may be, is a transcendental explanation of the conditions of the possibility of the experience of “necessary” moral demands by a rational being (here, specifically human).

We return now to the general question of the role of symbolism and analogy. In short, we must acknowledge that reason is employed in theoretical cases to unify and systematise thought and knowledge about such empirical phenomena, by connecting intuited images (models) of the known with the principle of systematic unity and thereby transforming their rational significance, in order to specify further connections one can and should make with other regions of known phenomena. This is, of course, a defeasible process involving hypothesis testing, but a Kantian philosophy of science insists that the structure of pure reason is such that connections are necessarily made in this way. In this context, it is useful to recall Kant’s characterisation of his metaphysics as that of an “a priori judging reason”.

themselves. Morality in general remains beyond the scope of both empirical demonstration and theoretical speculation. The unconditional “ought” inherent in moral consciousness reveals itself as a “fact of reason,” as Kant puts it. This “fact of reason” is the existential reality of the moral vocation, a reality of which we are certain in moral practice, even though we ultimately fail to comprehend (let alone prove) it in theory. We thus again confront the inextricable interconnectedness of the unconditioned and the conditioned. Practice and theory remain different, and practical and theoretical uses of reason can never be one and the same thing. It is only indirectly that they form a unity.” Most importantly, it is the unconditional demand of practical reason and, therefore, the transcendental condition of human freedom, which makes possible a critical metaphysics (9).

1Bielefeldt’s purpose in his book is “to show that Kant’s practical philosophy can help us to develop an appropriate language of liberal ethics in the broadest sense. What Kant offers is a highly sophisticated language that includes, among other things, the deliberate use of symbols, analogies and, at times, a friendly irony. Symbols, analogies, and irony can serve as a means of expressing indirectly those basic normative convictions that, at the same time, must be protected against the ever-lurking tendencies of authoritarian objectification.” (3)
Notoriously, Kant is claiming that although we cannot have metaphysical knowledge that outstrips possible experience, we can have metaphysical knowledge of the nature of reason, which in a sense is “beyond experience” proper. By this Kant means that we can know something about rational structure and rational limits, although we cannot know purely rational entities. Hegel has some sympathy with Kant’s revised conception of metaphysics, although he offers a radically different explanation and defence of what it might mean. One of his main objections to Kant’s Critical Philosophy is that such philosophy presupposes that reason has a certain structure, yet does not provide an adequate dialectical explanation of why it must in terms of how it must. We now discuss some of the Hegelian corrections of Kant in the context of evaluative reasoning.
III The encompassment of examples within evaluative reasoning

The claim to be argued further here is that, by Kant’s own lights, the unity of the understanding cannot be separated from the unity of reason; thus, conditions on the latter are conditions on the former, and reason itself is an implicit element in the conditions of the possibility of experience. We therefore arrive at a Hegelian confrontation with Kant, since Hegel laid a similar charge at Kant’s feet. The issue over which there is confrontation is the second concern we raised in the form of a question, near the commencement of §II.iii: “How does symbolic representation allow for the encompassment of material apparently external to reason (intuitively represented/able individuals) to be taken as analogical to material internal to reason (ideas in their guise as universal, subjectively valid maxims of pure reason)?”

As we noted in the earlier context, this question focuses the arguments of this chapter as a whole; it is moreover the theme which we will be extending and deepening in our direct discussion of Hegel.

First let us consider how the rightful distinction between two aspects of cognition, the capacity for receptivity through sensibility and the capacity for spontaneous conceptual activity through the understanding, led Kant to characterise cognitive representations themselves as having two aspects: the intuitive and the conceptual. Note that cognition depending upon two basic capacities does not entail it has two essential forms. Hegel is careful to note this point by offering in place of “receptivity” and “spontaneity” a distinction which allows for the penetration of the understanding’s content—and not merely its form—by reason. Hegel’s successor concepts would seem to be “immediacy” and “mediation”, respectively, yet these do not align with Kant’s distinction, since rational entities can appear in the role of “immediate” just as sensuous content can appear in the

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1 Hegel actually intimates a criticism similar to the one I’ve recommended here: “if the syllogism consists in the unity of the extremes being posited in it, and if, all the same, this unity is simply taken on the one hand as aparticular on its own, and on the other hand as a merely external relation, and non-unity is made the essential relationship of the syllogism, then the reason which constitutes the syllogism contributes nothing to rationality.” (1969, 665) He makes similar remarks in the introduction to the final section of The Subjective Logic, “The Idea”, of roughly this kind (Hegel (1969, 755-760)).
guise of “mediated”. In fact, the point that thought-entities do not in any straightforward sense have an intrinsically “immediate” or “mediated” quality is perhaps one of the keys to understanding what Hegel is up to at any given point in his dialectic.

In any case, the basic lesson is that the transformation of the content of the understanding’s judgments by reason turns out to depend upon the negative power of reason. On this Hegel says:

The understanding determines, and holds the determinations fixed; reason is negative and dialectical, because it resolves the determinations of the understanding into nothing; it is positive because it generates the universal and comprehends the particular therein. Just as the understanding is usually taken to be something separate from reason as such, so too dialectical reason is usually taken to be something distinct from positive reason. But reason in truth is spirit which is higher than either merely positive reason, or merely intuitive understanding. It is the negative, that which constitutes the quality alike of dialectical reason and of the understanding; it negates what is simple, thus positing the specific difference of the understanding; it equally resolves it and is thus dialectical.¹

The notorious difficulty for Kant is that of synthesising intuitions and concepts such that one can say by what right subjective conditions of thinking can have objective validity.² Hegel thought he was able to overcome the difficulty of explaining how rationally articulated thought, namely, that taking the form of a syllogism, could include a moment of singularity without resorting to the dualism between pure immediacy or givenness (on the side of “being”), and absolute conceptual mediation (on the side of “thought”).³

Hegel’s transformation of Kant’s intuition-concept distinction depends, however, on Fichte’s, which for its part involves a contrast between “feeling” and “concept”. This distinction between “feeling” and “concept” opened the way for Hegel to claim that the singular, particular, or universal character of a concept depended on its

¹Hegel (1969, 28).
²This phrasing is used in the Transcendental Deduction at A89-90/B122.
³That Kant is blocked from importing structures of syllogistic reasoning into his account of judgment by his intuition-concept distinction is mentioned by Redding (2003, 301). In that context it is also mentioned that Hegel’s rejection of the intuition-concept distinction allows him to adopt this strategy.
context of application. Note that this effectively restates Kant’s claim in the *Jäsche Logic*.

It is mere tautology to speak of general of common concepts, a mistake based on the wrong division of concepts into *general, particular, and singular*. Not the concepts themselves, only *their use* can be divided this way.¹

The additional novelty of Fichte’s account stems from his reference to “feeling” rather than “sensation”, where the former is meant to be entirely non-representational (as contrasted with Kantian intuitions, which are singular representations of phenomena). Fichte’s removal of Kant’s element of non-conceptuality from the realm of representation appears to have served as a signal to Hegel as to how to advance his own case.

The problem that remains is that of explaining the role singular representations have in judgments and syllogistic inferences; indeed, the question to be asked is how there can be such a thing as a normative constraint on the way sensible affections function in our cognition without it appearing as if cognitive conceptuality is imposed on merely “given” non-cognitive material. Hegel’s rejection of a separable intuitional form for cognition is of a piece with rejection of non-conceptual representations;² Hegel does not deny the existence and importance of feeling, although it is for him not the kind of “shape of consciousness” that can function to represent. Of course, it is not clear that Kant thinks intuitions can function to represent by themselves, when “represent” is taken in Kant’s usual sense, since we require concepts to knowingly stand in relation to some object.

An advantage of Hegel’s approach is that the realm of reason is not construed as distinct from things reasoned about, as the case apparently is in Kant. And this is because logical subjects of judgments are rendered fully in conceptual terms and able to become integrated into pieces of reasoning. Moreover, for Hegel syllogisms are the “truth” of the judgment; therefore the partially rational character of judgments and their terms are resolved in a more adequate way with no remainder: for Hegel there is no residual intuitional form which forbids reason from being “the certainty of consciousness that it is all reality”.³

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¹Kant (1974, §1).
²Yet cf. the discussion below in §§V-V.I of “shapes of consciousness”.
On this point, Redding refers to the way in which Hegel characterises a judgment about a house being “good”. Indeed, Hegel regarded evaluative judgments as “the most developed of judgment forms”, which, due to their evaluative character, are “contestable” and therefore lead to the “truth” of “the judgment” being claimed by Hegel to be “the syllogism”, since this latter form of rationality contains an explicit argumentative structure. In his discussion of this judgment Hegel says

\[ \text{this—the immediate singularity (Einzelheit)—house—the genus—being constituted thus and so—particularity—is good or bad.} \]

In his discussion of the evaluative dimension of perceptual judgment Redding draws a comparison between Aristotle’s second figure and Hegel’s third:

Aristotle’s second figure (i.e., Hegel’s third), designated “PUS”, is meant to be read:
\[ \text{UxP} \]
\[ \text{UxS} \]
\[ \text{PxS}. \]

And adds,

If we compare Hegel’s third figure to the pattern of the first, (UxP&PxS, “UxS”) from whence it has been generated, we will see that this is inference to the minor premise or the “case”.

Here Redding is establishing grounds for claiming there is a germ of inferentialist semantics in Kant by connecting Hegel’s and Peirce’s references to abduction and hypothetical reasoning to Kant’s inferences of analogy, which themselves involve an informally valid “inference to the minor premise”. His explanation of the logical

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2Redding (2007a, 181 & ff.).
4Redding (2003, 302).
5Redding (2003, 303).
6 The relevant Kantian example is that of the analogy drawn between the moon and the earth (where the moon is conceived in the example as “an earth”, as if the singular earth were a particular instantiation of a universal
character of abduction establishes it as resting on a form of analogical inference that is capable of generating hypotheses regarding properties a given phenomenon might have, on the basis of it possessing other properties. This structure is readily seen to be present also, at least implicitly, in the employment of symbolically represented ideas in moral judgment.

Hegel’s seems to view the forms of judgment in which evaluative terms “guide” inferences that may be made from them, as aesthetic ones. As Redding notes, Peirce took a similar view of the way abductive inference relates to “aestheticised” perceptual judgment. Here, “Hegel considers the explicitly evaluative ‘assertoric judgment’ in which universals such as ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘true’, ‘beautiful’, and so on, are predicated of some individual thing—his example is ‘this house is good’. The universals predicated of the subjects in such judgments are essentially what Kant treats as ‘ideas’, characterising not simply how the thing is but also how it ought to be, and while more general than judgments of beauty, such judgments for Hegel clearly refer back to Kant’s aesthetic judgments.”

Redding makes some further important comments on the connection between syllogistic reasoning and the employment of exemplars in aesthetic judgment. He notes that for Kant “there were no given rules for the application of the evaluative concept ‘beautiful’” and that “this seems to agree with the experience of aesthetic judging itself”. However, “abduction needs a rule”, even if the rule for the inference in question does not allow for that inference to be formally valid, and does not involve the move from the claim that an object has some determinate property, or is of a certain kind, to the claim that it has some other determinate property, or is of another kind. Thus it can be said that although aesthetic judgments are not governed by rules which dictate necessary and sufficient conditions, or make universal statements of the form “All Xs are beautiful”, they certainly are governed by a standard; aesthetic judgments are not subjective in the sense of being arbitrary. Importantly, rather than their being governed by perspicuous rules, as if this was ever the case with language anyhow, they are guided by reference to exemplary instances which have lived up to the standard being predicated in the judgment (i.e., “beautiful”).

whose properties could be regarded as a relevant model for other instances of such a kind.

1 See “Judgments of the Concept” in Hegel (1969, 657-663).
2 Redding (2003, 305). The emphases are mine.
The task required of a reasoner is that of convincing an interlocutor how a case being judged about somehow lives up to the same standard as an exemplary case, as in the case of an artwork said to be beautiful on the basis of it resembling some piece of classical art, for instance.

As Redding points out, such an analysis “seems to fit in with Hegel’s description of the universal ‘middle term’ of the ‘syllogism of analogy’ as an ‘essential universality’ within which ‘singularity and universality are immediately united’ rather than abstractly opposed”. The point is that the normativity operative in aesthetic judgments, like moral judgments, depends on the fact that certain perceptually discriminable features shared by certain objects can be grounds for claiming they ought to be categorised in the same way, in some relevant respect. This is obvious, yet the present point extends further.

Unlike in empirical judgments where one can in principle conclusively determine whether, to use Kant’s example, a certain set of symptoms is a sign of a certain disease, aesthetic judgments do not allow us to infer from the fact of an object having a certain empirical property to the determinate empirical fact of a certain object being beautiful. For Kant, we can at most reflectively characterise something as beautiful in a way that is determined by the non-cognitive feeling that arises in us as a result of being confronted with the object (we might also say “state of affairs”). And such reflective aesthetic classification rests on the possibility of reference to other cases where empirical objects occasion a certain structurally similar feeling that leads us to say things like: “That is beautiful”. Namely,

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1 Redding (2003, 306). The emphases are mine. There is a reference in this context to Hegel (1969, 693–694).

2 Redding refers to Kant’s view of the reflective characterisations involved with aesthetic judgment in the following way: “Kant is insistent that such inferences ‘are not functions of the determinative power of judgment…but rather of the reflective; hence they also do not determine the object, but only the mode of reflection concerning it, in order to attain its cognition’” (Kant 1992a, 625–626). In the Dohna-Wundlacken Logische notes that: “According to the inference by analogy, if 2 things agree under as many [determinations] as I have become acquainted with, then I infer that they agree also [in] the other [determinations]. I infer, then, from some determinations, which I cognize, that the others belong to the thing too. This is an inference of a provisional judgment. One reserves the right to change it.” Kant (1992a, 503) See Redding (2003, 308, n.2).
judging reflectively must in principle be an expression of a general capacity that can be actualised on other relevant occasions.

Employment of examples of moral behaviour involves a similar grouping principle, yet moral judgment is meant to be cognitive, since it involves the application of determinate concepts to appraised actions and events.¹ But if moral examples that are employed as symbolic representations of the idea of the good cannot be said to be fully determinate representations of “the good” (recall that symbols are “indirect” representations), then how can one claim that moral judgments are entirely cognitive? Is there not some non-cognitive dimension involved? Do our moral judgments not depend upon our ability to respond with feeling? Kant denies that inclination (feeling) is ever the ground of moral action, yet the presence of an approving attitude toward the moral law is surely a condition of acting morally (which is not to say that the moral law having the force it ought to depends on our liking it).² This sounds out of step with Kant’s official doctrine, since one cannot “opt out” of morality and one need not be inclined to act morally in order to be moral. This is beside the point, however. The idea is that whilst acting morally does not require one to experience morally commendable sensations, it does require one to endorse the moral law, in the sense of recognising its commands as ones to be followed.

This, it seems, is why determining a certain course of action to be moral requires comparing its structure (expressed by its maxim) with the structure (found in the maxim) of moral exemplars. If one’s

¹ There is a nice question as to whether it makes sense for events to be characterised as moral. In one sense we can say that to do so is to commit the error of anthropomorphisation; in another sense, we can say that it is better or worse that certain events happened, but this is only a moral appraisal if we can tie the event/s to actions performed. In other words, an attribution of responsibility is required to make the moral appraisal coherent.

² Of course, “approval” might be a totally inappropriate term here, since presumably, for Kant, the moral law does not depend on our approval in order to be the true ground of moral action; one might rather be humiliated and elevated by the moral law. The difficulty here stems partly from the fact that it is difficult to appreciate how one could assent to something without approving of it; this is the problem faced by the Humean when defending the notion of second-order desires. Kant’s point is simply that rational determination of the will occurs by one’s action being occasioned by a principle, rather than it being empirically determined by a desire. On this see Kant (1996b, "On the Principles of Pure Practical Reason", 5:19-41, 153-173, esp. 1. Definition & 2. Theorem I).
present course of action exemplifies a structurally relevant similarity with what the Categorical Imperative demands, say by respecting another rational being as an end in themselves in a complicated way that is not immediately obvious, then it can, for example, be regarded as moral; sometimes one needs to give quite a lot of information to determine exactly what moral worth an action has. Kant voices this concern in an admission from the *Metaphysics of Morals*, where the maxim of an action is noted as being not always perspicuous. That is, we can ask questions like:

> Is it murdering oneself to hurl oneself to certain death (like Curtius) in order to save one’s country?—or is deliberate martyrdom, sacrificing oneself for the good of all humanity, also to be considered an act of heroism?

This is now an important point that allows one to say that knowing what is the right thing to do requires knowing how to apply the demands of the moral law to one’s situation. And doing so is often not a straightforward matter. This is the reason finite human beings often need to guide their behaviour with moral examples: one can use cases of highly regarded moral behaviour as models. Such models have the normative function of signalling what actions count as good (in the case of exemplars, the “most good”, or the “morally best”), precisely because they are the paradigm of a (crucially, non-accidental) coincidence of the *is* and the *ought*: exemplars are cases where we say what *is so* is also what *ought to be*. Determining one’s future conduct morally therefore requires understanding what it is about exemplary cases of “doing the best thing in the circumstances” that makes them *exemplary*. And, importantly, this is determined by “common human reason”.

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1 Kant insists that “when moral worth is at issue, what counts is not actions, which one sees, but those inner principles of actions that one does not see.” (1996c, 4:407, 61-62) Cf. his remarks about reason being pure self-activity (4:452, 99).
2 Kant (1996d, 6:423, 548).
3 Of relevant consideration here is contemporary theory in the philosophy of action, two leading cases of which are Anscombe (1957/2000) and Davidson (1963).
4 One is struck by the difficulties that arise if it is admitted that patterns of reasoning about what is morally best are determined by social and historical context. Even if one elaborates upon this claim no further, and takes Hegel to endorse something like it, then a salient point of tension between him and Kant emerges: how can one assume there to be a
What we have said above regarding the determination of moral conduct implies that the maxim of an action can be somewhat indeterminate. It might seem erroneous to impute to Kant the thought that moral judgments are not fully determinate, because they are, unlike aesthetic judgments, cognitive. However, they are, like aesthetic judgments, evaluative; that is, normatively guided in a strong sense. Consider, however, the fact to which Kant assents, and which was adduced above: the maxim of an action is not always fully determinate. This means that not only is the "content" of the piece of moral behaviour being conceived symbolically not always fully determinate, but the action one is now performing does not have a fully determinate character either, unless one can say once one knows the proper maxim of the action the action is rendered determinate by its being known, but this introduces the complication that an action initially was not, rather than that it was not known as such. So not only are both terms of the relation of the analogy, when one makes an analogy between one's current action and a moral exemplar, indeterminate, but the idea to which one approximates with a symbol, is indeterminate also. This seems to make a mystery of Kant's account of moral judgment. What should one say in response to this difficulty?

It seems one fall back for Kant is the claim that the capacity for "sound judgment", either innate or acquired, is that which allows for the proper linkage between one's moral actions, symbolic examples, and the moral law, and that this is the ground of our ability to say certain actions are necessary and that one ought to perform them. But this appears to reduce the whole analysis to the concession that sociality alone determines the conditions of what can be deemed good. After all, how else could we come to learn the ways of proper judging?¹

With such a general conclusion Hegel would most likely have been satisfied; Kant, however, is in no position to grant such a concession.

¹ The alternative to "socially acquired" is "biologically innate". Clearly an appeal to the latter issues in what McDowell (1996) refers to as an "exculpation" rather than a justification, of the rational status of one's conduct.
For if socially determined standards of correctness were the grounds of determining what counted as “good”, the necessary form of the moral law would be reduced to the contingent content of the preferences of the community within which it was appealed to. Hegel’s position seems to be that although this may be approximately correct, this does not mean one can regard the normative standards of a community as merely contingent. Yet it is notoriously unclear how to explain that normative constraint is relative to historical and social contexts without abolishing the idea of something resembling a non-illusory standard altogether.

In a later work, Redding provides a hint; in speaking of the indeterminate nature of beauty, he claims that seeing beauty as a value rather than a property “brings it into the orbit of Fichte’s and Hegel’s treatment of recognition.” Thus, aesthetic judgments are more similar to acts of “Anerkennen” (recognition) than “Erkennen” (cognition). The basic idea is that in making an aesthetic judgment on is “recognising or acknowledging that it lives up to or exemplifies some norm much in the way in which my affective respectful response to another person’s action acknowledges that action as an expression of the moral law.”

Redding acknowledges that there are divergences between aesthetic and moral cases, although the key point here is that both kinds of judgment are meant to be disinterested. This point is captured best by Kant’s three injunctions in the Critique of the Power of Judgment: “(1) to think for oneself; (2) to think from the standpoint of everyone else; and (3) to think always consistently.”

The force of these rests on the fact that Kant seems to appeal to a parallel between the sensus communis and “common human reason (or understanding)”, where in both cases the task set for a rational being is to bring themselves into line with certain acceptable standards of aesthetic and moral appraisal.

The question one ought to raise is whether the separation of reason and feeling (qua sensation—which is, moreover, the “matter of appearance”) is absolute. On this point, one ought to compare Kant’s discussion of the aesthetic idea with the ideas of reason from §57 of the 3rd Critique. Kant posited an equivalent, at the level of sensibility, of that which he posited at the level of reason and his reason for keeping these separated from one another follows from his

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1 Redding (2007a, 180).
3 This phrase is in the title of §40 of the 3rd Critique.
4 Kant (1996c, 4:404, 58).
transcendental idealist thesis that appearances and things in themselves are radically distinct.

A more helpful way to make Kant’s point, from “Remark 1” to §57 of the 3rd Critique, that aesthetic ideas are “inexponible” and ideas of pure reason “indemonstrable”, would be to say that infima species, the representation of which Kantian intuitions are a paradigm, and the sumnum genus, which correlates with the ens realissimum, are not conceptually determinable. Rather, that conceptual activity is that which extends in two opposite directions, maximum specificity and maximum generality, without ever reaching a limit at either. If one puts the point this way one avoids the pitfalls of Kant’s transcendental idealism, whilst retaining one of its core insights. One problem is that Kant characterises the former (the aesthetic idea) as a “subjective” and the latter as “objective”. The arguments of this chapter are aimed at undermining the way Kant draws this distinction.

The conclusion of all this is that symbolically representable moral exemplars of “the good”, in cases of human moral action, can be instanced as place-fillers in judgments that fit into patterns of syllogistic reasoning, where an analogy is made between the action performed and what the moral law demands. Performances are appraised morally by (1) determining the action’s proper maxim, which is then, (2), compared with an example of what doing the right thing in the circumstances would involve, where in order for one’s action to be deemed moral it must share some relevant structural similarity with the example.

Note that this structural similarity will be present both at the level of the maxim (the description of the action), and, more interestingly, the action to be performed by the moral agent (the set of events in the empirically real that is described). This means that agents can be viewed empirically as being a physical part of an event and therefore be described in purely empirical, causal terms, yet at the same time be viewed in intelligible terms, as a self-determining moral agent acting in accordance with a practical law (the Categorical Imperative). Part of the difficulty, of which, as we noted above, Kant is aware, is that there is some ambiguity involved here, and this depends on the fact of the occasional obscurity of the connection between a physical action and its envisaged significance on both the part of the agent as well as those who judge their action.

1 Cf. Kant’s reference to “ideals of sensibility” at A570-571/B598-599.

2 Longuenesse (1995/2007, 180) discusses this general point, although her view is different.
Kant does insist that to properly understand the significance of an action one cannot make superficial judgments about empirical appearances, but rather seek to discover the agent’s reasons, which, qua reasons, issue from them qua rational agent.¹

Hegel’s point, according to Redding, seems to be that when one appraises something as having a certain character, i.e., “goodness”, one is claiming that it has this character on the basis of some empirical property. Moral and aesthetic cases essentially involve the reflective, evaluative classification of empirical matters. Yet Hegel makes a stronger point than this; he thinks that all judgments are like this, at a deep level only revealed through dialectical explication. Hegel regards evaluative judgment, the proper form of which he refers to in the *Science of Logic* as the “judgment of the concept”, as the most developed: it is the dialectical form that reveals the “truth” of judgment, prior to its explicitation in syllogistic form. This might be better put by saying that all judgment is evaluative, although oftentimes only covertly rather than explicitly so.

To connect this with Kant’s discussion of aesthetic judgment in §29 of the 3rd Critique, envisage Hegel as asking: “Why do we need to presume a distinction between “subjective” (agreeable), “subjective-objective” (beautiful), and “objective” (good) properties, as there is in Kant?” Indeed, Hegel does not separate “beauty” from “goodness”,² and in any case argues for a dialectical progression from “feeling”, to “representation”, and then to “thought”.

If one could understand Hegel’s response to this, one could also understand part of what Hegel is reacting to in Kant’s purportedly “subjective” idealism. This issue is that of how one ought to understand normative constraint. The general question: “Is determination of normative constraint a radically subjective matter based on projection of one’s preferences, or are normative appraisals anchored in their objects in some stronger sense?” Note how this question reflects the general concern of this chapter, as already noted: the question of how material apparently “external” to reason (symbolically represented individuals) can be judged as analogous to the transcendental ideas, which are “internal” to reason. We must now consider what Hegel means when he claims that the syllogism is the “truth” of the judgment, and how this explains the attitude just referred to.³

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¹ See 138, n.1 above.
² Redding (2007a, 182, n.18).
³ Cf. Hegel (1991b): “It is only when things are studied from the point of view of their kind, and as with necessity determined by the kind, that the
As Redding notes, Hegel views the subject term of an evaluative judgment of reflection not as a “mere singular” that has some “abstract universal” predicated of it. Rather, this is the case with the first shape of judgment in the dialectical progression: the judgment of existence. Instead, in judgments of reflection, the subject of the judgment “is now understood as instantiating some kind and determined by some defining power or disposition.” This means that it is understood “as standing in relation to something else”—such as the illness to be cured in the case of the ‘curative’ plant, for example—because such powers are expressed in the changes induced in other things with which they interact.

There is a further step here: once something is judged in terms of its capacity to induce some effect, “that in virtue of which” it has such an effect must be ascertained. Redding notes that satisfying this requirement would “be the task of specifying its ‘concept’.” This step completes the investigation, whose conclusion would be expressed in a structurally analogous way to this: “this plant, in virtue of its containing such and such a compound, is curative”. Such a statement lays out the implicitly syllogistic structure of such reflective judgments explicitly.

It is not necessary for present purposes to explain the details of the remainder of the dialectical progression in judgment, except to note that it is in the final shape, judgments of the concept, that the intersubjective dimension implicated in the establishment of objectivity, in its guise as normative constraint, emerges. It is a central theme in this intersubjective dimension that judgments of the concept allow for the subject term to include a demonstrative element, as expressed as, for example, “this house” or “this action”. This demonstrative element in the subject term is crucial for it enables the evaluative judgment to “be thought of as establishing a genuine cognitive relation to an independent object.” Yet because each subject who judges evaluatively will at least initially have an equal claim to correctness, such judgments are “subjective” and

\[\text{judgment first begins to be a true judgment (wahrhaft\textsuperscript{\textregistered}) (EL, 329; EnL, 242)}; \text{cited in Pippin (1989, 239). Cf.: “Truth is the agreement of the object with itself, i.e., with its Notion [Begriff].” (EL, 323; EnL, 237; Pippin (1989, 239))}\]

\[1\text{Hegel (1969, 630-643).}\]
\[2\text{Hegel (1969, 643-650).}\]
\[3\text{Redding (2007a, 182).}\]
\[4\text{Redding (2007a, 182).}\]
“problematic”.¹ It must therefore be shown how a further distinction can be drawn, within the process of reasoning itself, between that which is “external” to the conceptual realm (the object referred to demonstratively) and that which is “internal” (the concept predicated of the object).²

The key Hegelian move here, according to Redding, is that once one determines something as “external” to the concept (or, equivalently, to “reason”), one has determined it conceptually, or reasoned about it in some way. To reinvoke the role of demonstratives, Redding recalls Hegel’s dialectical breakdown of the structure of “Sense-Certainty” in Chapter 1 of the Phenomenology of Spirit: “An actual sense-certainty is not merely this pure immediacy, but an instance (or example [Beispiel]) of it”.³ This is to say that one cannot be confronted with a mere “this” in general, but always at least a “this such”, where the singular structure of the “this” can only be intelligible in terms of it having such-and-such a character. In a parallel way, “[I]n judgment, the concept is brought into relation to something singular and external, but singularity here must come to be understood as only an aspect (‘moment’) of a more coherent, organised, and hence, conceptualised world.” The question is then whether a “stronger conception of ‘externality’” is needed;⁴ Hegel appears to think not, at least not in the context of his discussion of Geist.⁵ In the Logic, at any rate, Hegel says:

The concept is the universal essence of a thing or a fact [Sache] withdrawn into itself, its negative unity with itself; this constitutes its subjectivity. But a thing is also essentially contingent and has an external constitution; this may equally be called the mere subjectivity of the thing in contrast to the other side, its objectivity...The thing itself is just this, that its concept, as the negative of itself, negates its universality and projects itself into the externality of individuality. The subject of the judgment is here posited as this duality; those opposite significations of subjectivity are, in accordance with their truth, brought into a unity.⁶

¹Redding (2007a, 184). Recall that problematic judgments correlate with Kant’s two categories of “possible” and “impossible”.
²Redding (2007a, 186).
³Hegel (1977b, §92); cited in Redding (2007a, 186).
⁴Redding (2007a, 187).
⁵There is, of course, a difference in the element of “absolute externality” in Hegel’s philosophy of nature.
⁶Hegel (1969, 661).
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This passage is another way of stating the point already made above: demonstrative reference to objects is a way of securing a connection between purported “externality to reason” and “internality to reason” (or, the concept), in such a way as to allow for the distinction between what is said (or thought) of something and that of which it is said (or thought) to be regarded as occurring within processes of reasoning themselves.¹ The basic point, again, is that the possibility of counter-assertions to one’s assertions is the basic feature of intersubjectively determined normative structure. In Redding’s words, “[W]ith the opposition of one assertion to another we are in the realm of Recognition interaction.”² The dialectical progression to the final judgment form, the apodictic, is now driven by the “contestation between apparently equally justified ‘problematic’ judgments”. In the apodictic judgment, the “claimant attempts to give a justification for the initial claim.”³ Of course, justifications can be either accepted or rejected, yet one’s status as a reasoner typically requires one to attempt to persuade those to whom one is providing the justification. Note how this parallels Kant’s account of aesthetic judgments of beauty in §40 of the 3rd Critique, where an appeal is made to the idea of a sensus communis.⁴

What is most interesting here is the parallel between the grounds of the appeal to agreement in aesthetic judgment, in Kant, and the grounds of the establishment of objectivity in the dialectic of judgment in Hegel. For Kant, one important condition of the possibility of agreements in subjective feeling (insofar as it is the

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¹ Cf. Evans (1982). This contrast is structurally identical to Strawson’s (1966/2006) interpretation of what the Transcendental Deduction offers: the idea of a subjective route through an objective world. The structure in the latter is the idea of there being subject-relative thoughts about things that exist independently of their being thought by the subject in question.

² Interpretations of Hegel that take Anerkennung to be the central concept of his philosophy are found in Williams (1992), Redding (1996).

³ Redding (2007a, 188).

⁴ Cf. Kant’s remarks about the analogy between physical and normative forces: “Thus, in analogy with the law of the equality of effect and counter-effect in the mutual attraction and repulsion of bodies, I can also conceive of the community of the members of a commonwealth in accordance with rules of justice, but I cannot transfer the specific determinations of the former (the material attraction and repulsion) to the latter and attribute them to the citizens in order to conceive of a system which is called a state.” (Kant (2000, 5:464-465, 329)). See also Kant (1996d, 6:232-233, 389) for a similar example.
basis for aesthetic judgment) is a shared a priori faculty of sensibility; for Hegel, “the ultimate ground of the judgment” is “the recognitive relation between subjects...their acknowledging each other as free in their conceptual capacities”.¹ Notice in both cases that whilst such judgments have a central “subjective” element, what occasions the judgments is something that can be properly regarded as “objective”: empirical properties of an object occasion certain feelings, and certain features of objects evaluated are the basis for claiming them to be better or worse, beautiful or ugly, good or bad, by some normative criterion (or some set of criteria).

The key is to recognise that, in Hegel’s view of the evaluative judgment, what occasions the judgments is within the purview of reason precisely because such things are referred to and judged about: the process of reasoning and the things reasoned about are properly conceived of as in harmony with one another. In his discussion of the judgment of the concept Hegel makes this point by saying that the subject and the predicate of the judgment are “adequate to one another”.²

Having made this claim, one is then led to the question of how it can be that certain properties or qualities come to be the ones upon which one’s judgment is based (one is not concerned merely with how one comes to have a certain “subjective” appreciation of those properties). It seems proper to say that the process of justification involved in evaluative judgment requires one to convince one’s interlocutors that such and such properties of the object in question are the ones they ought to be judging it on the basis of. In the example of a house, one might argue that a house having certain materials that allow it to be occupied with comfort, or being painted a certain colour that harmonises with its surroundings, are the

¹Redding (2007a, 189).
²Longuenesse (1992/2007) raises serious objections to Hegel’s claim regarding the “unity of thought and being”. It would be interesting to see McDowell’s reading of Hegel’s conception of reason extended to Hegel’s theory of judgment, since this would be an interesting angle on the apparent problem. One McDowellian thesis that could be developed by doing this is what I would refer to as the “Equipoise Thesis”: the idea that thought and being are “in equipoise” (see the papers in McDowell (2009). This should be understood as a way of thinking about reasoning as a process occurring in concrete communities of reasoners, rather than the absurd idea that “everything is always exactly the way we believe or judge it to be”.

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III ~ Examples and Evaluative Reasoning
Recollection of the essential role of symbolism and analogy in reasoning is crucial, because it signals to us how more than just the inferential practices of communities of reasoners determines the normative structure of such practices; it is clear that empirical properties of symbolic representations are also relevant to the functioning of such representations. This is evident in the fact that dis-analogy and mixed metaphor are both possible; it is also revealed in abductive reasoning, where an object possessing certain relevant empirical properties is oftentimes, and sometimes erroneously, taken to be a sign of it possessing certain other empirical properties.

The empirical likeness of both aesthetically appraised phenomena, as well as morally appraised phenomena, can often be grounds for grouping them together as satisfying some norm. The key point is that the belonging to the normatively determined category is something not decided entirely by the object’s or event’s empirical properties; belongingness to a normatively determined category is something to be decided upon by those collectively determining its worth. And it is a condition of the possibility of such a structure in rationality that symbols and analogies involves an element of indeterminacy, or, as contemporary philosophers would say “vagueness”.

The key is to understand how this vagueness is not debilitating of the ability to employ normative categories, but essential to them. After all, if one were to go on to search for additional instances of kinds that resembled in every respect the instances one knew, one would presumably be at a disadvantage; that is, at a loss when attempting to think coherently about the world (the inchoate plight of the nominalist). This feature of symbols is a further virtue by which they afford inexhaustible worth: one can derive significance from them in a way that is normatively constrained, yet to an indeterminate extent; the content of a symbol can never be fully and adequately captured with concepts (in their schematic uses). Of course, it is quite easy to formulate accidental dis-analogies by attempting to connect irrelevant features of symbols with what they symbolise, but again, the rational context within which the symbol is employed serves to constrain such possibilities and brings them into a reasonable level of agreement.

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1 See the discussion on Redding (2007a, 189-190) and the reference to McDowell (1979/1998).
Moreover, the centrality of symbolism and analogy in reasoning signals certain empirical constraints on rationality. Kant recognised that the application of pure practical reason to empirically bound action required a mediation by way of symbolic representation, yet we have seen that the point is far deeper: judgment in general requires appeal to things judged about, and our only route to discovering appropriate ways to judge kinds of things, as well as individuals as kinds of things, is by way of example. It seems fair to say that symbolic representation is essential to conceptual activity in both theoretical and practical cognition, that is, in empirical models and moral exemplars, respectively. Yet the nature of symbols—their empirical character as containing irrelevant features—also makes possible conceptual change. Thus, the condition of the possibility of conceptual activity—application of conceptual functions and rules to spatio-temporal empirical intuitions—is also the condition of the possibility of conceptual change. By this latter point it is meant that the structure of the free activity of judging itself leads, inevitably, to changes in rules by which judgments are made.

It is important to see that we speak of necessary rather than sufficient conditions of changes in judging. Quite clearly an empirical perspective of the rational judge is required to appreciate an actual change in judgmental activity, but once such a perspective is taken one can only have sufficient, rather than necessary conditions in view: one can only comprehend the presence of conditions that lead to actual changes in judging although one cannot say whether such changes were necessary or not.

What emerges at this level is an impetus for a view of judgmental activity that accounts for the free, rational self-determination of communities of individuals that are able to transform their usage of concepts in the way that symbolic and analogical cognition suggests is possible. Such a view, I suggest, whilst only implicit in Kant, is fully explicit in Hegel.

Our central task has so far been to determine is how symbolic representation is distinct from schematic representation. Kant thinks that symbols provide a guide for practical and aesthetic judgment, since he understands them to be embodied examples of ideas. Whilst ideas in theoretical reason play a regulative role in our thought—they are principles by which our reasoning practices are guided. Ideas in practical reason, however, have a quasi-constitutive role insofar as they are embodied in examples that serve as guides for our thought. One might say further that this constitutive function is enabled by the effect of the symbol on one’s moral character (one’s
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will). By saying that symbols “guide” our thinking in moral matters Kant must mean that symbols conclusively establish neither the exact nature of ideas, nor that they have been satisfied.

We must now ask: If ideas can be embodied in examples, for Kant, then how is this distinct from ideas simply having their life in examples? That is, existing only at the level of examples (yet admittedly all of the relevant ones)? After all, Kant’s claim is that ideas are actually abstract conceptions of the common principle discovered in examples. The question is what allows for the discovery of the common principle. Kant is always insisting upon the distinction between aggregates and unities and claiming that only in the latter case is the whole prior to the parts.¹ And this is the mark of a principle: in moral behaviour one subjugates one’s particular actions to the universal demands of the moral law (one “subsumes the particular under the universal”). In this sense the universal moral law, qua whole, is conceptually prior to the particular piece of moral behaviour, qua part.

Now although Kant warns against attempting to derive morality from examples, he does not argue convincingly enough against the possibility that idealised rational standards (crystallised in the form of ideal unities—“ideas”) might have their origins in actual patterns of normatively constrained behaviour, and that in virtue of this the connections between particular concrete actions and concrete phenomena might be clarified and thereby reflected at the level of the abstract. Note that this kind of derivation of ideals from the actual could occur in many different senses: historically across communities, genetically in individuals (but not necessarily so as to be understood in a reductive sense pertaining to mere natural signs; there might after all be “natural signs” that are only intelligible within an intersubjective context and which are therefore in principle irreducible), and so on. Even if the connection cannot be conclusively established, it certainly cannot be ruled out without thorough investigation.

Recall that the form of existence Kant is implicitly appealing to is the Neo-Platonic idea of “unity”; Kant’s problem is, however, that he refuses to grant sovereignty to the negativity of such a unity in the manner of Proclus and Hegel. Kant is of the opinion that only “being” rather than “unity” can truly be said to have “reality”, if “being” is

¹ Note in connection with this that an intuitive understanding is that which would reason from the whole to the parts because it knows the whole a discursive understanding reasons from the parts to the whole because it cannot know “the whole”. On this see Kant (2000, §77).
simply identified with that which is judged about positively in experience. His Platonism is therefore ambiguous and seems to serve little more than a pragmatic function, as was seen §II.ii.

Having recognised this, one sees a commonality between symbolic representation of ideas of reason in its practical use and the schema of the ideas of reason in its theoretical use. Yet in the former case the symbols have a “constitutive” role in our cognition because they have a causal effect on the will in functioning as guides; in the latter case, the schemata of the ideas of theoretical reason—let alone the ideas themselves: the soul, world-whole, and God—only play a “regulative “role in cognition because the idea itself does not strictly appear in theoretical cognition; rather, the idea provides a schema for grouping the understanding’s judgments and directing its future empirical inquiries.

It is notoriously unclear how exactly to spell out this idea of regulation beyond the forms of words already detailed: Kant’s employment of the concept of “regulative” constitutes an appeal to “guiding principles” that express “necessary maxims of reason”: a status granted to them in virtue of their claim to be necessary conditions of the possibility of maximally systematised, unified cognition. Perhaps one cannot clarify this further.

In any case, there is an additional problem one can raise here: How do we comprehend the embodied idea as an instantiation of the highest ideal of the rational framework which we take ourselves to employ in thinking? It seems that we must be already able to “think” the idea (to use a Kantian turn of phrase); we must already have a rule-governed process in mind in terms of which we can cognize moral or aesthetic phenomena in order to be able to recognise the embodied example of the idea as of the relevant kind. Genetic questions aside of how we come to employ the particular form of reasoning we do, we seem to be saddled with the problem of determining which comes first, (1), the embodied example of the idea, or (2), the highest rational ideal that prescribes a rule to which embodied examples must conform.

(1) is committed to an abstractionism, and the old dialectic of “sense” and “concept” is thereby set to play out—one that, if construed in the terms of the game played by classical empiricism, ends with an implausible semantic atomism that assumes an ability to derive meaningful content from single instances in absence of theoretical assumptions that themselves already colour the data in question; (2) needs to be elucidated carefully, in a manner that does not simply construe all possible data as—in the coherentist sense—
reflecting the rational demands of the conceptual framework in question. I take it that this dualistic picture is part of what Hegel seeks to avoid with his novel, “presuppositionless” dialectical approach. More specifically, by arguing from the very beginning, in the context of the emergence of linguistic consciousness, that reason—in its guise as the “intelligence” at the level of subjective spirit in the psychology of an individual subject—is at work in the lower levels of psychological phenomena such as “feeling” and “representation” (in addition to “thought”), Hegel is attempting to show how such a blunt distinction between “thought” and “being” is wrong-headed.

Kant’s way of including a “human”, or empirical dimension in the structure of our thought (in the guise of symbolic representation) is via his recognition that ethics and aesthetics are modes of judgment fundamentally dependent upon the peculiar character of humanity; in line with a more or less Aristotelian conception of humans as rational animals, Kant thinks of us as having both a sensuous side and a rational side; we share the sensuous side with mere nature and we share rationality with what was formally known as the Divine. On this latter point, it is noteworthy that such a way of splitting human nature becomes suspicious if we are denied knowledge of metaphysical entities of the kind formerly known as “God”. What sense, given this restriction, can we make of the claim that our rationality is that which is shared by a divine being?

Kant’s notorious rejection of knowledge in this area, in favour of faith, highlights his wish to replace the direct schematic representation of such metaphysical ideas with merely indirect “as-if” symbolic representation; although one cannot “know” of “God’s existence”, such existence is to be posited as “morally necessary”. Moreover, in moral action, whose aim is the highest good, one must think and act “as if” there were a perfect being for which the ideals of moral thinking were actual rather than merely possible.

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1 Recall Kant’s claim that we must view our reason as “only a weak copy” of a “highest reason” (A678/B706).
IV Symbols as a middling species of intuitive representation

It will be helpful to extend some of the insights gained through examination of Kant’s theory of symbolic representation, offered in the context of moral psychology, by considering how they might be applied to intentionality generally. We examine now the claim, therefore, to which we have merely hinted: whether and how symbolism may in fact be a feature of empirical cognition, made possible by practical concerns in theoretical uses of reason, rather than merely in practical uses in moral cognition. This consideration ought to serve as a way of giving content to Kant’s proclamation that reason functions generally under practical principles; that it is, at bottom, practical. This in any case ought to be said by Kant to follow from its lack of insight into the “inner nature” of things.

Our brief discussion is guided by attentiveness to a certain reading of Kantian empirical intuitions. Sellars referred to the “Janus-faced” character of such theoretical entities\(^1\) inasmuch as they were treated by Kant in two ways depending upon context: either as (1), the sensational matter of thought that is thoroughly non-conceptual, or (2) the basic, demonstrative, conceptual element of empirical cognition that is the paradigmatic instance of a word-world correspondence relation, and is instanced in judgment as a logical subject.

The basic argument goes like this. Consider an instance of an ordinary empirical concept. This instance of the concept can be regarded as a determination which applies to a determinable part of an intuition, e.g., one’s enjoyment of an intuition of an apple, which, as being of an apple, includes the application of the concept “apple”. Note that this usage of “determination” and “determinable” signals the fact that an act of predication has been made, where the predicate is considered to be a conceptual determination and the subject is that which is considered to be determined conceptually (we might suggest this is connected with a real distinction between acts and things acted upon). Thus, we impute to a Kantian position the claim that parts of whole intuitions—that to which “marks” are applied—are types of determinables for which there are determinates (or, determinate tokenings).

Although Kant does not say so, it seems there is profit to be gained from claiming that he was implicitly committed to two different types of logical form. First, the logical form of judgments in

\(^1\)Sellars (1967/1992, Chapter 1, I, §5 & ff.).
his transcendental logic is essentially Aristotelian; this can be gleaned from his table of categories, which entails that objective judgments have a substance-accident form (see his categories of relation corresponding to categorical judgments: “inherence” and “subsistence”; *substantia et accidens*). The second kind of logical form, required at the level of the transcendental unity of apperception, is not of this order; it is rather one of consistency, where in such a context one needs to be mindful that judgmental consistency is dependent also on the unity awarded by reason because reason is that which joins judgments in patterns of syllogistic reasoning. In the context of reasoning there is no question of categorial structure because objects of reason are not constrained by the categories, but rather sheer non-contradictoriness. This kind of logical form freed from ontological assumptions places all logical terms on a par: they become functions of the kind instanced in propositional logic.

If we can rest content with this suggestion it follows that from a Kantian perspective all empirical concepts are to be explained in terms of a family-member relation (determinables and their determinations), rather than a class-member or genus-species relation. Class-member relations belong to the realm of what is now termed mathematical or propositional logic, and genus-species relations belong to a theory of categories.\(^2\)

Now, it is true that since Kant offers a theory of reason inclusive of syllogistic he is at least implicitly committed to a theory of categorial structure, that is, the logical structure of empirical theories which involve the formulation of universal, law-like statements from which one infers particular facts, and that which moreover allows for the inference from one particular fact to another hypothetical one, on the basis of a law or rule. Such a theory is, however, distinct from Kant’s transcendental logic and his theory of empirical concept formation.

It is evident that since Kant holds a sensationalist view about empirical concepts, that they are only properly direct representations if there are sensational matters that correspond to them, he is then committed to the idea that the mereological parts of

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\(^1\)A80/B106.

\(^2\) I here refer to the idea of a taxonomical theory of categorial structure, rather than Kant’s epistemological theory of a priori categories. On the difference between Aristotle’s and Kant’s approaches to categories see Thompson (1983). The relevant literature on determinables and determinates is cited below in Chapter 3.
intuitions to which concepts refer, or, that on whose actual instantiation they depend for their truthful reference, admit of contrary predications. By this it is meant that the parts of whole intuitions of things to which concepts refer are themselves potential referents of logical subjects which admit of a certain range of predications. This range of predications is determined by the kind or type of the logical subject at play. In short, if one says that an apple is green one has ruled out that it is red, yellow, etc. And saying that an apple is green can be established as objectively true insofar as “apple” is a substance kind a concept for which has been formed by comparison, reflection, and abstraction; likewise, that “green” is a surface attribute of the substance whose spatio-temporal presence rules out the simultaneous spatio-temporal presence of other colours.

Let us consider the relation between the substantive “this apple” and the property “green”. Such concatenation is isomorphic to the relation between the Kantian categories of relation: “subsistence” (substantia) and “inherence” (accidens). For simplicity I will render these as “substance” and “accident”. The correlated judgments are categorical. Thus:

“Apple” stands to “green”
as
“Substance” stands to “accident”.

Note that this structure can be thought of as directly instantiated in the case of ordinary empirical intuitions, whereas symbolic representations can only be thought of as indirectly instantiating the structure of an idea, where the real use of reason is used by a rational judge as a guide for determining the validity of the judgment within which the symbol occurs. Of course, categories themselves are not encountered in experience, but represent a “unity of reflection on appearances”.¹ This raises anew our earlier question (from §II.i) of how distinct pure concepts of the understanding are from pure concepts of reason, yet in a moment we will see that Kant characterises the categories as themselves varieties of “symbolic language”. Importantly, both pure concepts of the understanding and pure concepts of reason bear analogical relations to empirical cognition.

The point is that although symbolic representations can be cognised in terms of their empirical properties and therefore

¹A310/B367.
understood in terms of their satisfying the logical functions of
judgment and the categories, their being cognised as a symbol
requires additional considerations: they must evaluable by reason as
a manifestation of reason. This raises the question of “internality”
and “externality” to reason.

The lesson is that Kant thinks symbols cannot be understood to
instantiate the properties they symbolise in the same way in which
schematised empirical concepts can. This is because particular
instances of schematised empirical concepts can be understood to
“directly” satisfy the necessary and sufficient conditions of the
application of the concept in question, whereas symbols are regarded
as symbols in virtue of the fact that they analogically (or,
“indirectly”) represent the structure of the idea which they
symbolise.

Thus, from the standpoint within which a moral agent is regarded
as merely intelligible, rather than in empirical terms, the thought of a
particular action in which a duty is fulfilled is noumenal insofar as
one cannot intuitively represent the demand of the moral law, and
thus its being empirically satisfied. Instead, judgment of the morality
of an agent’s action requires construction of an analogy between the
intuitive representation of a moral exemplar (i.e., Jesus) and the
example of action in question. Thus, analogies are formed as (1)
between intelligible principles (the moral law, in its guise as the
Categorical Imperative) and exemplars, as well as(2) between the
empirical properties of the exemplar (the best one can do in the
circumstances) and a common example of someone doing well, even if
not “the best as is empirically possible”. Presumably the task of
bringing about the Kingdom of Ends involves evaluation of
satisfaction on both levels, where comparison of moral actions with
moral exemplars is necessary only due to the limitations on the
soundness of individual subjects’ faculties of judgment.

Symbolisation consists in a property of the symbol standing to
something in an analogous way to that in which the idea it symbolises
stands to that thing. We can represent the same structure from
above in a practical case:

Moral perfection stands to the moral law (is demanded by,
satisfies)
as
Exemplary action stands to the circumstances/conditions of the
action (is demanded by, satisfies).
For Kant, objective, direct, cognitive representations (instances of empirical knowledge) that involve intuitive and conceptual elements are essentially synthetic constructions of sense-data ordered by rules. Indirect representations are cases of empirical cognition whose conceptual content has not been derived by comparison, reflection, and abstraction upon the sensory manifold, but rather instead formed by analogy with empirical concepts that have been formed this way. Kant makes this point in §59 of the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*:

To demonstrate the reality of our concepts, intuitions are always required. If they are empirical concepts, then the latter are called examples. If they are pure concepts of the understanding, then the latter are called schemata. But if one demands that the objective reality of the concepts of reason, i.e., of the ideas, be demonstrated, and moreover for the sake of theoretical cognition of them, then one desires something impossible, since no intuition adequate to them can be given at all.

Further:

All hypotyposis (presentation, *subjecto sub adspectum*), as making something sensible, is of one of two kinds: either schematic, where to a concept grasped by the understanding the corresponding intuition is given *a priori*; or symbolic, where to a concept which only reason can think, and to which no sensible intuition can be adequate, an intuition is attributed with which the power of judgment proceeds in a way merely analogous to that which it observes in schematization, i.e., it is merely the rule of this procedure, not of the intuition itself, and thus merely the form of the reflection, not the content, which corresponds to the concept.

Thus, the power of judgment is required to regulate the representation of symbols in accordance with a rule, where the “accordance with a rule” is understood in terms of the reflective function of judgment rather than the determinative; that is, in acts of finding concepts for objects, where the unity amongst symbolic representations consists in reflective unity: the same concepts and ideas are found to correspond to the symbolic representations in question. By contrast, determinative judgment consists in finding objects for concepts, with the implication that unity amongst determinations enacted in such a way would follow from the same acts of judgment being made with respect to the relevant objects. Viewed this way, determinative judgment and reflective judgment
mirror the notions of existence-as-*being* and existence-as-*unity*, respectively. Importantly, for Kant, only the former variety of judgment and form of existence is *given* in experience (to the extent that it has corresponding intuitional material).

Further on in §59 Kant admits that the role of symbolic representation and analogy requires “deeper investigation”, although he makes no attempt to contribute significantly to this end and insists that “this is not the place to dwell on it.” On the basis of his words in this context, however, I think one can infer that he was committed to admitting a much deeper role for symbolism and analogy in transcendental philosophy than could be gleaned from his broader program. Note the following:

Our language is full of such indirect presentations, in accordance with an analogy, where the expression does not contain the actual schema for the concept but only a symbol for reflection. Examples are the words *ground* (support, basis), *depend* (be held from above), *from which flow* (instead of follow), *substance* (as Locke expresses it: the bearer of accidents), and innumerable other nonschematic but symbolic hypotyposes and expressions for concepts not by means of direct intuition, but only in accordance with an analogy with it, i.e., the transportation of the reflection on one object of intuition to another, quite different concept, to which perhaps no one intuition can ever directly correspond.

Thus, because Kant admits that language is replete with symbolism he is committed to saying that much of what is judged involves analogical cognitions: many judgments can only be rendered true by demonstrating how a concept formed by analogy with an observational empirical concept stands in relation to something in the way the observational empirical concept stands to its relevant relatum.¹

Note also that since Kant includes one of his categories, “substance”, as a case of symbolic representation, and that if such a point is made by Kant about *one* of his categories it should be made about *all* of them, if he is to be consistent; that is, if they are to be on a par. This entails that when the categories are applied to experience

¹ §59: “the power of judgment performs a double task, first applying the concept of the object to a sensible intuition, and then, second, applying the mere rule of reflection on that intuition to an entirely different object, of which the first is only the symbol.”
they are symbolic representations;\(^1\) thus the only difference between the pure concepts of reason and the pure concepts of the understanding is that the former are formed by the understanding through reflection on appearances, and the latter have their source in the real use of reason, and are demanded to be employed as principles in formal uses of reason due to the systematic unity they bring to empirical cognition.

But is it not the case that pure concepts of the understanding also bring systematic unity to the manifold, yet at the level of individual judgments, rather than at the level of syllogisms of relation? As already noted, the distinction appears to be a distinction between unity that is found by reflection and unity that is sought by reason. Yet it is not clear that this distinction can coherently be maintained if unity “found” by the understanding is also “sought” by it in reflection, and also that unity “sought” by reason is also “found” in its real use—for if the transcendental ideas are not to be taken as “mere figments of the brain”, as Kant insist they aren’t, and that they are something above particular instances of syllogisms of relation functioning to achieve systematic unity for empirical cognition, then we must insist they are “found” in reason.

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\(^1\) It is crucial to separate the sheer transcendental-logical notion of a category from its application to experience; I take it this is a logical point about the necessity of separating acts of reflection from forms manifested in reflection (the categories).
V Hegel’s account of representation as a shape of consciousness

Hegel’s discussion of what he calls “representation” occurs within his treatment of “Psychology”. The wider context constitutes Subsection C, Section One of the *Encyclopedia Philosophy of Mind* and begins with reflections on the nature of such inquiry, before moving onto a discussion of the dialectical connection between various “shapes of consciousness”.¹ One of the key features of Hegel’s treatment of this topic is his focus on the role linguistic consciousness plays in an individual subject’s emergence as a free epistemic agent. One is inclined to presume a connection with moral agency in this context also, although I will not discuss that important topic.

This account of the emergence of linguistic consciousness details what in Hegel’s view are some of the complex conditions that make possible rationality, where Hegel here implicitly provides a way of overcoming the “Kantian Paradox”² that results from Kant’s statement of the “fact of reason”.³ Hegel’s resolution, as we will see, implicitly involves the argument that since a subject’s emergence as a free agent has linguistic conditions, and since linguistic capacities have social conditions, freedom is a social phenomenon.⁴

In §440 Hegel begins by telling us what he thinks the subject matter of the discipline is. According to him, psychology “studies the faculties or general modes of mental activity *qua* mental...apart both from the content,” which

on the phenomenal side is found in empirical ideation, in thinking [theoretical] and also in desire and will [practical]

And, also

²This is Terry Pinkard’s apt phrase.
³Kant (1996b, 5:30-32, 164-165).
⁴Cf. Hegel’s remark that the “principle of free mind is to make the merely given element (*das Seiende*) in consciousness into something mental (*Seelenhaftes*), and conversely to make what is mental into an objectivity.” (§440, Z.) On the connection between free moral agency and epistemic capacities note his remark: “theoretical mind as well as the practical mind still fall under the general range of Mind Subjective. They are not to be distinguished as active and passive” (§444).
from the two forms in which these modes exist, viz. in the soul as a physical mode, and consciousness itself as a separately existent object of that consciousness.

Three points must be noted. Firstly, by referring to “faculties or general modes of mental activity” Hegel is acknowledging that in speaking of operations of the mind (activity/acts) one must speak also of what makes that operation possible (faculties).\(^1\) This can be interpreted as a logical point about the unity of a certain capacity.

Secondly, by insisting that psychology is concerned with acts and not content, Hegel is making a useful distinction between the act of thinking and things thought about; thus “empirical ideation” should be interpreted as the manifestation in a subjective consciousness of thoughts and desires.

Thirdly, he indicates in this initial piece of text that the relation between psychological acts, the main of which he characterises as “sensation”, “intuition”, \(^2\) “representation”, and “thought”, is the point of interest for the psychologist. \(^3\)

\(^1\) deVries (1988) informs significantly the interpretation of Hegel’s “theory of mental activity” presented in this section.

\(^2\) Hegel seems to echo Kant when he says that the “content which is elevated to intuitions” is the mind’s sensations (1971, §440, 179). See A42-43/B59 for Kant’s remarks to the effect that sensation is the matter of empirical intuition; cf. also Kant’s remark that matter is “that in the appearance which corresponds to sensation” (A20/B34), where appearances are in intuitional form. The discussion below should illuminate how Hegel intended to improve on what he saw as the difficulties with Kant’s intuition/concept distinction.

The old riddle is: How can one acknowledge the ontological irreducibility of individual finite perspectives on the world (say, in a perceptually garnered visual image: an Anschauung), whilst acknowledging that cognition and thought must be ordered and expressible by general functions and rules, that is, by concepts? \(^3\)

\(^3\) Note Hegel’s cautioning against the idea that the relation between these shapes is “genetic” in the temporal sense: “The development here is not that of the individual (which has a certain anthropological character), where faculties and forces are regarded as successively emerging and presenting themselves in external existence—a series of steps, on the ascertainment of which there was for a long time laid great stress (by the system of Condillac), as if a conjectural natural emergence could exhibit the origin of these faculties and explain them.” (§442)

Thus one should not think of the conditions of rational self-consciousness in a way that allows for each moment of representation (“recollection”, “imagination”, “memory”) to be what it is in isolation from
Chapter Two: Metarepresentational Structure in Kant and Hegel

This last point merits a brief digression. Here, as in so many other places, Hegel tells us that “mind” is the “truth of soul and consciousness”. In the present context, he says that mind is an “elevation above nature and physical modes, and above the complication with an external object—in one word, above the material”; further, that “[A]ll it has now to do is to realise this notion of its freedom, and get rid of the form of immediacy with which it once more begins.”¹ He also tells us at the end of the “Psychology” section that “free mind is actual mind” and that this idea came into the world through Christianity; a perspective on humanity which sees “the individual as such” as having “infinite value as the object and aim of divine love, destined to live in absolute relation with God himself, and have God’s mind dwelling in him”.² These points should be borne in mind when considering the development involved with the shapes of consciousness mentioned above.³

Now, since mind is for Hegel the “truth” of the soul and consciousness, and since it is conceived of by him as having the array of progressively more complex shapes mentioned above, the most developed form of these, “thought”, must be taken to evince this character most adequately. Further, since mind essentially takes the world as its content, thought must be that shape that most adequately expresses the fact that minds and the world essentially stand in a relation to one another; one can say this is essential to having a mind at all.

Hegel does not rest content with this platitude, however; he says the “Idea” is the “unity of the Concept and objectivity” and the

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¹Hegel (1971, §440).
²Hegel (1971, §482). See also §481: “Actual free will is the unity of theoretical and practical mind; a free will, which realises its own freedom of will, now that the formalism, fortuitousness, and contractedness of the practical content up to this point have been superseded.”
³See §441, Z.: “The finitude of mind must not...be taken for something absolutely fixed, but must be recognised as a mode of the manifestation of mind which is nonetheless infinite according to its essence. This implies that finite mind is immediately a contradiction, an untruth, and at the same time is the process of ridding itself of this untruth. This struggling with the finite, the overcoming of limitation, constitutes the stamp of the divine in the human mind and forms a necessary stage of the eternal mind. Therefore to talk of the limitations of Reason is worse than it would be to talk about wooden iron.”
“congruence of the Concept and reality”. One way to interpret this view in the present context is that, given this thesis, and given that “thought” for Hegel is the most developed form of mind and that its most developed phenomenon is the Idea, the Idea should be taken to express in the most complete form what is involved with (1), a mind having thoughts about the world and (2), the world being something about which thoughts are had. The basic idea is essentially Kantian: the idea of “God” (Kant’s ens realissimum, Hegel’s Absolute Idea) is the form and content of a system: both rationally ordered knowledge and a law-governed world (at the level of both nature and spirit) has such a form.

Our present concern is with how Hegel sees representational shapes of consciousness as playing an integral part in there being such a thing as a perspectival take on a world from within that world. Put another way, Hegel’s insistence upon an ineliminable representational, symbolic element in consciousness is of a piece with his resistance to the idea that a Leibnizian divine script of clear and distinct ideas could on its own constitute a complete account of metaphysical reality; or, in his terms, the Absolute Idea. And this amounts to saying that finitude is irreducible and an essential moment of the infinite; thus that the idea of “God” includes that of individual human standpoints. Thus there is a sense in which Hegel’s view of the relation between the divine and human standpoints is closer to Leibniz’s than Kant’s, since Kant conceives of the two as

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2 I here ignore the fact that for both Kant and Hegel it is more proper to say that world is a whole the parts of which are thought about. This is another way of making the point from §II.ii: the sumnum genus does not have existence in the form of “being”, but rather that of “unity”.

3 See Leibniz (1982, Chapter xxix).

4 Note that the phrase “metaphysical reality” would be highly problematic in Hegel’s view; the reference is to Leibniz. This general point about forms of representation is implicit in the discussion of the “mathematical syllogism” in Hegel (1969, 679-686). In the section entitled “On the Common View of the Syllogism” Hegel refers to Ploucquet’s propositional calculus rather than Leibniz’s, although the same point holds: abstraction is a necessary procedure which aids efficiency and clarity of expression, although abstract languages cannot be thought of as a sheer replacement of that from which they abstract, but rather as a Aufhebung of them (see esp. 685-686).
being fundamentally different in kind and thus externally rather than internally related.

Our analysis of the significance of Hegel's account of representation requires disambiguation of Hegel's use of the term from Kant's, as well as from contemporary custom. In §451 Hegel tells us:

Representation is this recollected or inwardised intuition, and as such is the middle between that stage of intelligence where it finds itself immediately subject to modification and that where intelligence is in its freedom, or, as thought.

By “intelligence” Hegel means the activity of spirit at the level of an individual subjective consciousness; its emergence should equally be understood as the development of reason as a theoretical and practical phenomenon; that is, as a capacity for possession of objective knowledge and freedom.¹ He goes on to tell us that this capacity manifests in representational consciousness as a rendering of “immediacy inward”, where this allows for a penetration of intuitive content into consciousness, whilst simultaneously ridding such content of “subjectivity of the inwardness”.

For his part, Kant uses the term “representation” to refer to any content of consciousness whatever;² thus both intuitional and conceptual aspects are subsumed under it. One must recall, however, that although cognition is for Kant always a product of both sensibility and the understanding, the human capacity to represent extends wider than this: one can indeed have non-cognitive sensations as well as entertain pure concepts of reason, although our relation to such phenomena fails in all cases to be properly objective. Thus, Kant's usage is reasonably close to contemporary ones, even if one rejects Kant's transcendental idealist restrictions on knowledge. The meaning Hegel grants “representation” in the context of his

¹ A more developed account of this theme would involve comparing Hegel's account of the emergence of linguistic consciousness with his account of the “actualisation of rational self-consciousness through its own activity”. On this, see Hegel (1977b, Chapter V, esp. Sub-section B).

² See A319-320/B376-377 for Kant's taxonomy. He includes all objects of thought under the genus “representation in general”, and conceives of the following as a “progression”: perceptions, sensations, cognitions (intuitions and concepts, where the latter are pure or empirical), and ideas. Note that Kant equates “pure concepts” with “notions”, and says that ideas are composed of notions. Note also that the Transcendental Ideal is not mentioned; is it not a representation? (cf. A567-568/B595-596).
reflections on psychology is narrower than both Kant’s usage as well as contemporary convention.

Hegel’s dialectical account of the cross-pollination of shapes of consciousness involves him insisting on there being a cognitive form that is both imagistic and conceptual. This definition of “representation” is unlike Kant’s portrayal of conceptualised intuitional content however, since Hegel makes no separation between the two aspects: representations are not characterised by him as being the outcome of two independent cognitive faculties working together (sensibility and the understanding), or, for the two-aspect Kantian,¹ as being possible only under two distinct epistemic conditions (sensible and intellectual). Rather, representations are an imagistic manifestation of conceptuality, and have a form and content not unlike Kant’s symbols.

It is clear that the claims Hegel makes in this context should be regarded as one of his many attempts to reformulate Kant’s account of representation. Hegel’s solution is characteristically complicated and subtle, since he insists there are three distinct moments involved with representation and each of these plays a separate role and is related to Kant’s sensible and intellectual conditions in different ways.

¹ The most complete and well-known account of which is found in Allison (2004).
V.i Symbols as shapes of linguistic consciousness

As Magnus (2001) and Verene (1985) have both documented in detail, symbolism is a pervasive yet ill-treated dimension of Hegel’s work. Most obviously, understanding the role symbolism plays for Hegel is essential for understanding his *Phenomenology* as well as his theory of Absolute Spirit, in the latter’s guise as both art and religion. But this is not all. The *Encyclopedia Philosophy of Mind* frames the conditions of the emergence of free, rational self-consciousness in terms of such consciousness’s capacity to *discover* as well as to *create* significance in the world, and symbolic consciousness is an essential moment of such a process. Here one should recall Hegel’s capsule description of his theory of spirit in terms of our ability to gain “freedom from…and in” the world we have generated “as our own creation”, in response to the world we found “presupposed before us”.

It is essential here that the symbol “allows spirit to know itself in its otherness, to experience its self-alienation—to think itself not thinking…it allows spirit to know itself as it truly is.” Recall the remarks from §II.i above, where it was suggested that if one reads Kant’s account of symbolism in conjunction with his claims about the *sensus communis* from §40 of the 3rd Critique, it appears that symbolic cognition can be taken to reveal certain features of ourselves which are in principle unknowable. This is the case partly because symbols are themselves conceptually inexhaustible, and therefore indeterminate yet endlessly determinable; it is the case also partly because we take them to have a share in the same transcendentally ideal world of which our noumenal selves are a part. The conceptual indeterminacy and endless determinability of symbols follows from their having intuitional form, itself which is both indivisible and infinitely divisible. There appears to be a similar point at issue in Hegel’s account of symbolic consciousness, although his view is of course distinct.

Another way to frame this emergence of free, rational self-consciousness is in terms of the activity of positing one’s

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1 Thus Hegel’s lectures on these topics are essential sources to turn to for details; see Hegel (1975/1988, 2006).
2 See the capsule description in Hegel (1971, §386).
Hegel’s way of dealing with the problem of nihilism, as raised in his time by Jacobi, is to acknowledge that in epistemic contexts one always begins with certain presuppositions. Moreover, that it is a condition of rationality that one posit these as one’s own, where this does not entail that one ought to dogmatically fixate on whatever beliefs one finds oneself with, but rather that the possibility of revising beliefs depends upon one first being able to recognise them as one’s own; further, that upon reflection one will inevitably find one’s way of expressing one’s beliefs to embody certain dialectical tensions which lead one to grasp deep and often contradictory implications of one’s view.

Hegel’s explanation of how forms of representation arise at the level of subjective spirit involves the claim that the “intelligence” abstracts from rich perceptual phenomena to derive common characteristics. This same pattern can be observed in objective spirit at the level of social formation, and can also be understood as a precondition of spirit coming to self-consciousness, in Chapter 4 of the *Phenomenology*, even if the exact relation of the latter to the systematic accounts of spirit in the *Encyclopedia* is somewhat ambiguous. Recall, however, that Hegel regarded the *Phenomenology* as the necessary preamble to the *Logic*; therefore one should presumably interpret it as an extended argument for how to understand the emergence of self-conscious spirit, from an Archimedean point that is simultaneously able to grasp the point of view of spirit in its journey.

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1 Such phrasing is pervasive in Hegel’s writings. See Hegel (1971, §441, Z.): “for free mind, the self-developing and altering determinations of the object are explicitly the product of free mind itself, the subjectifying of objectivity and the objectifying of subjectivity are its own work. The determinations of which it is aware are, of course, inherent in the object, but at the same time they are posited by mind. In free mind there is nothing immediate. Therefore, when the ‘facts of consciousness’ are spoken of as if for mind they were something primary and unmediated and must remain for it something merely given, it must be remarked that though at the stage of consciousness a great deal of such given material presents itself, free mind must not leave these facts as given, independent things, but must demonstrate and so explain them to be acts of mind, to be a content which it has posited.”

2 The Introduction to Hegel (1977b) demonstrates this view clearly. For more on this topic see Forster (1989).


There is therefore good reason to think of Absolute Knowing, as detailed in the final chapter of the *Phenomenology*, as giving a different perspective of the same theme that emerges in The Subjective Logic: the idea that thought and reality can be “adequate to one another”. As indicated in Chapter 1, the section on “Subjectivity” gives an account of this possibility from the perspective of a rational, subjective consciousness by arguing for a radical view of the cognitive shapes of “Concept”, “Judgment”, and “Syllogism”.

Preliminarily it can be said that, for Hegel, the role of the intelligence in transforming symbolising consciousness into sign-making consciousness parallels the conceptual clarification by philosophy of the pictorial representation of the trinity in religion, whereby it is subsequently articulated as the Absolute Idea. The basic feature is the common structure expressed by these two manifestations of the most fundamental claim of Hegel’s philosophy: the essential unity of thought and being.

Symbolisation is, at the level of subjective spirit, a primitive stage in the emergence of linguistic consciousness that is still mired in the empirical features of the elements of signification; the successor stage of “sign-making” consciousness is correlated with the capacity for verbal expression governed by intersubjectively mediated norms that transcend any individual consciousness's grasp or institution of them. Symbolisation is also an essential feature of religious consciousness, qua manifestation in an individual consciousness of the religious moment of Absolute Spirit. In the religious moment of Absolute Spirit, symbolisation reveals deep structure involved with the freedom of self-consciousness, at the level of pictorial representation.

In the final chapter of the *Science of Logic* Hegel expresses this point regarding unity by acknowledging the ineradicable circularity in systematic reasoning. He characterises the “process of further determination” as circular, since “while getting further away from the indeterminate beginning [Being] is also getting back nearer to it”. This is because the “retrogressive grounding of the beginning,

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1 “The Absolute Idea” is the terminological equivalent in Philosophy, qua shape of Absolute Spirit. Thus Hegel’s famous declaration to be giving an exposition of “God” in the *Logic* (see Hegel (1969, 50)) should be interpreted as saying that not only is the entire *Logic* is a development that finds fulfilment in its final chapter but, moreover, that the final chapter is that of which the book is an “exposition”. Defence of Hegel’s teleological strategy cannot be undertaken here.
and the *progressive further determining* of it, coincide and are the same.” He says further that:

the science exhibits itself as a *circle* returning upon itself, the end being wound back into the beginning, the simple ground, by the mediation; this circle is moreover a *circle of circles*, for each individual member as ensouled by the method is reflected into itself, so that in returning into the beginning it is at the same time the beginning of a new member. Links of this chain are the individual sciences [of logic, nature and spirit], each of which has an *antecedent* and a *successor*—or, expressed more accurately, *has only the antecedent and indicates it successor* in its conclusion.  

In harmony with the idea of this circular pattern of reasoning, the triune structure common to the idea of “God” in religion and philosophy can be said to involve the transition from “God the Father”—or subjective consciousness—to “Jesus the Son”—or the reflection of thought in its object (the finite subject in the world)—and finally to the “Holy Spirit”—or the community of thinkers which are the condition of the Father *qua* subjective consciousness realising and actualising itself.  

Note how the idea of a subjective consciousness, with which one begins, can only be intelligible in terms of it belonging to a community of subjective consciousnesses. This is clearly circular, since that community to which such a subjective consciousness belongs must include subjects that are also somehow already self-conscious. Of course, Hegel believes the circle to be virtuous rather than vicious, for he sees that one finds one’s way into a pattern of reasoning only by adopting certain presuppositions; the important mark of rationality is to recognise these for what they are. Crucially, one must not posit them uncritically, but rather to attempt to develop them dialectically and in so doing recognise such positing to be ultimately unavoidable.

In any case, the consequence is that

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1 Hegel (1969, 841).
3 Cf. Fichte (1982, see esp. Part One, and Part Two, §4 E.) here on the “I” and the “not-I”. Hegel’s trinitarian model is a development of the claim that this opposition is necessary for free self-consciousness (a self-differentiating “I”, that is part of a community of “I”s). Cf. the Master-Slave dialectic in Chapter 4 of Hegel (1977b).
logic, too, in the absolute Idea, has withdrawn into that same simple unity which its beginning is [the Father]; the pure immediacy of being in which at first every determination appears to be extinguished or removed by abstraction, is the Idea that has reached through mediation, that is, through the sublation of mediation, a likeness correspondent to itself. But now it is also fulfilled being, the Concept that comprehends itself, being as the concrete and also absolutely intensive totality [the Holy Spirit].

I suggest that this remark can be interpreted in the following manner: the final moment of the trinity, the Holy Spirit, can be regarded as a clarification of the initial concept of God, the divine, “otherworldly” Father, via the concept of God, the incarnate, “worldly” Son, as well as a transformation of it, such that it has the form of unity rather than being. Hegel’s insistence upon the move from an abstract singularity (God the Father) to a distributive unity (the Holy Spirit) is therefore a reversal of Kant’s argumentative strategy regarding the generation of the concept of “God”: Kant rejects the dialectical inference that leads from the idea of a “distributive unity of the use of the understanding in experience” to that of a “collective unity of a whole of experience”; a dialectical inference that has the same form as that involved with the reification of the omnitudo realitatis from a source of negative grounding for complete determination of individual things, into a “most real being” (the ens realissimum) in the form of a singular that contains the “perfection” of all possible predicates. Hegel instead begins with a conception of “God” as “the Father”, which may be correlated with Kant’s sense of the ens realissimum, and then explains how it unites with the more adequate conception of “the Holy Spirit”, which resembles a distributive unity of judgments made by an organically developing community of subjective consciousnesses which together mediate the validity of one another’s claims.

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1 Hegel (1969, 842). Translation modified; the interpolations are my own also.
2 A582/B610.
3 This is also a helpful way of understanding Hegel’s attitude to contradiction (cf. Redding (2007a, Chapter 7)). In the simplest of terms, it may be said that here the One is the many. This can sound like a logical point regarding the possibility of conceiving of the members of a set as belonging to that one set—thus, being unified, and “one”—yet since Hegel views metaphysics as being logic (and vice versa), the point is not merely logical (in a formal sense) for him. Regarding contradiction, recall that because Kant conceives of his critical metaphysics is metaphysics of “an a
Hegel’s point is that the idea of a transcendent God, “the Father”, is inadequately so conceived in isolation, but nevertheless not to be negated “externally”, due to the dialectical role it plays in the successor concept of the Holy Spirit, where a kind of “distributive unity” of ensouled, embodied noûs replaces it. The move which both Kant and Hegel think is to be resisted is the dialectical one from the idea of a totality to the idea of that totality as a singularity. That the point follows from certain axioms of idealist logic can be gleaned from a glance at Kant’s table of both the categories and logical functions of judgment: the category of totality corresponds to the logical function of singularity (note Kant’s remark that no judgment is properly singular, since only intuitions have the form of singularity).

The basic difference is that Hegel thinks that although the abstractly singular conception of “God” is inadequate, he nevertheless believes it to be essential to the dialectical structure of the triune God (in religion), as well as the structure of free, rational, self-consciousness (in philosophy). Kant, for his part, simply resists this dialectical move.

We are now in a position to appreciate the dialectical exposition of linguistic consciousness. John McCumber has provided an analysis of §§451-464 of the Encyclopedia Philosophy of Mind congenial to the line of argument presented here. He discusses two types of “names” and their role in Hegel’s idea that “philosophical truth is the self-development of thought” which is, moreover, essentially expressed in language. These two kinds are, respectively, “representational names” and “names as such”, where the former are symbolic and the latter are kinds of signs. “Representational names” are therefore not to be taken to be equivalent to representations of a piece with

\[\text{priori}\] judging reason”, Hegel should be read as rebuking him for disallowing contradictions in metaphysics, given that contradiction is endemic to reason itself.


Cf. McCumber (1993, 215-220) where he discusses the “aporia” involved with the claim that Hegel’s philosophy is a “philosophy of words”; indeed, one whose claims for absoluteness are expressed in finite form.

3 Discussed in McCumber (1993, 220-229).
4 Discussed in McCumber (1993, 229-238).
sub-propositional contents; they are to be taken as symbolic and indirect representations; “names as such” are roughly correlated with signs and therefore have a similar function to schematically distributed representations. They are therefore closer to what would now be referred to as sub-propositional contents.

The key difference between “representational names” and “names as such” is therefore the extent to which their empirical character plays a functional role. We must take care to not construe “names as such” as totally abstract, because for Hegel total freedom from empirical matters does not emerge until spirit develops to the stage of “thought”.¹

McCumber advances the intriguing claim that a proper reading of the role of words, in their guise as vehicles of reason in Hegel’s philosophy, ought to dispel confusions endemic to both Left- and Right-Hegelianism. This thesis, with whose general presuppositions I agree, merits brief comment. A desire for the ideal or “centred” reading can be said to be at the forefront of the mind of a serious interpreter of a text if one presumes it simply means “sympathetic faithfulness”, or “adequacy”. Thus, in harmony with Hegel’s nuanced view of the dialectical complexities of a subject’s emergence into the realm of reason, it is crucial that one understand how language can be regarded as both a topic of what were later called “Naturwissenschaften” and “Geisteswissenschaften”. It is important to see how such a reading does no violence to the proper account of Geist.² As McCumber argues, Hegel regards language as both a

¹ There are some additional complexities involved here which for simplicity I slide over. For an in-depth analysis of the subtleties of Hegel’s view see McCumber’s own discussion, as referenced above.

² Cf. McCumber’s reference to Clark (1971, xi) at 217: “Clark argues that the passage of thought into language ‘illuminates’ the more general passage of logic into nature. Nature is for Hegel ‘impotent,’ incapable of manifesting the Concept. And if Clark is right in taking language for Hegel to be a strictly natural phenomenon, it would follow that language, too, is incapable of expressing philosophical thought.” Below this McCumber says that “we seem to have a scholarly consensus that language cannot adequately express Hegelian thought because it is representational: rigid in form and one-sided in content.” As noted, McCumber’s thesis is that the role of non-representational language (signs, rather than symbols) allows this difficulty to be surpassed (cf. 218-220 for support for this claim in the literature).

At 219 McCumber seems to identify his interpretation of Hegel’s theory of linguistic consciousness as a fusion of those who defend a reading of Hegel either in terms of symbolic consciousness or sign-making
natural phenomenon as well as an expression of spirit;\textsuperscript{1} thus it is a historical phenomenon that admits of development whereby properties of the instances of fulfilment of laws or rules stand to modify the law or rule with which they are so far in accord.\textsuperscript{2}

The points of interest here can be clarified by considering some key differences between so-called “natural signs” and “conventional signs”. By “natural sign” I mean a form of representation that tracks, in a mechanistic fashion, some other natural phenomenon. An example of a natural sign would be a lion’s roar.\textsuperscript{3} By “conventional sign” I mean a form of representation whose significance can be altered by those who employ the sign: thus the word “red”, when uttered by an English speaker under ordinary conditions, refers to the colour red, because that is what it is agreed upon by English speakers, conceived of as a speech community, to mean.

A helpful device for focusing the differences between natural signs and conventional signs is the distinction between extension and intension: conventions are formulated as intensions (definitions) which can be articulated and employed to determine the extension of a concept (that to which the definition applies). Intensions begin their life as abstract generalisations \textit{from} sets of extensions, since there are no “innate concepts”, except in the attenuated sense of \textit{natural signs}. Natural signs themselves are mere sets of extensions correlated with other natural phenomena. It is inappropriate to think of natural signs as having an “intension” in the same way, except in the sense of their law-like regularity being expressible in terms of a law-like correlation between natural events formulable in linguistic terms. What natural signs do \textit{not} allow is a mutually-modifying relation between extension and intension: something is either a natural sign or it is not. That is, the law expressing the correlation between certain natural events \textit{does not} and \textit{cannot}, by some consciousness. Note that this terminology is Magnus’s. McCumber associates these two alternative readings with Left-Hegelianism and Right-Hegelianism, respectively.

\textsuperscript{1} On this see McCumber (2010).

\textsuperscript{2} I am here suggesting that there is a degree of harmony between Hegel’s historical theory of spirit and those liberal naturalisms that insist that interpretive explanations, as offered in the “human sciences”, have a certain primacy or \textit{sui generis} character. See the papers in De Caro (2004, 2010) on this theme.

\textsuperscript{3} See Fichte (1996).
feedback looping effect, affect what it describes. This is only possible with conventional signs.¹

This claim could be debated on the grounds that the “natural” behaviour of certain beings with sufficiently complex linguistic ability is able to be modified by concept use, although blurring this line is tantamount to blurring the line between “second” and “first nature”, about which I will say no more.

Insofar as for Kant the role that symbolic representation plays in cognition depends upon empirical features of such symbols, they bear some similarity to natural signs. We see here how work on Kant’s account of symbols might actually be used to modify his account of schemata, since it is clear that schematisation involves specifying the concrete application of concepts, therefore of the specification of their relation to empirical, imaginistically representable phenomena. Consideration of the extent to which all judgments embody an aesthetic dimension is highly pertinent here.

Something else suggested by this comment is that different “marks”, in Kant’s terminology, of objects to which concepts are applied may be taken to be salient in different (contextual) conditions and these previously insignificant features of the object included in the extension may lead to modifications in the intension: the “definition”, or sense of the concept. We can also see the possibility of dis-analogy and inappropriate metaphor here. Nevertheless, in the general case the salient feature of a symbol is often immediately obvious to most individuals and this signals their familiarity with the conventions governing it; Kant’s reference to those who “judge well” and those who require training through exposure to many examples is pertinent here.

These points bear consequence for the development of complex syntactic structure out of primitive symbolism. Consider the way in which Kant’s symbolic representations could be seen as working at two different semantic levels: (1) Determined by empirical likenesses based on salient semantic features; (2) Determined by similarity of inferential role of the propositional structures with which judgments

¹ Cf. Kant’s famous remarks: “Everything in nature occurs in accordance with laws. Only a rational being has the capacity to act in accordance with the representation of laws, that is, in accordance with principles, or has a will. Since reason is required for the derivation of actions from laws, the will is nothing other than practical reason.” Kant (1996c, 4:412, 66; cf. 4:401, 56) And: “The will is thought as a capacity to determine itself to acting in conformity with the representation of certain laws.” Kant (1996c, 4:427, 78)
referring to the symbol (including it as the subject of a moral or aesthetic judgment) are connected; that is, determined by the place within a syllogism of the judgments referring to symbolic representations. Recall that such representations are a species of intuitive representation yet are taken to somehow express a structure analogical to an idea, which is not representable in intuitional form at all.

It is worth pointing out that both (1) and (2) are distinct from the mere associative connections which might obtain between empirically similar phenomena, whose significance is limited to S-R governed behaviour. Whilst (1) mentioned above may share superficial features, it is radically different due to the intersubjective availability of the perceived salience. Sheer S-R connections obtaining, for a given conscious being, between empirically similar phenomena do not and cannot play the role of (1) unless and until they are available for mediation by a more complex, “supervening” inferential structure of the kind instanced by (2); that is, until the content is integrated into a richer network governed by conventions.

We thus distinguish three levels of reference: S-R connections, symbols which are somehow materially isomorphic to that which they symbolise, and verbally expressible representations whose physical character as sign-designs is related in no relevant way to that which they represent. It should be noted that “sensation” or “intuition” in Hegel’s sense should be taken to be causally related to that which they represent much in the way that a S-R connection, or natural sign is; representations should be taken to be akin to (1) above insofar as they evince material structural similarity to that which they represent, whereas (2) expresses the character of what Hegel calls “thought”. The picture is of course more nuanced than this, since these shapes of consciousness interpenetrate one another, although such distinctions shall aid our more fine grained distinctions between the three moments of representation itself.

The basic thesis of Chapter 7 of McCumber’s book is that, regarding “representational names” (symbols) and “names as such” (sub-propositional elements), “while neither by itself is an adequate medium for Hegelian philosophical thought, both together may be.”¹ This thesis is also entailed by one of the general claims made by the present work, insofar as it is argued that both symbolising and sign-making activities are essential to the operations of rationality, where, appropriately conceived, these together reveal how language ought

to be seen as integrated into the world, as within the lives of individual reasoners, qua participants in linguistic communities.

It is to be noted that the section “Representation” occurs as the middle between the extremes of “Intuition” and “Thinking”. The two key actions which coordinate with the emergence of the intelligence are the “interiorisation” and “universalisation” of the content found in intuition.¹ The key feature of representations, in Hegel’s sense, is that they exhibit intelligible semantic features, whilst having irreducible spatio-temporal form. One might even say that the semantic content of representations, in this sense, is “exhibited” in their form; the significances of their form and content are inseparable; Hegelian representations, like symbols, show rather than say.² Note that Hegel regards as essential to the freedom of thought the possibility of separating semantic content from the empirical features of the vehicles by which such content is expressed. Thus he says that we must regard it as an infinite step forward that the forms of thought have been freed from the material in which they are submerged in self-conscious intuition, figurate conception, and in our desiring and willing, or rather in ideational desiring and willing—and there is no human desiring and willing without ideation—and that these universalities have been brought into prominence for their own sake and made objects of contemplation as was done by Plato and after him especially by Aristotle; this constitutes the intelligent apprehension of them.

Hegel’s discussion of the representational shape of consciousness occurs in three stages, which are indicated in any case by subheadings. These are entitled “Recollection” (§§452-454), “Imagination” (§§455-460), and “Memory” (§§461-464). “Recollection” involves the intelligence retaining an image of something encountered in intuition such that it may be recalled from memory at a later stage, say, for example, when one recognises new instances of a kind one has encountered before.³ Crucially, the intelligence allows for recognition of various particulars as being instances of a universal because it abstracts from the particularities of the original

¹McCumber (1993, 220).
²Hegel (1969, 33)
presentation of an instance, and recognises its universal quality. This allows also for “association of ideas”.¹

This point bears similarity to Kant’s theory of the construction of empirical concepts through a process of comparison, reflection, and abstraction. It is crucial to see that the basic insight of idealism here, as expressed by both Kant and Hegel, is that whilst such a process undeniably occurs, this cannot be the whole story regarding our conceptual capacities. It is a basic claim of idealist logic that there is a deep structure contributed by us, and that this structure is not to be analysed in terms of innate neurophysiological structure, as many contemporary naturalists would argue.² Hegel’s development of Kant’s formal conception of the “I think” goes hand in hand with an argument for the structure of our conceptual discourse as being thoroughly intersubjective. The implication is that conceptual structure cannot be understood at the level of individual concept-users (what is “in the head”), but rather must be understood in terms of “recognitive interaction”.

The second stage of representational consciousness occurs at the level of the imagination. Here the universal qualities abstracted by the intelligence at the stage of recollection are made thematic. This is distinct from the former stage, where the basic operation was the comprehension of the universality of particular representations; now the universality itself is an object of consciousness. As McCumber mentions, “[T]he Phenomenology shows this universalising to be not merely an individual, psychological process, but a social one. It becomes so because representations are, as will be seen, connected to utterances.”³ Further, that because to make an utterance is to adopt a certain status determined by social and historical conditions on language use,⁴ the significance of the universal qualities extracted by the imagination is mediated by these conditions.

It must be noted that this process is also individual and psychological, and that therefore certain contingencies of one’s individual imagination condition the manner in which qualities are extracted. Clearly, this is essential to creativity and novelty of all kinds, and is also a condition of a language resisting ossification and

³ McCumber (1993, 221).
instead exemplifying dynamism. The important point is that in communication social and historical mediation transforms the original, individual significance that is initially only felt or perceived.

The process just adumbrated is that which leads to the formation of symbols (then “signs, and ultimately...language.”) As McCumber says,

When this function of an image is seized upon by the Intelligence so that it uses the image to call forth the universal, the image becomes a “symbol”. Socrates’ nose...can occasion me to think of “snubness”; when this comes to be its main function, the nose is a “symbol” of snubness. But the identity in content between symbol and symbolised can diminish and even disappear: Socrates’s nose can occasion, for example, the thought of his good humour, or even that of human ‘good-humouredness’ itself. When the identity of content between symbol and symbolised wholly disappears, the symbol has become a sign.

The consequence is that sign-making consciousness is thereby able to move in the realm of universality, by signifying abstract qualities in a way that does not require a mode of signification that resembles them. Namely, the connection between a sign and something signified becomes arbitrary. One might say that, in contemporary parlance, the complex syntactical relationships in truth-functional discourse require this relationship between sign and signified to be arbitrary in order to function as they do. If such relationships were not arbitrary, language would be caught up with irrelevant features of its mode of expression and would therefore be unable to express abstract and therefore complex ideas of the kind necessary for intersubjective communication to be possible. It seems obvious that a level of generality and universality in linguistic communication is required in order for individuals in different informational states—with different perceptual information available to them—to be able to understand one another.

Hegel explains the transition from the symbol to sign this way:

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1 It is interesting to note, in this connection, the harmony between social and linguistic change, where the lack of one is typically mirrored by lack in the other.

2 This process therefore mirrors the transitions from Chapter 1 to 4 in Hegel (1977b).

The arbitrary attaching of an external existent to a representation which does not correspond to it, but is distinct from it even according to content,\(^1\) makes that existent into a sign.\(^2\)

The reference to correspondence is significant here.\(^3\) We cannot treat the issue in detail, although it has so far been implied by our discussion of Kant that symbols “correspond” in some way to what they are symbols of, in virtue of relevant features of them being related in an analogous way to that in which features of what they symbolise are related. Ignoring the difficulties with Kant’s explanation of the indirect symbolic representation of ideas, we note that the physical character of symbols is essential to their meaning. This relationship between a symbol and what it symbolises is thus a relationship of fairly straightforward correspondence: a symbol is a symbolic representation of something else just in case it resembles it, viz., exhibits features that correspond to features the symbolised thing has.\(^4\) Recall the problems that arose for Kant, insofar as he held that that which is symbolised is an abstract, unintuitable idea.

Hegel’s insight is that the transition from representations to conceptually clarified and developed thought involves the transformation of the significance of universal features of individual psychological representations through the requisite process of articulation of those features in verbal form. As noted above, verbalisation of what one takes to be significant places such significances into a social “space of reasons”,\(^5\) in which those

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\(^1\) Note the perplexing inconsistencies here with Hegel’s use of content, as in Hegel (2006), discussed in §VI. The paradox is that the content of representation and thought can be the same (“about the same thing”, the “intentional object” referred to in the Husserlian tradition) whilst being different (in virtue of being presented in a different form, “the intentional content” as discussed in that tradition).

\(^2\) Hegel (1986, 156).

\(^3\) Contemporary attempts at expressing similar insights abound in analytical philosophy of language. One notable case is Sellars (1962/1991b, a), 1967/1992, Chapter V), who distinguishes the linguistic functions of “picturing” and “truth”, where the former is relational and non-semantic, and the latter is non-relational and semantic.

\(^4\) deVries (1987) provides great insight into the ways Hegel’s position might be located within both traditional and contemporary theories of representation. The relevant connection here is how this issue relates to the idea of representations “corresponding” to what they are representations of.

\(^5\) This famous phrase is from Sellars (1956/1997, §36).
significances are adjudicated upon by the fellow members of one’s speech community. Of course, symbolic language is a possible medium for intersubjective communication, although it has grave limitations, which Hegel frequently points out.\(^1\) However, it seems to be implied here that the syntactically complex form of linguistic consciousness which Hegel refers to in speaking of signs (and which we ought to take as relevantly similar to what is now thought of as truth-functional propositions) can only arise if a social context exists.

To restate, this is because it is demanded by a situation in which communicators in distinct informational states cannot rely on a form of communication that conveys meaning by likening representations to their significance; regarding possibility, we should say that the idea of an isolated individual operating with a complex syntax does not make sense, given the insuperable difficulties with a language that would be merely private.

One obvious reason for this is that abstract concepts or ideas cannot be represented symbolically; another is that individuals making sense of one another requires them to bring their individual psychological states into harmony somehow, and this requires the employment of general representations that signify a variety of family-resemblances, and are expressed in a complex context intelligible in absence of pictorial representations of that which is signified, where this is in any case possible only in the case of concrete rather than abstract concepts.

At this point one must recall the \textit{aufgehoben} character of intuitive material upon which the intelligence sets to work. As McCumber notes, “[T]he sign is not an intuition, but an intuition negated: the concrete unity of sensuous determinacy found in the individual intuition is disregarded in favour of the simple movement of the mind to a representation. This movement is then the ‘attaching’ of the intuition to its meaning.”\(^2\) Again, since the quality of the sign itself is irrelevant, its way of “attaching” to intuition is all that matters. To put the point slightly differently, we should say that the way in which a sign is employed to express thoughts about intuitively represented/-able items is all we need to know in order to know its meaning, which sounds awfully like a “meaning-as-use” theory.

The “negation” of the intuitive content is the important Hegelian move. It signals a parallel move to those dialectical transitions in the

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\(^1\) See his remarks about logical expressions in Chinese in the Hegel (1969, 32).

\(^2\) McCumber (1993, 224).
opening chapters of the *Phenomenology*, where consciousness and its object metamorphose through a series of categorial structures which express the way in which the relata of the intentional relation are related. The relevant transition for present purposes is that from “Perception” to “the Understanding”, where an object once represented as a substance with properties is in the sequel thought of as being determined by its relations to other things. An example of this would be the transition from the intuitive representation of a red apple as an item of which one could reproduce a corresponding image in pictorial form in a painting, to a thought of it as a piece of organic matter determined by certain chemical and physical laws and whose perceived colour is a result of it both having certain reflective surface properties and it being perceived in “normal conditions”, where the English word “red” is properly employed.

McCumber says that the

capacity to reduce complex content to simple thought-determinations...is not unimportant: in the *Phenomenology*, it is said to be one of the reasons why the individual can, in her own lifetime, recapitulate the entire history of Spirit’s rise to the Absolute.¹

The transition from this stage of representation—the imagination—to that of memory involves a similar move to that involved here. The imagination made thematic the universal qualities recognised at the stage of recollection, and thereby, in McCumber’s words, “got control of its images”. Memory now “operates on the word in the same way” and therefore gains “control of its names”.² This procedure must be conceived of as “internal” to the actions of the intelligence in a stronger sense: relevant relations are now between signs, which are moreover determined by the syntactically complex structure that emerges at this level. McCumber puts this by saying that “[J]ust as Imagination first universalised intuitions by reflecting upon what connected them with the images they called up, so Verbal Memory reflects upon the relation between the sign and the universal signified—on the ‘name’ as their mutual attachment.” Crucially, this means that

The sound of the name is thus itself universalised: it becomes a representation—the representation of the sound of the name, or as I

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¹ See Hegel (1977b, §29).
²McCumber (1993, 225).
Chapter Two: Metarepresentational Structure in Kant and Hegel

will call the ‘representation of the name’—and can be retained within the Intelligence.¹

This important transition is, according to McCumber’s Hegel, what makes possible abstract thought about “meanings”. In §461 Hegel says this:

Under the shape of memory the course of intelligence passes through the same inwardising (recollecting) functions, as regards the intuition of the word, as representation in general does in dealing with the first immediate intuition (§451).

Hegel then comments on both signs and names. Regarding signs he makes one point, in §461:

(1) Making its own the synthesis achieved in the sign, intelligence, by this inwardising (memorising) elevates the single synthesis to a universal, i.e. permanent, synthesis, in which name and meaning are for it objectively united, and renders the intuition (which the name originally is) a representation—and recall that for Hegel it is judgment that is determining representations (not concepts).² Thus the import (connotation) and sign, being identified, form one representation: the representation in its inwardness is rendered concrete and gets existence for its import; all this being the work or memory which retains names (retentive Memory).

And of names he makes two, the first of which occurs in §462:

The name is thus the thing so far as it exists and counts in the ideational realm. (2) In the name, Reproductive memory has and recognises the thing, and with the thing it has the name, apart from intuition and image. The name, as giving an existence to the content in intelligence, is the externality of intelligence to itself; and the inwardising or recollection of the name, i.e., of an intuition of intellectual origin, is at the same time a self-externalisation to which intelligence reduces itself on its own ground. The association of the particular names lies in the meaning of the features sensitive, representative, or cogitant—series of which the intelligence traverses as it feels, represents, or thinks.

The second point occurs in §463:

¹McCumber (1993, 225).
(3) As the interconnection of names lies in the meaning, the conjunction of their meaning with the reality

There is a sense in which this capability to move in the sphere of abstract names is “thinking”, although more properly this is still the realm of representation, not thought. This is because the intelligence is, so to speak, operating within the realm of actual natural language—actual spoken names—whereas at the level of thought, the activity is conceived of by Hegel as more abstract than this: he speaks of the understanding as cognising an inverted world; as having taking invisible explanatory principles as somehow prior to that which they explained.¹

Our concern has been to see how Hegel’s analyses of the emergence of linguistic consciousness, as so far discussed, stands to illuminate the nature of symbolic thinking. Some final points can be made to this end. McCumber notes:

The “names in which we think” (or, as I call them representational names) are as Hegel presents them fully representational: they are names which have been worked up by the Understanding so that they have completely articulated their representational meaning and then coincided with that meaning. As representational, those names—on one of their two sides—provide a cultural mirror for an objective world. Precisely because they are, if only to a degree, representational, they remain related to the sensuous domain from which we saw them develop—here, in the relation between the universal meanings of those words and the sensory experiences from which they are derived.²

This feature of Hegel’s account announces a holistic sentiment; Hegel insists upon the ineradicably sensuous element by defending the complex aufgehoben dialectical transitions so far discussed. In Hegel’s terms, the symbolic actions in representational thinking are forever intermingling with abstract thought; not only is language, in Wittgenstein’s phrasing, like an old city with new, architecturally complex innovations,³ where the former involve forms of onomatopoeic picturing of symbolised phenomena by symbols, but language moreover does not “lose the world” in the manner suggested by Richard Rorty. Although this point cannot be established here, it seems further development of these Hegelian

¹ Cf. Hegel (1977b, Chapter 3).
³Wittgenstein (1958, §18).
ideas could profit from a closer examination of the interaction between symbolic and schematic forms in what have in other contexts been referred to as “conceptual schemes”.

An interpreter of Hegel that acknowledges both his post-Kantian credentials as well as his hyperbolic claims that philosophy is “essentially rational theology”, that its actions amount to “no more than” a transformation of representations into thoughts and thoughts “into the Concept”; in addition to his claim that the “content” of the epitome of his system—the Science of Logic—is “God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and a finite spirit”, is compelled to be open-minded about his highly original philosophical theology. An explanation of how reason can be both a social and historical phenomenon as well as being committed to theological entities is the fundamental burden placed on such an interpreter. I do not pretend to have wholly satisfied such demands here, although I hope to have highlighted directions in which such developments in Hegel scholarship might go. One problem is that Hegel’s position is the philosophical equivalent of liquid helium: difficult to get a purchase of friction on.

The general aim of this section therefore has been to explain some of the significance of the connections between his theorising about religion, on the one hand, and language and self-consciousness, on the other. The more specific claim of this section has been that a proper understanding of Hegel’s views regarding the structural symmetry between religious imagery and philosophical language actually stands to render more plausible his account of the idea of “God”, as well as his metaphysics of absolute idealism.

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1 See Davidson (1973/1984) for a canonical statement of the issues involved.
3 Hegel (1991b, §20, 50).
4 Hegel (1969, 50).
5 In investigating this territory, Magnus (2001) argues against Derrida’s reading of Hegel by insisting that “the symbolic mediation of spirit” is a feature that allows one to say that whilst spirit endures periods of alienation from itself where it is determined by its “other”, it is nevertheless able to be fully self-determining on the grounds that symbols are both partially opaque to spirit as well as expressions of spirit itself. An understanding of the role of the symbolic in Hegel’s philosophy (especially its dialectical function in the self-determination of spirit) is essential for understanding how real freedom is possible; namely, how a sensuous consciousness is able to freely actualise rationality in its life. See Magnus (2001, 241 & ff.).
A main concern has been to show that the Absolute Idea of philosophy, in Hegel’s system, is an alternate expression of the same structure in Absolute Spirit at another level: the “God” of religion. Here it is crucial that, in religion as in art, the “ambiguity and alienation of the symbolic penetrates spirit’s absolute dimension.” Indeed, religion “is itself symbolic with respect to the fully clarified truth of philosophy”, and yet “spirit cannot be reduced to philosophical thought: its absoluteness includes the symbolic forms of art and religion.” This is because “[S]pirit has the need to be in an other form, and this is part of its positive constitution and self-determination. Due to their symbolic elements, art and religion present their content as something other than the spirit that intuits and represents them”; these other two moments of Absolute Spirit allow spirit “to know its own internal difference.” And it is here crucial to be reminded that spirit’s capacity to be “Absolute” is not equivalent to a capacity to arrive at some standpoint which it from then on occupies; rather, spirit’s “absoluteness lies within its self-creating, self-determining act. Spirit becomes absolute. It is never absolute ‘once and for all.’”

This examination of Hegel’s alternate account of forms of representation reveals more detail involved with his claims for an “unconditioned” reason; Hegel thinks if reason can be said to be conditioned by nothing but itself, then it is unconditioned. Put another way, if its activity can be understood in terms of entirely rational transitions, then it is indeed infinite: limited by nothing outside itself.

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1 Cf. Magnus (2001, 37) on this point. Given this point, and given the role that the theory of Absolute Spirit plays in Hegel’s philosophy, it ought to be regarded as incumbent upon the Hegelian philosopher to consider the actual human practices involved with linguistic transformation more seriously (the transformations involved with the move from symbolic meaning to syntactically more complex forms of signification).


3 Magnus (2001, 244).


5 Spinoza (1985, I, Def. 2, 408): “That thing is said to be finite in its own kind (in suogenererfinita) that can be limited by another of the same nature.” Cf. Magnus (2001, 242).
VI Kant and Hegel on “God”

Kant’s generally dismissive attitude to the specificities of religious doctrine and narrative was well known and is articulated throughout his writings; he was dismissive also of many aspects of Christianity as found themselves realised in concrete form in his epoch. Given his constant admonitions against taking one’s departure in moral reasoning from empirical examples this ought not to be surprising; Kant is always telling us that we must come to conclusions about morality through practical reason alone and our appeal to examples occurs simply as a matter of expediency. This insistence expresses the desire on Kant’s part to dispense with inclination and to rather judge rationally and in a principled manner.

Nevertheless, he had said at B395, with reference to his critical metaphysics, as based on a conception of reason as at bottom practical, that:

Metaphysics has as the proper end of its investigation only three ideas: God, freedom, and immortality; so that the second concept, combined with the first, should lead to the third as a necessary conclusion. Everything else with which this science is concerned serves merely as a means of attaining these ideas and their reality. *It does not need them for the sake of natural science, but instead to get beyond nature.* The insight into these ideas would make theology, morals, and, through their combination, religion, thus the highest ends of our existence, dependent solely upon the faculty of speculative reason and on nothing else. *In a systematic representation of those ideas, the suggested order, which is a synthetic one, would be the most appropriate; but in working through them, which must necessarily be done first, the analytic order, which inverts this one, is more suitable to the end of completing our great*

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1 See the remarks in Wood (1978, 15) regarding Heinrich Heine’s view of Kant as a “theological Robespierre, a soulless, ruthless, and incorruptible executioner of the Deity”. Note also Wood’s remarks on 16 as to the Prussian minister, Johann Christoph Wollner, in his forbiddance of Kant to write on “matters pertaining to religion”, on the basis of, amongst other things, Kant’s condemnation of “superstitious pseudo-service of God” in religious institutions of the time. On this see Kant (1996g, “§3 Concerning Priestcraft as a Regime in the Counterfeit Service of the Good Principle”, esp. 6:176, 194, n.*). One of the bases for Kant’s criticisms is the frequent mistake of confusing the “visible church” for the “invisible church”; an error equivalent to the fallacy of subreption: mistaking the appearance for the thing in itself.
project, proceeding from what experience makes immediately available to us from the doctrine of the soul, to the doctrine of the world and from there all the way to the cognition of God.¹

The synthetic order Kant refers to, from God through freedom and then immortality, proceeds from (1) the consciousness of the moral law as if it were spoken in the voice of God, to (2) the idea of freedom which Kant claims we know a priori upon the basis of our knowledge of the moral law, to the idea of (3) immortality, which is required in order to make the actualisation of moral perfection intelligible: we cannot be expected to emulate moral perfection within finite experience since it is not able to be rendered under the conditions of possible experience, since it is an unconditional demand; it is that which is envisaged in the merely intelligible Kingdom of Ends, in an infinitely distant future² not ever to be encountered in possible experience; nonetheless, theology and religion are here considered by Kant to be the “highest ends of our existence”,³ a depressing thought if entailing that one is a moral failure, almost by necessity.

Our analysis of symbolic representation in Kant’s account of practical reason in §II.iii has revealed why Kant insisted upon a

¹My emphases.

²Kant (1996b, 5:124, 240). Kant attempts to resolve the problem of our inevitable moral shortcomings in the eyes of God, at any given instant, by claiming that it is because God “scrutinizes the heart”, wherein we strive toward satisfaction of the moral law (Kant (1996g, 6:67, 109)). Cf. Kant’s remarks about a “boundless future” and “eternity” (6:69, 110). Cf. also Kant’s remarks about the fact that the human being “nevertheless started from evil” (6:72, 112 & ff.); one may question this presumption, of course, and indeed, the presumption that inclinations such as love are not worthy unless they are pursued incidently as the result of a virtuous character that merely happens to have a sensibility coordinate with its rationally determined will. This tension was an early focus of Hegel’s, and he articulated an opposed view regarding the deeper value of love in his essay on “The Life of Jesus” (see Hegel (1984)).

³One should here compare the Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason, in Kant (1996b, 5:107-148, 226-258), especially the discussion of the postulates of pure practical reason: “The Immortality of the Soul as a Postulate of Pure Practical Reason” and “The Existence of God as Postulate of Pure Practical Reason” (5:122-134, 238-247). Note how Kant’s attempt to resolve the dialectic in practical uses of reason mirrors his resolution of the Antinomy of speculative reason, as well as aesthetic (Kant (2000, §57)) and teleological judgment (Kant (2000, §§75-77)); he in each case appeals to the idea of the supersensible but does not countenance its existence as knowable; rather only that the idea of it is necessary.
certain conception of the interaction between the finite, conditioned human standpoint and the infinite, unconditional demands we conceive of as being made upon us in our conscience, as if uttered by "God". Thus, Kant conceives of religion as being a fusion of morality and theology; ideally, religion is itself a set of ritualistic practices guided by moral theology. The symbolic value of the religious narrative surrounding Jesus is articulated in *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, in the section entitled "The Personified Idea of the Good Principle", where we find Kant saying that the only thing that can “make a world the object of divine decree and the end of creation is *Humanity* (rational being in general as pertaining to the world) *in its full moral perfection.*” The exemplar of this is the “Son of God”; a human being which is “alone pleasing to God”. Curiously such a being is however also to be conceived of as “in him from all eternity”, since “the idea of him proceeds from God’s being”. This seems to be Kant’s way of acknowledging the import of the father-son aspect of the trinity, since he says further that this being is “not, therefore, a created thing but God’s only-begotten Son”, that is moreover “the Word”, “(the Fiat!)”.

Kant insists that it is “our universal human duty to *elevate* ourselves to this ideal of moral perfection, i.e., to the prototype of moral disposition in its entire purity, and for this the very idea, which is presented to us by reason for emulation, can give us force”. Note here that the demand is coherent only because the divine character of the “Son of God” is not an empirical phenomenon, but

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1 See Kant (1996g, "§4 Concerning the Guiding Thread of Conscience in Matters of Faith"). Kant speaks of an “inner feeling” regarding the “true meaning of the Scripture and its divine origin” and claims that “this impulse is but the effect of the moral law which fills the human being with heartfelt respect, and hence deserves to be considered also as divine command.” He adds to this: “But just as we cannot derive or convey the recognition of laws, and that they are moral, on the basis of any sort of feeling, equally so and even less can we derive or convey on the basis of a feeling sure evidence of a direct divine influence.” Kant (1996g, 6:113-114, 145) Cf. Kant’s remarks about the “need of practical reason” for “the universal true religious faith” in a God that is (1) “the almighty creator of heaven and earth, i.e. morally as *holy* lawgiver”, (2) as “the preserver of the human race, as its *benevolent* rule and moral guardian”, and as (3) “the administrator of his own holy laws, i.e. as *just* judge.” (6:139, 165-166)

2 Kant is elsewhere dismissive of the trinity: (1996a, 7:38-39, 264).

3 Note he does not say “archetype”, because as we are told in the Dialectic’s chapter “On the pure concepts of reason” (A315/B372), we cannot represent this in intuition because it is an *idea.*
rather an intelligible aspect of the moral exemplar; we cannot experience this, thus it cannot be a limitation on our capacity to empirically realise moral demands. (In connection with this one should recall Kant’s remarks about Abraham and Isaac, wherein he suggests that we ought to be suspicious of apparently supernatural events since they do not conform to the world of sense within which all our knowledge occurs; moreover that in that particular case we ought to be suspicious of such an immoral demand as it does not conform with the moral law, which we do have a priori knowledge of through reason alone.)¹

The outcome of our employment of the idea of the “Son of God” as a moral exemplar is that in our “practical faith” in it, “the human being can thus hope to become pleasing to God (and thereby blessed)”. Again, we should remind ourselves that being pleasing to God is equivalent to satisfactorily fulfilling the commands which the moral law issues, since we hear them as if they were uttered in the “voice of God”. Thus, “only a human being conscious of such a moral disposition in himself as enables him to believe and self-assuredly trust that he, under similar temptation and afflictions (so far as these are made the touchstone of that idea), would steadfastly cling to the prototype of humanity and follow this prototype’s example in loyal emulation, only such a human being, and he alone, is entitled to consider himself not an unworthy object of divine pleasure.”²

As Kant goes on to discuss “The Objective Reality of This Idea”,³ we find that it is the fact that the “Son of God” is represented as moral perfection incarnate that we are able to “emulate” him, qua “example”.⁴ Indeed, Kant says that from “the practical point of view this idea [of the Son of God; of moral perfection incarnate] has complete reality within itself.” This is because it “resides in our morally-legislative reason.”⁵ Note also that in the practical postulates

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²Kant (1996g, 6:60-62, 103-105).
⁴See Kant (1996g, 6:64-5 & n.*, 107). Kant also refers to the “Son of God” as a “model” (6:66, 108).
⁵Kant in any case raises problems with the employment of the idea of the “Son of God” as moral exemplar. One of these, for instance, is that Jesus’s disposition is meant to be such as is already in harmony with moral perfection (not the quote above whereby the “Son of God” is meant to have “issued” from the will of God himself). The specific difficulties here are of
Kant deduces the moral necessity of belief in the existence of God from the fact that the moral law demands moral perfection of us; thus the idea of “God” as well as the “Son of God” have an identical origin: the demand of the moral law. The difference is that “God” _qua father_ is the theoretical source of the law and that whose voice we imagine as if being instanced _empirically_ in our consciousness (the practical manifestation is that of the idea as a force which commands and determines our will in a rational manner); the “Son of God” is a source of the theoretical conception of a divine, moral incarnation: the possibility of humanity being saved from its inherent evil. Meanwhile, in the practical domain, the narrative serves as a symbolic guide for actual actions which we might perform.

Now, given that Kant sees the Kingdom of Ends as involving rational subjects who all have their will determined wholly by the moral law in the form of particular practical laws (rationally determinations of the will, rather than empirical ones) as being the “complete determination” of the Categorical Imperative: equivalently, such a state of affairs would be that in which the _will of “God”_ would be _completely determined_ _qua_ actualised in the individual actions of rational subjects in virtue of their being parts of such a kingdom. Kant thus insists our moral vocation is to bring about a world where the rational _is_ actualised in the world, and that some “laws of nature” would actually be in such a situation rational laws (derivations of “The Categorical Imperative” that describe the total set of actions of human beings).

This means Kant’s moral philosophy insists we _ought_ to make the rational actual. Hegel is equally keen on such an idea, although Hegel claims that “what is rational is actual and what is actual is rational”, and thus believes the rational to itself necessarily _be_ actual (we find this idea rendered somewhat clearer upon examination of his claim that “not only is the syllogism rational, but _everything rational is a syllogism_”). When we encounter Hegel’s explanation of the trinity

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2I separate theoretical and practical dimensions in a related but distinct way in Chapter 3, §II.ii when speaking about the manifestation of “God” in theoretical and practical uses of reason.
4Hegel (1991a, 20).
5Hegel (1969, 664).
below it will become apparent how radical his views of “rational” and “syllogism” are.

In any case, Kant’s employment of the idea of the “Son of God” as a moral exemplar entails that:

We ought to conform to it, and therefore we must be able to.

Kant is here insisting that ought implies can, yet we may ask: “Does our conscientious cognisance of the moral imperative that we ought to perfect our moral performances and moral character imply that we can do so?” The answer to this depends upon what is meant by moral perfection, and as we have seen in our discussion in §§II.iii of (1) the obstacles to our representing satisfaction of the unconditional moral law in conditioned empirical behaviours, as well as (2), the role of description in establishing the moral status of actions,¹ it is far from clear how we might can be morally perfect.²

It is crucial that Kant explicitly connects his discussion of the “Son of God” here with his talk of symbolic representation by speaking of the role of analogical reasoning involved:

It is plainly a limitation of human reason, one which is ever inseparable from it, that we cannot think of any significant moral worth in the actions of a person without at the same time portraying this person or his expression in human guise, even though we do not thereby mean to say that this is how things are in themselves for we always need a certain analogy with natural being in order to make supersensible characteristics comprehensible to us...although through reason we cannot form any concept of how a self-sufficient being could sacrifice something that belongs to his blessedness, thus robbing himself of a perfection. We have here (as means of elucidation) a schematism of analogy, with which we cannot dispense. To transform it, however, into a schematism of object-determination (as means for expanding our cognition) constitutes

¹ See the “Casuistical questions” (and responses to them) scattered throughout Kant (1996d).
² Cf. Kant’s discussion of conscience here; he says it is not necessary that we know, beyond our ability to know, what is the right or wrong thing to do, but rather that we must believe that the thing we do is necessarily the right thing to do, which is of course meant to be something to which we are led by reasoning well in moral contexts (Kant (1996g, 6:185-186, 202-203)).
anthropomorphism, and from the moral point of view (in religion) this has most injurious consequences.¹

The basic problem with the employment of the “Son of God” as moral exemplar is that there is great difficulty with differentiating what Kant calls the “schematism of analogy” and the “schematism of object-determination”, because, as we have seen, the understanding is not separate from reason in the way he assumes. Indeed, how can we distinguish “direct” from “indirect” satisfaction of a schema (in general) if the only way to make sense of “indirect” satisfaction is by conceiving of it as akin to “direct” satisfaction that is simply never complete? After all, we must think of “direct” satisfaction of a schema as also never complete, albeit in a different way: there are always more instances of subsumption under concepts, and subordination of concepts to one another, that is required to further determine the schema of an empirical concept.

We should read the above as saying: determine its intension or sense by determining its extension through application to instances. This would mean we figure out what a concept means, what its schema is, where it applies and how, in applying it. Recalling our discussion in §V.1, consider the fact that the normative dimension of concepts allows us to modify intensions on the basis of their extensions: we can change our definition when we discover that something about instances to which we allow a concept to apply must be made explicit in the intension, or definition; or at least we might implicitly change our definition or realise our definition allowed certain novel instances to fall under it that up until a certain point we had no example of, given in intuition.

Note here the difference: We say that direct representations of concepts involves employment of an intellectual function of the understanding (the capacity to judge according to the rules that are essential to the concepts we employ) that is never completely determined because the function can always be employed in additional instances in determinative judgment (one must always be able to apply empirical concepts in novel instances). Likewise, empirical objects can never be completely determined because one can always find more marks in intuition to apply concepts to (a lesson from Kant’s account of aesthetic judgment).

For their part, indirect representations of ideas in symbols involve the attempt to satisfy a rational demand that can never be satisfied because it is unconditional, whereas symbolic

¹Kant (1996g, 6:64-65, 107, n.*).
representations of it in intuitional form are conditioned. Recall that Kant’s transcendental concept of reason is that of “the totality of conditions to a conditioned thing”, thus ideas of reason cannot be satisfied because they are instanced as principles that call for complete object-determination (a complete adumbration of conditions and determinations) rather than represent it.

Thus, the impossibility of completely determining an empirical concept that is directly represented is due to the fact that the complete set of instances to which it applies is not given: it expands infinitely. The impossibility of completely determining an idea that is indirectly represented follows from the fact that no instance can be said to satisfy it. Note how the task of the understanding is to reach toward the infinite set, whereas reason fails to find any members whatsoever for the sets whose proper names are ideas: the sets of the soul, the world-whole, God, the highest good, and so on, have zero members.

Note the mathematical complementarity between $\infty$ and 0: $1/0 = \infty$; for our purposes here: consider this to be a way of representing the idea that a singular idea (“1”) that cannot be divided into instances (thus, “0”) is infinite (“$\infty$”). Note that Kant’s ideas are not therefore undefined (as “0/0” in mathematics is), but rather their definitions simply cannot be adequately understood, except as formal, rational demands, that is, theoretical ideas performing a practical function.

The consequences for practical uses of reason are meant to be that if we represent moral perfection as if it were no more than performing certain actions that are or were performed, we would be taking moral instruction merely from examples, where this would render unconditional demands conditioned; it would render the infinite finite. Hegel’s famous response is that by separating the divine from the human and insisting that the infinite cannot, so to speak, be instanced in the finite, is to limit the infinite by the finite: to insist that the infinite is prevented by the empirical character of our will, from being instantiated. (And to use the device adduced above, reason’s entities have zero satisfactions.) Hegel’s point is that that which is truly infinite is able to permeate what Kant would call the empirically real and so actualise itself “without limit” in

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1 See A322-323/B379.

2 Note that “complete determination of things” is the task recommended by Kant’s “principle of complete determination” from the Transcendental Ideal (see Chapter 3), not the “complete determination of concepts”.

3 This criticism was articulated as early as 1802; see Hegel (1977a).
particular cases, just as our example of empirical concepts with “direct” satisfactions suggested. The issue is, of course, fixing just what “empirically real” and “actual” mean, and here one only needs to consult the dialectic from feeling and pure immediacy to rationally determined thought, where syllogisms are the “truth of the judgment”.

Notice that Hegel’s concern is identical to Kant’s: Kant insists that if reason is to be infinite it cannot be construed as satisfied by finitude, but Hegel would agree. Hegel’s objection is rather that Kant’s conception of reason is incoherent because if one cannot conceive of reason as connecting with empirical reality except insofar as it demands to be then it is empty.¹ According to Hegel, on Kant’s view moral demands cannot be satisfied and therefore reason cannot be meaningfully be said to be actual; it is, rather, as “phenomenal” as the empirical world of appearances.

We have said enough of this objection; we must now instead consider Hegel’s view of the Trinitarian representation of “God” and the lessons he believes it contains as to how we ought to conceive of rational self-consciousness. We attend to Hegel’s defence of “Knowledge of God”² in the Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion and consider some remarks about the trinity from the Encyclopedia Philosophy of Mind. It is worth pointing out that Hegel’s reflections from his Lectures are, at face value, extremely unconvincing: Hegel’s words often come across as no less dogmatic than the pre-Critical rational theology which Kant originally attacked. This is because he is, after all, attempting to account for what he calls “religious consciousness”. The main obstacle here is that of understanding Hegel’s views about content, and attention to a narrow range of points should reveal some of this difficulty to be unfounded.

Most pointedly, Hegel seems at many points to equivocate between “belief” and “knowledge”.³ Yet given that Hegel thinks the

¹ For Hegel, “God” exists precisely at that level where recognitive interaction is in its ideal shape, in acts of confession and forgiveness; in Hegel’s view, “God” is for Kant outside the moral sphere we inhabit. See the discussion of “C. Spirit That is Certain of Itself. Morality” esp. “Conscience. The ‘Beautiful Soul’; Evil and its Forgiveness” Hegel (1977b, §§632-671, 383-409).

² The section editorially entitled this way occurs in Hegel (2006, 277-330, 128-189).

³ “Knowledge is the universal, whereas belief is only a part of knowledge. If I believe in God, then God is in my consciousness, and I also know that God is.” Hegel (2006, 283, 135).
“form” of thought can generate “content”, we may say that the form of thought being the Absolute Idea (the philosophical concept that correlates with the religious image of “God”) entails the form of all thought following from it, at the level of thinking; indeed, this sounds very alike Kant’s claim that the complete determination of things in the world of sense requires the *ens realissimum* to be posited by reason.¹ Note then how knowledge may follow from belief: if one presumes that the content of thought follows from its form, then individual cases of knowledge presuppose a certain form from which they follow, and the ability to think about this form entails that one knows something about this form. For Hegel, in religious consciousness, qua immersed in representations, the freedom of thought is represented in the image of the trinity of the “God the Father, “God the Son”, and “the Holy Spirit”. At the level of representational thinking we cannot adequately represent such a form of the complete system of rational thought; thus at least in this sense Hegel agrees with Kant’s forbiddance from our representing the *omnitudo realitatis* and the *ens realissimum* in intuitional form.² According to Hegel, this, however, does not mean we do not *know* it. Indeed, he thinks the representational (what for Kant is, roughly, intuitional) depiction of the trinity *does* count as “knowledge of God”; moreover that this religious consciousness is the appropriate one in which to speak of “God”, where in philosophy it is more proper to speak of the Absolute Idea.

Consider one statement of Hegel’s view of an aspect of “knowledge of God” (rational insight as taking the form of immediate certainty):

> In one respect immediate certainty is said to be *knowledge*. I do not need to believe what I see before me, for I know it. I do not believe that a sky is above me; I see it. On the other hand, when I have rational insight into the necessity of a thing, then, too, I do not say “I believe.”³

I take it the presumption is that one can be said to know “God” both immediately and through reason. Now, if we recall that for Kant

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² Hegel says “we speak of “faith in God”—according to ordinary linguistic usage—because we have no immediate sensible intuition of God.” Hegel (2006, 284, 136).
“God” is a transcendental idea alongside the world-whole, we feel pressed to raise a related question in order to clarify the absurdity that we merely “believe” “God” exists. Thus, we ask whether it makes sense to say “I believe there is a world”; we may wonder whether the idea of an ultimate ground for all predications we make of things in experience—of all topics of thought that emerge in our consciousness, of all subjects we entertain—makes sense.

Hegel’s remarks about belief can be compared usefully in this connection:

Belief rests upon testimony and so has a ground. But the absolutely proper ground of belief, the absolute testimony to the content of a religion, is the witness of the spirit and not miracle or external, historical verification.¹

Hegel’s employment of the phrase “the witness of the spirit” is revealing: individual subjective religious belief is mediated by such a subjective consciousness’s inclusion in the wider sphere of Geist; yet individual instances of belief are not externally justified by their having been caused by beliefs that pervade communities of which the subjects holding the beliefs are parts. Rather, the “One” is reflected in “the Many” individuals by way of their grasping the unity to which they belong, but which cannot be grasped except as a negative unity.

We ought to connect this point with Hegel’s view of content. He reveals an important part of his view of cognition when he says that “[A]ny content can be in feeling, just as it can be in thought generally.” Prima facie, this suggests that the dialectical transformation of an intentional relation does not alter the intentional content of the act related to the object; that is, the dialectical differences between feeling, representation, and thought do not constitute differences in content as such. If this is right, Hegel is committed to the thesis that content is simply whatever a cognitive state is about, which would mean he equates intentional content with intentional object. And although Hegel does not explicitly put the point in these terms, such terminology can be employed to elucidate his view; this characterisation would clarify his repeated insistence on the unity of thought and being by explaining how it can be said that one can have the same content in one’s

¹Hegel (2006, 284, 137).
cognition in many different ways. In the present context, feeling is being discussed as one of these ways.¹

In addition, Hegel confirms that he understands feeling to be what in contemporary parlance is known as “non-cognitive”:

> We cannot say of feeling that it is good or not good, that it is correct and genuine on the one hand, or false or spurious on the other. This indeterminateness is feeling [per se].²

However, Hegel recognises that, although feeling is indeterminate in this way, when cognition takes this form it is precisely the determinateness of the feeling itself that is thematic. And according to Hegel “[T]his determinateness is what appears as its content.” Even more strikingly, he says

> To the extent that we have a representation of this determinateness and are ourselves conscious of it, we have therefore an object that also appears at the same time in a subjective mode, as an object of feeling. In the case of outwardly sensible feeling its determinateness is the content—for example, when we feel something hard, the determinateness of the feeling is therefore a hardness. But we also say about this hardness that there is a hard object present. The hardness therefore [both] is subjective and exists as an object.³

Hegel here seems to allow that the “content” is that which the form of cognition (feeling, representation, or thought) is about (in the terminology of the scholastic and phenomenological traditions: the “intentional object”) he apparently has no problem with allowing that such content can vary, whilst remaining the same. If so, this would go some way to explaining Hegel’s attitude to contradiction, for in the example just cited Hegel mentions the content in feeling is “hardness” (presumably a “sensation”), yet in representation and thought the shape of consciousness would take different forms, would

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¹ The remainder of the page Hegel (2006, 286, 138) expands on this point. On 139 Hegel insists upon the important of the corporeal character of the feeling of conviction, and thereby clarifies what he had said earlier regarding the “anthropological aspect” of feeling: such a primitive step on the road to clarified thought is infused with animalistic flavour (286, 138).

² Hegel (2006, 287, 139).

have distinct “content’, yet would nevertheless be about the same object, and so would have the same “content” in a different sense.¹

One might ask here whether Hegel would have benefitted from employing the tripartite distinction of intentional act, content, and object; one might also wonder whether Hegel’s line of thinking has a virtue that this tradition of usage does not. For his insistence on equating what in other contexts is referred to as “intentional content” and “intentional object” seems to go hand in hand with his thesis regarding the identity of thought and being. What Hegel must say, in order to avoid sounding completely absurd, is that one can have cognitive access to phenomena in a variety of structurally distinct ways (broadly: feeling, representation, and thought), and although in each case the “content” of the cognition is what the thought is about, this “content” can change whilst being the same.²

Put another way, one might say that these three distinct forms of cognition are not only “moments” of an intentional relation, in the sense of an intentional act, enjoyed by a subject, but are also moments of actuality, in Hegel’s sense of that word: they are basic structures involved with the emergence of linguistic consciousness, qua realisation and actualisation of spirit at the level of an individual subject. And notoriously, although according to Hegel one has the same “content” in feeling, representation, and thought, it is only in the latter that the structure of this intentional relation is adequate to

¹ See Redding (2007a, Chapter 7) for a helpful discussion of how Hegel’s attitude toward contradiction relates to the dialectical logical structure of his metaphysics. On 204 Redding refers to the essential role Hegel’s “cognitive contextualism” plays in his attitude toward contradiction. This is precisely the significance of the above discussion for the apparent contradictoriness of the content of distinct shapes of consciousness, insofar as they are meant to be the same, even if different (the intentional content and the object replicate the “subject” and “object” distinction).

² I will not say “remaining” since this introduces difficulties related to temporal reference of the kind with which sense-certainty struggles. Of course, “being” is a word that carries its own baggage, although it is the crucially transformational element of the dialectic that conflicts with the use of “remaining”, whereas Hegel shows the concept of “being” itself to undergo transformation on the way to the Absolute.

³ Cf. the remark cited below—“Philosophy does nothing but transform our representations into concepts. The content remains always the same.” (Hegel (2006, 292, 145))—with Hegel’s claim Hegel (1991b, §20, 50): “...philosophy does nothing but transform representations into concepts—although, of course, it does go on to transform the mere thought into the Concept.”
its own internal demands—most especially when thought moves in the realm of “the Concept”.

How does this point relate to Hegel’s discussion of “knowledge of God”? He does repeat the point just made by claiming that “the very determinateness of the feeling is the content”; thus, the determinateness of one’s feeling of knowing God is the content of that “knowing”; thus the structural failure: such content is radically subjective whereas, for Hegel, God is universal and anything but merely subjective.¹ Nevertheless, such feeling is meant to be essential in order to have one’s being—here in the guise of one’s subjectivity—fully imbued by the feeling of “knowing”, which is an important “anthropological” element in such a relation to God (amongst other things one might conceive of oneself as knowing).

So, in short, this failure of feeling to satisfy the conditions of “knowledge of God” proper rests on the fact that it is not the “authentic mode” of such knowledge. The “fundamental determination of feeling” is, instead, “the specificity or particularity of my own subjectivity.”² And so, in order to properly assess that such a determination that arises in my own consciousness has the “content” it seems to, “we must look about for grounds of decision other than those of feeling.”³ This is because, for Hegel, “it is true that every content is capable of being in feeling: religion, right, ethics, crime, passion. Each content has a place in feeling.” And I take it that this claim is a repetition of the point that whilst the proper, or most adequate, shape of consciousness is not always, and in fact rarely, feeling, this most primitive mode of cognition is absolutely essential; a fact which reminds us of the important anthropological aspect of knowing, referred to above.

Strikingly, however, Hegel extends his critique of feeling by claiming that it fails to provide the necessary structure for such a basic ethical distinction as that between good and evil; for as he says, “evil with all its shadings and qualifications is in feeling just as much as the good.”⁴ And after acknowledging the tendency of ethical

¹ Hegel says that “in the case of God we have already drawn attention to the fact that this is a content that belongs to thought, for thought is the soil in which this content is both apprehended and engendered alike.” Hegel (2006, 290, 142).
² Hegel (2006, 290, 142).
⁴ Hegel (2006, 291, 143). He also refers to Matthew 15:19 in this context (cf. n.73) when saying that “in the Bible it says that wicked thoughts of blasphemy proceed from the heart.”
traditions influenced by Christianity to insist that evil has its source in the heart, he notes that “natural feelings cannot be the proper impulses to action.” Which he takes to mean that “what is genuine is not the content of the heart as such, but instead what ought to be the heart’s goal and interest—this content and these determinations should become and be what is genuinely true.”

When Hegel proceeds to discuss the “representational” shape of consciousness of “God” in his Lectures, he begins by insisting that

what the genuinely true is we first learn through representation and thought.

And he then refers to the “form of feeling” as the “subjective aspect”, whereas the “form of representation” is said to be the “objective aspect, the content of the certainty”. This latter clause is puzzling, given the above thesis advanced regarding the relationship between Hegel’s views of shapes of consciousness and contradiction, for how could representation be the “content of the certainty”, if certainty is an experiential manifestation of pure immediacy—the sheer presentation in consciousness of a content? If the above thesis is correct, the content of the “certainty” that God exists ought to be pure immediacy of the feeling that God exists, ought it not? For our argument was that the content of cognition God could be the same, viz., be about God, whilst nevertheless be different. For we had effectively said that the content was the mode of the presentation, thus, the claim was advanced that the intentional content and the intentional object were, in Hegel’s eyes, apparently united (in the manner of thought and being standing in an identity relation). If this were correct, which it seemed in first approximation to be, what could Hegel mean here?

I take it that whilst Hegel allows for contradictoriness, he does nevertheless seem to think different phenomena have their own proper, most adequate mode of presentation. In this case, it seems that in the case of “God”, the shape of consciousness most proper is representation, and this is so even though its articulation in philosophy at the level of the “concept” is somehow superior. This could be taken to mean that the “form of representation concerns the objective aspect, the content of the certainty”. This would only be so, of course, if Hegel was limiting himself to talk of representation of “God” here, rather than to representation in general. If it were the

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1Hegel (2006, 291, 144).
latter, this would introduce the difficulty that representation was “the content of the certainty, the objective aspect”, of cognition in all cases, and for all phenomena. If “objective” is taken here to mean “related to the object, qua object”, rather than “object, thought about which is in this context conceptually mediated” then there is a good argument to think that this is actually the case. Nevertheless, we can let the point hold for now, in order to see what illumination it can provide for understanding Hegel’s insistence that

For human beings God is primarily in the form of representation. [Representation] is a consciousness of something that one has before oneself as something objective. The fact that the religious content is present primarily in the form of representation is connected with what I said earlier, religion is the consciousness of absolute truth in the way that it occurs for all human beings. Thus it is found primarily in the form of representation.¹

The connection between religion and philosophy is made explicitly in Hegel’s remarks following this. He asserts that philosophy has “the same content” as religion, which he takes in both cases to be “the truth”, and believes, moreover, to be “the spirit of the world generally and not the particular spirit.”² This is followed by an expression of Hegel’s general position regarding content, as mentioned already in the interpretation advanced above:

Philosophy does nothing but transform representation into concepts. The content remains always the same.³

Hegel then goes on to note that representations are “sensible forms of configurations”, typically referred to as “images” (Bilder). However, although representations take the form of images, “they have a significance distinct from that which the image as such primitively expresses”.⁴ And by this Hegel would appear to be saying the same thing we noted in §V.i in our discussion of the stages of the emergence of linguistic consciousness, in the movement from recollection to the imagination, where the universal character of a representation becomes thematised, rather than its particularity.

²Hegel (2006, 292, 144).
Chapter Two: Metarepresentational Structure in Kant and Hegel

The point would be that what the “image as such primitively expresses” is not as much to the point, as is its “symbolic or allegorical” character.

Indeed, Hegel says that, viewed this way, representations have a dual character; with them, we “have before us something twofold”—

1. “..the immediate”
2. “…what is meant by it, its inner meaning”

—where (1) is the “external aspect”.¹ In commenting on this symbolic character of religious imagery, Hegel is quite explicit about the non-literal character of the discourse in which it is found, for he says that “there are many forms in religion about which we know that they are only metaphors.”² And his recurring Trinitarian example is adduced:

if we say that God has begotten a son, we know quite well this is only an image; representation provides us with “son” and “begetter” from a familiar relationship, which, as we well know, is not meant in its immediacy, but is supposed to signify a different relationship, which is something like this one. This sensible relationship has right within itself something corresponding for the most part to what is properly meant with regard to God.

Recalling our discussion from §V.i we can say that, for Hegel, the ultimate symbolic import of this metaphor rests on a structural similarity between the religious imagery of “God the Father”, “the Son”, and “the Holy Spirit”, and a certain structure in the form of Absolute Spirit known as philosophy (that of “Being”, “Essence”, and “the Concept”, which comprises the Absolute Idea).³ We say “ultimate” import because the Absolute Idea of philosophy is more rarefied than the God of religion, and this is despite the fact that, as Hegel was cited as saying above, religious imagery is the essential mode in which “Truth” is manifested for human beings. Hegel sheds some light on this connection in a lucid passage from the Encyclopedia Philosophy of Mind that is worth quoting at length:

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² Hegel (2006, 293, 146).
³ See the Introduction to The Subjective Logic in Hegel (1969) where it is said that “the Concept” is the truth of “Being” and “Essence” and contain them within it; note also that “the Idea” is the unity of “the Concept” and “reality”.

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What we have said...about the nature of mind is something which philosophy alone can and does demonstrate; it does not need to be confirmed by our ordinary consciousness. But in so far as our non-philosophical thinking, on its part, needs an understandable account of the developed Concept of mind or spirit, it may be reminded that the Christian theology, too, conceives of God, that is, of Truth, as spirit and contemplates this, not as something quiescent, something abiding in empty identicalness but as something which necessarily enters into the process of distinguishing itself from itself, of positing its Other, and which comes to itself only through this Other, and by positively overcoming it—not by abandoning it. Theology, as we know, expresses this process in picture-thinking by saying that God the Father (this simple universal or being-within-self), putting his aside solitariness creates Nature (the being that is external to itself, outside of itself), begets a Son (his other “I”), but in the power of his love beholds in this Other himself, recognises his likeness therein and in it returns to unity with himself; but this unity is no longer abstract and immediate, but a concrete unity mediated by the moment of difference; it is the Holy Spirit which proceeds from the Father and the Son, reaching its perfect actuality and truth in the community of Christians; and it is as this that God must be known if he is to be grasped in his absolute truth, as the actual Idea in and for itself, and not merely in the form of the pure Concept, of abstract being-within-self, or in the equally untrue form of a detached actuality not corresponding to the universality of his Concept, but in the full agreement of his Concept and his actuality.¹

This clarification ought therefore to be seen as explaining Hegel’s claim that the sensible representation of religious imagery “has right within itself something corresponding for the most part to what is properly meant with regard to God”, where “what is properly meant” is that expressed by the Absolute Idea of philosophy.

Now Hegel makes it fairly clear that the import of religious imagery is not to be evaluated in terms of its claim to truth in the ordinary sense, where such an assessment would lead to the objection of its being merely symbolic and ultimately fictive.² He says in this context that “we certainly do attend to the story with our imagination, but we do not ask whether it is meant seriously.”³ And in relating his case to Greek mythology, adds that “[W]e enjoy the narratives of Jupiter and the other deities, but we do not in the main inquire further about what Homer reports of them to us, we do not

¹Hegel (1971, §381, 12-13).
take it in the way we do some other historical report.” However, “there is also something historical that is a divine history—a story, indeed, that is supposed to be history in the proper sense, namely the story of Jesus.” Yet Hegel means something quite particular by this, for he claims that the story of Jesus can be taken in a twofold sense that notes the actual historical life of a man, as well as the “divine history”, where the latter is the “object of reason”.

Hegel’s meaning is not unequivocal here unless, and until, the idea of an “object of reason” can be rendered distinct from, say, a natural object, where “object of reason” is taken to be the proper analysis in the context of spirit (which does seem eminently plausible).

Hegel strengthens this impression in adding:

Just as a myth has a meaning or an allegory within it, so there is this twofold character generally in every story. Undoubtedly there are myths in which the outward appearance is the predominant feature. But ordinarily a myth contains an allegory, as in the case of Plato.

And importantly,

Generally speaking, every history contains this external sequence of occurrences and action, but they are occurrences with respect to a human being, a spirit. What is more, the history of a state is the action, deed, and fate of a universal spirit, the spirit of a people. Histories of this kind already have a universal feature within them, implicitly and explicitly. If we take this superficially, we can say that from every history a moral may be extracted. The moral encapsulates at least the essential ethical powers that have contributed to the action and brought about the event, and they are the inner or substantial element.1

Curiously, Hegel thinks that representation necessarily portrays such “powers of ethical life” in a narrative form, or “the way it exists in appearance”, whereas at the level of thought the universal itself is grasped.2 At least here Hegel does not explain exactly what these “essential ethical powers” are meant to be, although the general point is clear: at the level of thought the common characteristics of

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2Hegel (2006, 295, 148). It is worth noting at this juncture Hegel’s words from the Introduction to the Subjective Logic: “philosophy is not meant to be a narration of happenings but a cognition of what is true in them, and further, on the basis of this cognition, to comprehend that which, in the narrative, appears as a mere happening.” Hegel (1969, 588).
ethical actions can be expressed in the form of something akin to what Kant would call a duty, where the content of the action performed from duty can be given verbal expression in a sufficiently general way such as to abstract from the “appearance” of the time, place, and particularity of instances which fulfil the universal demand satisfied by the particular performance.

Curiously, Hegel adds to these reflections the remark that

the historical as such is what exists for representation, and on the other hand there are images.

And he follows this with a repetition of the same point made above, about the twofold aspect of stories, now related to the shape of spirit known as “religion”, where religion portrays historical, ethical, stories in the shape of representation; an essentially sensible form that is instanced as “a series of actions and sensible determinations that follow one another in time and then occur side by side in space.” Crucially,

The content is empirical, concrete, manifold, its combination residing partly in spatial contiguity and partly in temporal succession.

And yet “this content has an inner aspect—there is spirit within it that acts upon spirit”, where by this Hegel is acknowledging this Spinozist conception of the (True) Infinite, where such is limited by nothing outside of itself; the characterisation that enables Hegel to defend a conception of spirit that is not supernatural in the traditional sense, but is nevertheless not to be analysed in standardly “natural” terms either. He does say further that

To the spirit that is in the content the subjective spirit bears witness—initially through a dim recognition lacking the development for consciousness of this spirit that is in the content.

And in doing so refers to a theme exemplified by his Phenomenology as whole—or, at least, in doing so covertly hints at the veracity of an interpretation that conceives of that work as involving an ironic double-perspective of a spirit whose transformations are being viewed from the outside whilst being simultaneously understood from an angle only visible from within such a process.

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1 For a nice discussion of this locution and the significance it has for Hegel, see Pinkard (2008).
In his closing reflections on representation proper, Hegel clarifies the thesis which we extracted from him above, regarding his position on “content”. He says

Representation concerns the objective side of the content, whereas feeling concerns the manner in which the content exists within our specific being, or within the specificity of consciousness.¹

And he then proceeds to question how these sides, or moments, relate with respect to religious consciousness; namely, how one form might derive from the other (religious feeling from religious representation, or vice-versa). He answers this by restating the fact that whilst feelings “contain this enveloped subjectivity”, they cannot serve as a ground for justification of the content, simply because they are too indeterminate. And moreover, that representation is the “more objective mode” within which the content of religion, qua shape of spirit, is present within consciousness.² And in closing, provides an explanation of the functional role of the religious representation:

Representation is necessary for it [the indeterminacy of religious feeling] to come to feeling and to consciousness, for it to emerge into consciousness and be felt. Instruction and teaching belong to this [process of] representation, and religious formation everywhere begins from this point.³

Here the distinctly anthropological character of religious imagery, mentioned earlier, is affirmed, and light is shed on Hegel’s view of the moral vocation of humanity. Recalling Kant’s employment of symbolic representation in his practical philosophy as a necessary device for rendering unconditional moral demands in a conditioned form comprehensible (we might say “apprehensible”, qua sensible), we are inclined to say that Hegel takes a similar view, except Hegel seems to think the trinity is an ideal model for thinking about the very relation itself that a finite consciousness stands in to what Kant would call the “moral law”. For Hegel’s insistence upon the anthropological character of religious representation, and the divine character of dialectical logic, seems to mirror Kant’s distinction between the conditioned and unconditioned, where the former is

¹Hegel (2006, 297, 150).
represented in a spatio-temporal fashion, and the latter is represented in a purely rational manner, not limited by the conditions of possible experience for those with sensible (rather than intellectual) intuition.

The most helpful way to understand Hegel’s discussion is to note that the dialectical development of consciousness from “sense-certainty, through “perception”, and then “the understanding” from the Phenomenology implies that that of which one is immediately conscious cannot be said, unless it is mediated; thus what sense-certainty cannot articulate itself. For this same reason Hegel says ““[W]e set certainty in opposition to truth, for in that something is certain it is not yet true.” This same point holds for cognition of “God”, although “God” is meant to be a special case since the way in which it is conceived reveals the capacity for rational freedom of the individual in question (thus here one should compare Hegel’s discussion of varieties of religion). Hegel thus places a much stronger emphasis on the exact nature of the idea of “God” than Kant, and this follows from his appreciation of the historical nature of consciousness: Hegel appreciates that particular cultural practices, especially what he groups under “Absolute Spirit”, stand to reveal crucial aspects of the forms of life connected with it. Hegel believes that the Christian trinity, as an image of three-in-one, represents a deep truth about the nature of a free, rational self-consciousness, and its capacity to be instantiated in the modern world.

Hegel’s view of the rational does not entail that we require an infinitely distant future life in which we are merely intelligible beings in order to conceive of it as actualised. This is because such a view of “rational” is wholly without empirical content: it is empty. Thus, for infinite rationality to escape becoming finite, qua blocked from actualisation in the world by finite wills, it must be able to be instanced in the finite; that is, the infinite and the finite must be entangled rather than abstract negations of one another. As a corollary of this, God and the human standpoint must be seen to be entangled in the actual: Absolute Knowing then must be conceived of as the infinite process of renewing one’s commitment to norms that one realises and actualises in the world, as a part of “The Holy Spirit’ (3rd moment of the Trinity).

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1Hegel (2006, 283, 135).
Chapter Three: A Hegelian Dialectical Exposition of Kant’s Principle of Complete Determination
I Preamble

This chapter adds more detail to the account offered in Chapter 2, §II.ii of the basic representational and structural differences between Kant's and Hegel's respective ideas of "God". In that earlier context we were concerned with the way in which Kant's theory of reason led him to postulate an idea of "God" that was "beyond" experience, yet, in theoretical uses of reason, was regulative for systematically unified, rational, self-conscious cognition of the phenomenal world. We will now be focusing on the specific logical operations Kant takes to be involved in the "rational ascent" to the idea of "God".

Characterising the logical or rational procedure as an "ascent" is a way of acknowledging that the nature of Kant's conception of the rational order is akin to the Porphyrian tree. In the first chapter of the Transcendental Dialectic, "The transcendental ideas", Kant had construed rational ascent to conditions as "prosyllogistic" and descent to appearances as "episyllogistic". Recall that this distinction can helpfully be clarified by connecting it with a similar contrast drawn with regard to judgment in the third Critique between reflective judgment through "classification", and determinative judgment through "specification", respectively.

Grasping the role these forms of syllogising and judging have in Kant's philosophy is central for understanding what he means by "transcendental", and, given the recognition of similar, related logical principles in Hegel's idealist logic, is central also for understanding how Hegel's own philosophy might be "transcendental" in a non-foundational sense—the apparent contradictoriness of that idea notwithstanding. With respect to Hegel, what one needs to grasp is that whilst grounds may be essential, they need not be ultimate and presuppositional in any straightforward sense. Moreover, grounds must ultimately be rational (stem from reason), and not be mere products of the abstract understanding's capacity to judge, in Kant's sense.

I've just mentioned "operations" rather than "principles", because the latter is to be discussed here in the singular as the "principle of complete determination" (hereafter PCD), whilst the former can be taken to here refer to the function of assumptions expressed by (1) disjunctive judgment and (2) infinite judgment in the employment of the principle itself. The assumptions expressed by these principles are that one can and must (1) divide possible predications of an object into those that are satisfied and those that are not, by utilising the
logical notion of the *disjunctive* “either/or” as a transcendental function and (2), in accord with the transcendental function of *infinite* judgment, affirm a negative predicate “not P”, and thereby posit a whole of possibility by which is divided into that which satisfies “P” and that which does not.

Note how these functions are complementary: the major premise of a disjunctive syllogism divides the whole of possibility into that which satisfies a predicate and that which does not, and infinite judgment in its place as a minor premise affirms a negative predicate of an object (which is one of the disjuncts in the major premise) and thereby alludes to a transcendental sphere, the world of sense, that stands to be determined.\(^1\) Kant thinks this procedure involves something merely “analogous” to judgment because the “All of reality” is not a genus which may divided into species.\(^2\) At any rate, it is of great significance that Kant think does not think the “All of reality” (*omnitudo realitatis*) stands to “bits of reality”—judgments about phenomena—as genera stand to species. We will return to this point.

Note that although the pure concepts of reason also function as principles for the systematic unification of the understanding’s actions in experience, the PCD should be interpreted as the basic principle of Kant’s transcendental concept of reason. After all, as he says, “the transcendental concept of reason is none other than that of the *totality of conditions* to a given conditioned thing”,\(^3\) and the totality of *all* conditions—the ground of complete determination of *all* things—conceived of as a singular “*in individuo*”, as Kant puts it, is the *ens realissimum* (“the most real being”). This means the idea of “God” is for Kant more fundamental and essential than that of the soul and the world-whole; it is not simply another transcendental idea, it is both that and the Transcendental Ideal.

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1. These are the grounds of the PCD Longuenesse (1995/2005, 217-218) recognises. The essential connection between these forms of judgment is noted also in Longuenesse (2001/2005, 190): “Note…the close connection between the forms of disjunctive and infinite judgment: these forms jointly contribute to the constitution of a unified logical space within which concepts delimit each other’s sphere, and thus contribute to the determination of each other’s meaning.” On 191 Longuenesse enumerates five themes she finds in Kant’s table of judgments, which, if coupled with her account of the PCD, give a summary of her reading of the skeleton of Kant’s system of transcendental logic.
3. A322/B379.
It is these operations, disjunctive and infinite judgment, that will here be given a Hegelian dialectical exposition. This dialectical exposition will reveal some novel themes in both Kant’s and Hegel’s conceptions of determination, and will therefore reveal also the dialectical connection between their respective ideas of “God” and that of a rational, judging self-consciousness.¹

¹ There is a portion of the literature on determination—specifically, that on determinables and determinates—that it would be valuable to connect with the themes in this chapter. Such a task extends, however, beyond our immediate concern of clarifying Kant and Hegel. If one were to take this path, one ought to begin with Johnson (1921), development of him by Prior (1949a, b), the symposium with Körner (1959) and Searle (1959), and Rosenberg’s (1966) dissertation under Sellars. For some recent overviews see Funkhouser (2006) and Sanford (2011). For a different angle which has influenced work on this topic (i.e., Putnam’s), see Wittgenstein (1929).

Interestingly, Fine (2011) inquires as to what would be involved with the world itself having a determinable-determinate structure. (Notice Fine does not pose the question: “What would it mean to say that the world itself has a determinable-determinate structure?”) Prima facie, this general question presupposes a transcendentally real version of the ens realissimum in the Leibnizian sense, tied to the sheer “logical possibility” of things (and not just concepts) that Kant views as metaphysically indeterminate and undeterminable.

A way of connecting Fine’s analysis with the account of determination here can be recommended on the basis of a programmatic remark: “I have not wanted to say what it is for a determinate to belong to a given determinable but to say what it is for the world to possess the kind of structure that it has when the determinate/determinable distinction is in play.” (162) Note that a transcendental idealist (Kant), unlike a transcendental realist (Aristotle/Fine), will insist that talk of the world possessing determinable-determinate structure entails a theory about what makes determination by a self-conscious, rational subject possible, and that this theory will tell one everything one can know about what it is for the world to possess a determinable-determinate structure, for this can be nothing more than what it is to know the world as such. Fine does say, however, that his account is given in abstraction from such a question (163). One could take him then to giving an account that is either neutral with respect to transcendental logic, supplementary to it, or in conflict with it. I shall not attempt to address this question here.

In any case, it is likely that Fine’s analysis of that question is conducted in ignorance of its connection with the idealist reading of determination here explored. It is unsurprising, however, that a Neo-Aristotelian metaphysician would find the idea of determinable-determinate structure a worthy topic of analysis; for whilst the relation is not itself identical to that of subjects and accidents, there is a connection. Cf. Johnson (1921, 173 & ff.)
Evidently determination is an important topic in the philosophy of logic, so a clear view of how Kant’s and Hegel’s perspectives on it differ ought to aid understanding of some of the peculiarities of their idealist logics also. And given that idealist logic posits certain epistemological grounds for ontological claims, explication of the former will recommend a general connection between both of their philosophies and what is now referred to as “metametaphysics”.

It is also significant that if the complete determination in question is essentially judgmental then the possibility of completely determining a thing in this sense will for Kant have at least the same conditions as those placed upon judging in general.

The account given here aims to show how in idealist logic there is an intimate connection between the way in which an individual thing can be determined and the structure of the system within which it is determined: it is precisely the function of the PCD to ensure this possibility; thus the PCD serves as the highest of the principles whose manifestation is of ideas of reason (we might even say it is \textit{the grounding principle of reason} in both theoretical and practical domains).

The account given here thus provides a sketch of what the connection between individual object determination and the idea of a unified rational system is for both Kant and Hegel. We will see that Kant’s view of this connection begins with a rejection of the Leibnizian view of the concepts “matter” and “form”, where Kant will insist that “matter” is to be conceived as “logical genus” and “form” as its mode of specification in “the form of a system”.

I take the claims above to imply that idealist logic, for \textit{both} Kant and Hegel, articulates conditions and grounds for (1) a rational self-consciousness; (2) the things about which such a rational self-consciousness can have thoughts; and (3) the relation in which a

\footnotesize{on the substantive and the adjective, the difference between which is for him a point of departure in offering an account of determinables and determinates.

\footnotesize{1} See Chalmers (2009). I think doing so demonstrates how enlightening idealist logic is, for such logic, for Kant and Hegel, articulates the structure of the foundation of ontological claims.

\footnotesize{2} See Longuenesse (1995/2005, 213) for a similar view. She offers a capsule description of her reading of the first Critique at 232 & ff. Kant develops the idea of a “form of a system” in greater detail in the 3rd Critique. See the First Introduction: “Nature specifies its general laws into empirical ones, in accordance with the form of a logical system, in behalf of the power of judgment.” Kant (2000, 20:216, 19)
rational self-consciousness and the things about it can have thoughts stand to each other. This focus reveals the dialectical connection between their respective conceptions of the way in which understanding is merely “finite” and reason “infinite”; that is, our focus reveals their distinct accounts of the dialectical connection between “the human standpoint” and “knowledge of God”.¹

The structure of the chapter is as follows. In §II I explain what Kant is up to in The Ideal of Pure Reason, and why the section of that chapter known as “The Transcendental Ideal” is so important. I narrow my focus further by highlighting the importance of Kant’s differentiation between two principles at the beginning of the Transcendental Ideal, and explain how Kant there commits himself to two distinct views about modality: one relative to “concepts” and one relative to “things”. The former kind of modality is “logical” and the latter “real”.

It is important to appreciate the difference between real and logical possibility, since the reading of the PCD I shall give here depends on acknowledging that, for Kant, whilst the complete determination of things involves following a principle that asks one to forever reach beyond one’s actual experience, it does not require one to transcend what Kant calls possible experience. This reading of the PCD follows Longuenesse and contradicts much of the extant literature on the Transcendental Ideal.²

Following Longuenesse,³ we focus on the theoretical components that ground Kant’s PCD (infinite judgment, disjunctive judgment, and the synthetic unity of apperception) and proceed by offering a Hegelian perspective on both their character, in isolation, and on

¹ Recall the adumbration of this point in Chapter 1 and the paper it took as a point of departure: Longuenesse (1995/2007).
² See, for example, Wood (1978), Grier (2001), Ostaric (2009).
³ Note that on (1995/2005, 212) Longunesse equates the totum realitatis with the “unlimited whole of reality”. Kant does not use the phrase totum realitatis in the the Transcendental Ideal; he refers to the omnitudo realitatis as the “All of reality”, and there is a subtle difference. Longuenesse seems to be employing “totum realitatis” in order to establish a connection with Kant’s response to Leibniz in The Amphiboly, where Kant rejects the idea that “the whole of possibility” (in the purely rational sense, of non-contradictoriness = conceivability = possibility, where in the case of the “most real being”, possibility = actuality) is equivalent to an “unlimited whole of reality”, because “reality”, for Kant, is empirical and therefore subject to transcendental-logical conditions of possibility.
their supposed roles in the epistemic and semantical complete determination of things.

Following our exposition of judgmental determination in §§III-III.ii we offer, in short compass, an articulation of some of the implications of this exposition. We will thereby also mount an explanation of the fundamental place judgmental determination occupies in Kant's and Hegel's projects of articulating the logic of self-consciousness, where self-consciousness necessarily involves determination of objects that are not the self. Therefore, in §IV, we will examine Hegel's statement of his program in the Introduction to The Subjective Logic, as well as remarks he makes about self-consciousness elsewhere. The themes explored in that crucial section will then be connected with those at the core of Kant's transcendental idealism: those explored in Kant's Transcendental Deduction, and expressed in Kant's claim for a synthetic unity of apperception.

Given that an informed decision about the status of the idea of "God" here presupposes at least a clarification of the arguments used to motivate a claim for there being a conceptual dependence between the idea of "God" and the idea of self-consciousness, we must examine those aspects of transcendental logic that are most important for understanding this connection. That is exactly what I believe Longuenesse's reading allows for, even if she concludes by rejecting Kant's claim that the ens realissimum is a necessary idea of reason in its theoretical use.2

By focussing on judgment, and by demonstrating the connections it has, in Kant and Hegel, with the idea of a “human standpoint” and the idea of “God”, or “knowledge of God”, we open the way to further fruitful dialogue between analytical reconstructions of German Idealism and detailed, exegetical work. The common offering here is a theory of what it takes to be a judging, and therefore rational, concept-using, normatively-constrained, animal.

1 Here we recall not only Kant's claim in the Refutation of Idealism that “inner experience...is possible only under the presupposition of outer experience" (B275), but also Fichte's (1982) development of transcendental idealism as involving a distinction between the “I” and “not-I” (see especially his remarks about Kant in “Second Introduction: For readers who already have a philosophical system”). It is Fichte's development of Kant that allows for, amongst other things, Hegel's radicalisation of the idea of determination.

II Kant’s aims in The Transcendental Ideal

Let us recall the systematising, unifying drive of reason as it is detailed in the arguments of the chapter of the Transcendental Dialectic entitled “The Ideal of Pure Reason”. And let us be reminded that this chapter is the third in a series of three chapters in the Second Book of the Dialectic (The Dialectical Inferences of Pure Reason), each of which criticises one of the three traditional topics of metaphysica specialis: rational psychology, rational cosmology, and rational theology, to which correspond “The Paralogisms of Pure Reason”, “The Antinomy of Pure Reason”, and “The Ideal of Pure Reason”, respectively.

The Ideal of Pure Reason is concerned with the errors of rational theology and its argument essentially has three stages: (1) The term “ideal” is introduced and the form of representation exemplified by an ideal is compared with ideas\(^1\) and the categories;\(^2\) (2) the connection between the ideal and Kant’s transcendental method is drawn and a “critical”, or “regulative” conception of a “highest something” is intimated, albeit darkly; (3) the traditional proofs for the existence of a highest being (i.e., “God”) are repudiated.\(^3\) The obscurity of (2) will be our object of clarification. This topic is addressed in the Transcendental Ideal.\(^4\)

Now, whilst Kant’s criticisms of the arguments for the existence of God are of interest, the cosmological and the physicotheological proofs presuppose the validity of the ontological proof, so successful critique of the latter is sufficient for rejection of the former two.\(^5\)

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\(^2\)A80/B106 & ff.
\(^3\)Cf. Grier’s account of the ideal (2001, 230 & ff.).
\(^4\)As Longuenesse (1995/2005, 212, n.3) notes, when employing the phrase “transcendental ideal” Kant is sometimes referring to (1) the process of reasoning which leads to the ens realissimum, and sometimes he is referring to (2) the ens realissimum itself. Note also that the phrase is the title of the section in which the arguments and the entity are discussed.
\(^5\)Note that this strategy does not involve the fallacy of denying the antecedent; namely, claiming that “If p, then q; not p; therefore, not q.” The point is that the critical account of the PCD, which dispenses with the rationalist defence of the ens realissimum, dispenses also with the proofs of rational theology. This is because the soundness of the rationalist reading
Further restriction of our attention is justified by the fact that Kant’s criticisms of the ontological proof follow from his critical account of the PCD; a critical account that is the centrepiece of Kant’s reformulation of rational theology as transcendental theology. Close analysis of that difficult piece of text therefore reveals the connection between Kant’s critique of rational theology and his philosophical position as a whole. It in fact reveals his transcendental idealism to be transcendental theology (we return to this below in §II.ii).

In the Transcendental Ideal, Kant claims that reason’s systematising, unifying “drive to the unconditioned” ends with the postulation of two necessary, rational entities\(^1\) which, when conceived in a traditional rationalist sense, involve “illusions of reason”:\(^2\) the \textit{omnitudo realitatis}, and the \textit{ens realissimum}.\(^1\)(Cf.

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1 I say “entities” rather than “ideals” in order to respect Kant’s terminological insistence that (1), the \textit{ens realissimum} is “the one genuine ideal of which human reason is capable” (A576/B604; my emphasis) and (2), that “the ideal of pure reason is the object of a transcendental theology” (A580/B608).

2 Here note the contrast between two metaphysical pitfalls for the rational judging consciousness: (1) \textit{errors of judgment} (the “fallacy of subreption” as so-called in his pre-Critical work) where appearances are mistaken for things in themselves, as guarded against in the Appendix to the Analytic (The Amphiboly), and (2) \textit{illusions of reason}, which are detailed in the Dialectic, where rational posits such as the pure concepts of reason are taken to have objective reality. Grier (2001) is exemplary with regard to her thorough treatment of the issues involved here (on this issue see esp. Chapters 3 & 4). Her main contribution is to demonstrate how the latter pitfall is an ineradicable and indeed essential element of reason in its push to the unconditioned (see the contrast between “regulative” and “constitutive” in the Appendix to the Dialectic); that the former pitfall is entirely avoidable is argued for by Kant in his transcendental investigations.
Kant’s claim in the Appendix to the Dialectic that the transcendental employment of the pure concepts of reason is justified by the systematic unity they afford our cognition. The latter entity (“the most real being”) is a dialectical transformation of the former (“All of reality”) and is meant to contain the “perfection” of all predicates instanced in it. The *ens realissimum* is conceived of as a singular, or “*in individuo*”, as Kant says.\(^2\) The *ens realissimum*, “the concept of an individual being”, is

a *transcendental ideal* which is the *ground of the complete determination* that is *necessarily encountered in everything existing*, and which constitutes the supreme and complete *material condition of*

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1 Oddly, Longuenesse (1995/2005) employs the term “*totumrealitatis*” throughout. At 212 she equates this with “unlimited whole of reality”, at 220 with “sum total of all realities” and “totality of positive predicates”, “complete whole of positive determinations of things”. At 222 n.12 she attributes to Kant the view that this idea could only be the “whole of reality given to the senses”; at 229 “the (indeterminate, collective) whole of reality given in space and time”. She mentions the *omnitudorealitatis* in only two places: (1) at 219, where she identifies it with the “sum total of all reality”, and at 222, where it is described as a “totality of positive predicates”.

Since Kant only ever mentions the *omnitudorealitatis* I will not use the phrase “*totumrealitatis*”. Note that the relevant logical moves are in any case from a “sum total of all possibility” (A573/B601) to an “All of reality” (*omnitudorealitatis*; A576/B604) to a “most real being” (*ens realissimum*; A576/B604). The equivalent in The Amphiboly of the move from the “sum total of all possibility” to the “All of reality” in the Transcendental Ideal is that from the “matter of all possibility” to “unbounded reality” (A266/B322 & ff.). In the case of the intellectualist philosopher in The Amphiboly, however, these two are simply taken to be equivalent. There is only taken to be a progression in the Transcendental Ideal because Kant is discussing what he takes to be a logical error; the consequence is that Kant’s transcendental conception of possibility can only be explained in terms of the relation between the cognitive faculty of the judging subject and the empirical reality given in the world of sense about which they make judgments.

If one were to develop Kant’s view of possibility in contemporary terms, a sound beginning can be found in Hintikka (1969) and the recent appraisal of him in Perry (2009).

2 A568/B396.
its possibility, to which all thinking of objects in general must, as regards the content of that thinking, be traced back.¹

The ens realissimum is also conceived of by Kant as “the one single genuine ideal of which human reason is capable, because only in this one single case is an—in itself universal—concept of one thing thoroughly determined through itself, and cognized as the representation of an individual.” Moreover, the ens realissimum is that which is “realised...hypostatised...and personified”, and thereby transformed from a “mere representation” into “a highest understanding...an intelligence”,² in order to rationally ground the systematic unity of thought about nature;³ a systematicity that is, as later argued in the Critique of the Power of Judgment, both deterministic and teleological.⁴

As we’ve seen, ideas appear to have a more general and abstract cognitive function than the categories insofar as they are what we might call “meta-judgmental” rather than judgmental: they serve to unify and systematise the judgmental actions of the understanding, whereas the categories serve to unify intuitional content in judgment itself. Ideas are rational, and not simply intellectual. “Ideals”, however, are to be understood “not merely in concreto but in individuo, i.e., as an individual thing which is determinable, or even determined, through the idea alone.”⁵ This willingness to speak of determination as occurring amongst the elements of thought, rather than involving the procedure expressed in the imagery of language and thought as “reaching beyond” or “outside” itself to determine the world, recalls Kant’s employment of a unique version of the Aristotelian form/matter distinction, as stated in The Amphiboly:

¹A576/B604; my emphases. I have modified Guyer and Wood’s translation to harmonise with Longuenesse’s translation of “durchgängig” as “complete” rather than “thoroughgoing”. This is simply because I engage closely with Longuenesse’s reading of the principle. Note that Norman Kemp-Smith also translates “durchgängig” as “complete”.

²A583/B611. Apart from the Latin expressions, the emphases in the paragraph are mine.

³Note the significance of the fact that for Kant nature was the world of sense (or, to use a Sellarsian turn of phrase, the world of “actual” and “obtainable” empirical representings).

⁴The dialectic of determinative and teleological judgment is the topic of the Second Division of the Second Part of the Critique of the Power of Judgment (5:385-415, 257-284) and the discussion of this particular issue occurs in the famous §§75-77 (5:397-410, 268-279).

⁵A568/B596.
Matter and form. These are two concepts that ground all other reflection, so inseparably are they bound up with every use of the understanding. The former signifies the determinable in general, the latter its determination (both in the transcendental sense, since one abstracts from all differences in what is given and from the way in which that is determined). The logicians formerly called the universal the matter, but the specific difference the form.\(^2\)

One is here struck by the way Kant’s account of “matter” and “form” as “concepts of reflection” clarifies another of his explanations of the “matter” and “form” of thought, as offered in the B Edition of the Metaphysical Deduction:

the impressions of the senses provide the first occasion for opening the entire power of cognition to them and for bringing about experience, which contains two very heterogeneous elements, namely a matter for cognition from the senses and a certain form for ordering it from the inner source of intuiting and thinking, which, on the occasion of the former, are first brought into use and bring forth concepts.\(^3\)

Here we have Kant’s classic statement that experiential “content” is to be thought of as having two conditioning “forms”: the pure form of intuition and the pure form of concepts. Once one appreciates the citation from The Amphiboly given prior to this, it becomes clear that when Kant speaks of “matter” and “form” it must remembered that these are “concepts of reflection” that have a function in

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\(^1\) Cf. Kant’s official statement about “Matter and form of judgments”: “Matter and form belong to every judgment as essential constituents of it. The matter of the judgment consists in the given representations that are combined in the unity of consciousness in the judgment, the form in the determination of the way that the various representations belong, as such, to one consciousness.” Kant (1992a, 597).

\(^2\) A266-268/B322-324; my emphases. “The logicians” here refers to the Schoolmen: Kant is appropriating a piece of Aristotelian scholasticism and pressing it into service for what could be called “purely pragmatic” purposes. This is to suggest that Kant’s transcendental logic is not merely formal logic, but a logic based on the epistemic operations involved in thinking: recognition, (re-)identification, individuation, determination, etc. A convincing case cannot be made for such an interpretation of transcendental logic here, although it is hoped that one can be motivated by the specific considerations entered into here.

\(^3\) B118; boldface in translation.
“transcendental reflection”: “matter” and “form” mean something different depending on whether they are being used to reflect on either intuitions or concepts.

This means that in the citation from The Amphiboly, we cannot take Kant to be equating “matter” with sensuous, non-conceptual content (“sensation” as “the matter of appearance”), and “form” with the conceptual determinations whose logical form is determined by functions of judgment, syllogistic inferential relations, and the ideal systematic unity expressed by transcendental ideas.\(^1\) Regarded such a way, “matter” would pertain to the matter of intuition,\(^2\) and “form” to the form of a concept. But intuition also has the form of spatio-temporality, and the content of a concept is to be derived from its logical significance as a particular element of a judgment. (Recall that for Kant concepts are essentially used for judging.)\(^3\)

In The Amphiboly Kant writes:

In every judgment one can call the given concepts logical matter (for judgment), their relation (by means of the copula) the form of the judgment. In every being its components (essentialia) are the matter; the way in which they are connected in a thing, the essential form.\(^4\)

This way of putting the point reveals a key feature of Kant’s conception of determination: it occurs between “logical matter” and the “form of the judgment”, where the latter has its proper place in the syllogistic inferences where it plays a role as a premise or conclusion. To say that form is prior to matter in this sense is to say that the form of the judgment determines its logical matter. The most natural interpretation of such a claim is expressed by the

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\(^1\) Such a blunt distinction is foreign to Kant anyway; for one, although his term “intuition” clearly refers to a blend of conceptual form and sensational matter (“sensation is the matter of appearance”(A7/B17)), intuitions are not obviously to be understood in a way amenable to this “stamping” metaphor—that is, in a way that, if correct would place Kant, in virtue of endorsing such an idea, on the “coherentist” arm of McDowell’s seesaw. Sellars discusses the “Janus-faced” character of Kantian intuitions in Sellars (1967/1992, Chapter I).

\(^2\) For an explanation of the form of intuition (or, “form of appearance”) see A20/B34 and A42/B59-60.

\(^3\) See Engstrom (2006) for an attempt to establish the thesis that Kant’s distinction between sensibility and the understanding rests on a more fundamental distinction between the “matter” and “form” of thought, that is not problematically dualistic in the way usually assumed.

\(^4\) A266/B322; my emphases, apart from the Latin.
semantic holist’s thesis that propositions do not have independent significance, but are rather relative to a particular theoretical context (here judgmental and syllogistic). When this claim is taken in its widest extension, it should be taken to express Kant’s concern with explaining the systematic unity of reason.¹

For present purposes, the most crucial remark occurs in Kant’s confirmation of the relevance of this matter/form distinction for understanding his conception of “the matter of all possibility”, which is intimately connected with the idea of the omnitudo realitatis:

Also, in respect to things in general, unbounded reality was regarded as the matter of all possibility, but its limitation (negation) as that form through which one thing is distinguished from another in accordance with transcendental concepts.²

As is evident from the past tense, Kant is here speaking of a viewpoint he is rejecting—the transcendental realist’s viewpoint within which “unbounded reality” is taken to be given to consciousness in a way not constrained by the conditions of cognition;³ that is, in a sense that would construe “the matter of all

¹ Toward the beginning of The Ideal of Pure Reason Kant speaks of “virtue” and “wisdom” as ideas, and “the sage” as an ideal. If we recall our discussion of symbolism from Chapter 2, §II.iii we will see what he is alluding to when he says: “just as the idea gives the rule, so the ideal in such a case serves as the original image for the complete determination of the copy; and we have in us no other standard for our actions than the conduct of this divine human being, with which we can compare ourselves, judging ourselves and thereby improving ourselves, even though we can never reach the standard.” (A569/B597) Kant is saying that ideas of reason in its theoretical use cannot be represented symbolically; the ens realissimum cannot be represented as an ideal “individuo”.

²A266-267/B322.Longuenesse (1995/2005) modifies the Guyer and Wood translation here from “is” to “was”; an adjustment she justifies this way: “It is important to translate this past tense to make it clear that Kant is describing a view made irrelevant by the critical standpoint he advocates.” (213, n.5)

³ One can easily make of this a tautology, as is often done by those who denounce Henry Allison’s two-aspect reading as an accurate portrayal of Kant’s intentions. Strawson (2000, 241) characterises the two-aspect reading of transcendental idealism as tautologous, insofar as he takes it to be saying that we cannot experience things except under the conditions under which we experience them. I do not think this is an accurate reading of Allison’s two-aspect Kant, nor of Kant himself. See the introduction to Allison (2004) for his responses to critics.
possibility” as an object given to consciousness, rather than as a regulative ideal whose function is to guide scientific knowledge in its attempts to augment its systematic unity. In Kant’s regulative sense, distinguishing “one thing from another in accordance with transcendental concepts” involves infinite judgment (whose corresponding category, mentioned by Kant in the above passage, is “limitation”) that determine “parts” of the “whole” of the “unbounded reality” through a process with the following form

\[ S \text{ is } \sim P, \]

where \( p \) is some property, from whose sphere of determination \( S \) is excluded. Such a form of judgment is not mere negation, since negative judgment does not involve the positing of (or, as Kant would say somewhat misleadingly, “it does not think”) the sphere of determination, or predication, from which the subject is excluded. The form of judgment just represented is what Kant calls “infinite judgment”.

Kant’s point is that, when applied as a method for finding realms of predication from which logical subjects are excluded, this method for conceptualising “determination” is easily led into the error of positing an object of which all the infinite judgments are limitations, although there is, of course, a legitimate transcendental end to which infinite judgment is employed. The proper transcendental idealist procedure involves conceiving of the ascent to the idea of the “sphere of all possibility” as a regressive argument to the conditions of certain kinds of determinative judgment; that is, involving as a counterpart, a reflective Porphyrian procedure that subsumes objects under concepts, and subordinates those concepts under higher concepts in turn until systematic unity is achieved and expressed in a singular: the idea of a unified system of theoretical and practical freedom, and theoretical and practical knowledge.

Kant conceives of the conceptual conditions further up the categorial tree as merely regulative, not constitutive. This distinction is not without problems. I do not mean to suggest Kant is a Neo-Platonist about concepts employed in the “doctrine of nature”; rather

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1 Work in the literature on transcendental arguments that recognises the centrality of such a procedure to Kantian transcendentalism is important to understand what is meant here. See the literature compiled by Isabel Cabrera in Stern (1999/2003, 307-321). See, in particular, Ameriks (1978).
that his theory of judgment commits him to a certain view of the rational order.

In the context of the PCD in the Transcendental Ideal, however, the concept divided disjunctively and then “determined” by infinite judgment is that of an “object of possible experience”; *this concept* is the critically-reduced conception of what Longuenesse calls the *totum realitatis* and which Kant actually refers to as the *omnitudo realitatis* (“All of reality”).¹ When a negative predicate is affirmed of a logical subject, as above, it is the sphere of the entire set of possible predicates available for “the concept of an object of possible experience” that serves as that to which the logical subject belongs. The logical subject of an infinite judgment is thus placed in the otherwise undetermined sphere of “the concept of an object of possible experience”.²

Notice that the conceptual sphere of “the concept of an object of possible experience” is somewhat determinate: It is structured in terms of Kant’s sensible and intellectual epistemic conditions (space and time; the forms of judgment, from which flow the categories and the concepts of reflection).³ These conditions provide a certain form and content (see the discussion of “matter” and “form” above) for cognition, with which the PCD harmonises. We will see below that Hegel takes issue with these purported transcendental conditions. Most famously and succinctly he notes in his sceptical remarks in the Introduction to the *Science of Logic* that the transcendental enterprise can be viewed as if “shot from a pistol”.⁴ Hegel can ask of Kant, given that the latter wishes to draw “limits” to knowledge and reason, how he knows the nature of these “limits” themselves if he cannot think both sides of them (cf. Wittgenstein’s similar remarks in the *Tractatus*).⁵

Recall the erroneous inference Kant guards against in The Appendix to the Dialectic, of deriving a *constitutive* usage of a transcendental idea from a *regulative* one; that is, from:

\[ \text{Find for conditioned knowledge given through the understanding the unconditioned whereby its unity is brought to completion.} \]

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¹A576/B604.
²I here exploit Longuenesse’s(1995/2005, 218) interpretation, yet have modified her way of putting the point.
³For a defence of this reading against criticism see Longuenesse (2000).
To:

If the conditioned is given, the whole series of conditions, subordinated to one another—a series which is therefore itself unconditioned—is likewise given, that is, contained in the object and its connection.¹

This pair of propositions together expresses the error Kant insists grounds the Transcendental Ideal of which we have been speaking: the generation of the ens realissimum out of the omnitudo realitatis, and the latter itself out of the “distributive use of the understanding in experience”. He puts the point this way:

That we...hypostatise this idea of the sum total of all reality²...comes about because we dialectically transform the distributive use of the understanding in experience, into the collective unity of a whole of experience, and from this whole of appearance we think up an individual thing containing in itself all empirical reality, which then—by means of the transcendental subreption we have already thought—is confused with the concept of a thing that stands at the summit of the possibility of all things, providing the real conditions for their complete determination.³

Forced into a contemporary idiom, we might be moved to say that they are “reified” forms. Yet to say that they are nothing other than “the ground of the process”, or the “form and content” of complete determination, is not to deny them a connection with the content with which the reasoning process is concerned, what it is about;

¹ A308/B364; cited in Grier (2001, 122). Cf.: “to find the unconditioned for conditioned cognitions of the understanding, with which its unity will be completed.” (A307/B364). Ostaric (2009, 159) refers to this as reason’s “principle of systematicity”. The assumption quoted from Grier is a presupposition of this principle.

² Note that the omnitudo realitatis is actually characterised by Kant as the “All of reality”, rather than the “sum total of all reality”. There are many ambiguities in this section of Kant’s work and the most plausible interpretation of this divergence seems to be that he is here careless with his phrasing; therefore, that “All of reality” and “sum total of all reality” should be taken to be the same. On this point, note the remarks above regarding Longuenesse’s employment of the totumrealitatis.

³ A582-583/B660-661; my emphases.
rather, it is to have one’s eyes open to their functional character: their nature understood in terms of what they do.

Now, for Kant, these purely rational entities are not possible objects of experience, yet, given his beliefs about the structure of at least our thought, he nevertheless takes them to be ineradicable elements of at least our discursive thinking: he takes them to have a related function to the transcendental ideas (the soul, the world-whole, God) and therefore that they function as “regulative ideals” for inquiry in a related way. To specify this a little further, we may say that the *omnitudo realitatis*, functioning regulatively, serves as a way of thinking about possible experience in general: “All of reality” as the distributive unity of the understanding in its judgments of the world of sense. The *ens realissimum*, functioning regulatively, is the singular grounding condition of this domain, its source of objective predications (transcendental-logical functions as instanced in empirical judgments: “the concept of an object of possible experience”.

According to Kant, it is the rationalist’s error to think that such ideas play a “constitutive” role in our thought, as if the supposed “rational intelligibility” of the ideas guaranteed their “reality”. Further, that this manifestation of the transcendental illusion equates to thinking that the “matter” of the “whole of possibility” is given to thought. Kant’s response to Leibniz in The Amphiboly, involves him saying that only the “form” of the “whole of possibility” can be so given insofar as this is no more than the transcendental conditions on knowledge. Further, according to Kant’s critique of metaphysics, such form can only be expressed by the PCD *itself*, in the guise of an epistemological and semantical task.¹

We will return to this point, since we must first discuss the two principles whose structure Kant explains in the opening paragraphs of the Transcendental Ideal.

¹A266-268/B322-324.
II. Kant’s kind of modality

The PCD is that which guides the rational ascent of reason to the idea of the *ens realissimum*, qua ground of all reality thought of as an individual\(^1\)—which is moreover a *most real being*—by insisting that the “complete determination” of any “thing” requires comparison of that thing with all pairs of possible predicates “contained in” the idea of the “sum total of all possibility”.\(^2\)

Kant equates “the whole of possibility” with “the sum total of all predicates of *things in general*”.\(^3\) My emphasis is intended to recommend that Kant is speaking of “things in general” to only be epistemically available under the conditions of the possibility of an “object of possible experience”. So even though the concept of a “thing in general” does not strictly involve sensible conditions yet rather only intellectual conditions, this is not enough to render it an object of knowledge, but rather only the idea of a possible object of knowledge to which must be added sensible matter in an appearance. From this it follows that “things” are here to be understood as transcendental-logical kinds (singulars which provide intuitional matter for the idea of an “object in general”, or “transcendental object”) and not empirical kinds.

Crucially, Kant distinguishes between the PCD, which guides the process of determining *things* in the world of sense, and another principle (“the principle of determinability”, hereafter PD), which he takes to express the claim that *concepts* are determinable. It is of the utmost significance that Kant differentiates these two principles at the beginning of the Transcendental Ideal, because they reveal to us how the conditions of the possibility of a *thing* are for him more complex and numerous than the condition of the possibility of a *concept*. The latter is singular and not plural because the only condition of the possibility of a concept is non-contradictoriness. Kant provides this explanation of the PD:

\(^{1}\)A568/B596.

\(^{2}\) On this point, cf. the reconstruction of Hegel’s critique of Kant in Kreines (2007, 326 & ff.).

Kant seems to later employ “the sum total of all possibility” (A573/B601) to mean the same thing as “the whole of possibility”, which might be the reason for Longuenesse’s employment of the phrase “*totumrealitatis*”\(^3\) rather than “*omnitudorealitatis*”. Cf. Figure 14.1 and the ensuing discussion in Buchdahl (1992b, 319 & ff.).

\(^{3}\)A572/B600.
Every concept, in regard to what is not contained in it, is indeterminate, and stands under the principle of determinability: that of every two contradictorily opposed predicates only one can apply to it, which rests on the principle of contradiction and hence is a merely logical principle, which abstracts from every content of cognition, and has in view nothing but the logical form of cognition.¹

Now, whilst Kant says this principle “rests on the principle of contradiction”, he is actually asserting “the principle of contradiction applies to concepts”, so the PD is a metaprinciple that is meant to validate the principle of contradiction: the PD asserts that the principle of contradiction applies to concepts.² It is clear, however, that such a validation is redundant, because in asserting there is such a thing as the principle of contradiction one has already done all that can be done in order to assert its validity. The positing of a “metaprinciple” presumes the need for further validation; an act

¹ A571/B599.
² Cf. the discussion of the apparent complementarity between the principle of excluded middle and the principle of contradiction in Wood (1978, 42-44). On 42 Wood acknowledges that the principle of contradiction is “the principle that at most one of any two contradictories can belong to a given concept”, whereas the principle of excluded middle is the complementary claim that “at least one of any pair contradictories must belong to any given subject.” As Wood recognises, there are clearly problems with the implication that universal concepts are determinable in this way; the point seems to hold rather only for particulars to which the universal concept in question applies (Wood highlights the peculiarity of the claim that one could predicate of the concept “humanity” either “young” or “not young”, “wise” or “not wise”). This is simply a way of saying that if one can predicate at least one concept of a thing, then one can predicate indefinitely many more (intuitions are fully determinate and endlessly determinable: more marks can always be found in them because there is no such thing as an infirma species articulable in conceptual terms). Moreover, we ought to conclude that certain conventions will govern which predications genuinely determine the thing, as opposed to committing a category mistake.

Part of the problem with the modality at issue here (pure logical possibility) is that it ignores the significance of categorial distinctions for the possibility of determination of a concept (and not merely a thing-kind). I take it that there is a problem with thinking only things, and not concepts, embed categorial distinctions, for one cannot speak or think of things except in conceptual terms, even if one can speak or think of concepts without assuming a material existence is implied by them.
which, if carried out consistently, would result in an infinite regress; we could ask why the PD applies, and on such a basis be motivated to formulate additional principles to establish this, etc. I take it that the lesson is that, first principles are indeed always worth establishing, but that it is difficult to sometimes see just how they should be established. I am here assuming “God” is in any case a grounding idea (which is, if any thing is, a first principle). Importantly, then, Hegel’s own attitude toward contradiction is to be borne in mind (“everything is contradictory”) when assessing Kant’s attitude toward determination.

According to Kant, concepts being determinable, therefore their being non-contradictory is a condition of their possibility:

The concept is always possible if it does not contradict itself. That is the logical mark of possibility, and thereby the object of the concept is distinguished from the *nihil negativum*. Yet it can nonetheless be an empty concept, if the objective reality of the synthesis through which the concept is generated has not been established in particular; but as was shown above [in The Analytic], this always rests on principles of possible experience and not on the principles of analysis (on the principle of contradiction). This is a warning not to infer immediately from the possibility of the concept (logical possibility) to the possibility of the thing (real possibility).

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1Henrich (2003, 8) acknowledges Kant’s dismissal of the attempts by Fichte to ground his philosophy in supposedly more fundamental principles. We might take this to recommend that Kant was concerned to begin by taking possible experience and the deliverances of the moral law through our rational conscience as basic data for analysis in terms of what he took to be necessary conditions of their possibility. He seems to have been unconcerned about providing a singular first principle for his system because his system began by looking to “the starry heavens above” him and the “moral law within” him(Kant (1996b, 5:161, 269)).


4A596/B624.
Here Kant unambiguously denounces the idea that the logical
possibility of concepts is equivalent to the real possibility of things;
moreover, that the latter cannot be inferred from the former. As he
says, one cannot speak of the conditions of the real possibility of
things except under conditions of possible experience. Kant says that
claims employing the categories without intuitional content have no
sense or meaning.\(^1\) This would mean that for sheer logical possibility
to have any import for our cognition it must be augmented through
consideration of the conditions of real possibility.\(^2\)

Crucially, at the end of The Amphiboly it is remarked that the
“highest concept with which one is accustomed to begin a
transcendental philosophy is usually the division between the
possible and the impossible”, but that “since every division
presupposes a concept that is to be divided, a still higher one must be
given”, which he says is “the concept of an object in general”. Now,
since “the categories are the only concepts that relate to objects in
general”, the concept of an object in general is to be regarded as only
having intellectual conditions.\(^3\) The difference between “the concept
of an object in general” and the “concept of an object of possible
experience” is that the latter also has sensible conditions.

It is epistemologically significant that something cannot be said to
be an object of possible experience if it has not been experienced
before, that is, if it has not been rendered “objectively real” (we thus
recognise the effects of conditions of the possibility of experience on
the possibilities for the reproductive imagination).\(^4\) This is the same
as saying that unless it can and until it has been brought under the
sensible conditions of possible experience it is not an object of
knowledge. Kant’s empirical realism (equivalently: his positivism)
commits him to saying that “negation is nothing, namely, a concept of
the absence of an object”.\(^5\) This identification of “negation” with
“nothing” is equivalent to an expression of what Kant calls the “\textit{nilo}
privativum”, which for Kant is one of two ways of there being
“empty data for concepts” (the other is the \textit{ens imaginarius}). In

\(^1\) See B149, A155/B194, A240/B299, and B307-308,
to distinguish between the \textit{determining of things} by a formal and empty
thought, and the sense and meaning that thoughts have when they are of an object.”
\(^3\) A290/B346.
\(^4\) Here one should note Kant’s account of aesthetic judgment in the 3rd
Critique, especially his remarks about genius, and the aesthetic idea.
\(^5\) A291/B347.
contrast to this there are for Kant two ways of a concept itself being empty: the *ens rationis* ("empty concept without object") the *nihil negativum* ("empty object without concept").¹ Importantly, determination requires data and “the concept of an object in general” can only be given data if it is brought under sensible conditions in the guise of “the concept of an object of possible experience”; any determination, let alone “complete determination”, can only be undertaken as an epistemological and semantical task given both sensible and intellectual conditions.

There is little else to be said about the PD except that the way it is contrasted with the PCD demonstrates an important fact about Kant’s attitude to logic: while he insisted that general logic did not provide sufficient conditions for formulating a framework for cognition (for that transcendental logic is also required), he did think that it provided a necessary framework for thinking—therefore, by extension, it did provide necessary conditions for knowledge.

Kant thought a “general” logical framework could be employed in discussions of noumena as well as other purely intellectual or rational objects, such as those posited by *metaphysica specialis*. Kant is therefore committed to saying nothing more, but nothing less, than that noumena are non-contradictory. Notice this amounts to saying the noumenal world does not tolerate contradictions; this itself seems an illegitimate positive claim. The ideas, however, are in principle forbade provision of intuitional content. Importantly, for Kant, the main reason such rational ideas could be “thought” is that they are not inherently “contradictory”: they are “problematic” (merely possible) concepts. Such thought entities, conceived of as noumenal, are not, however, subject to the categories. It would therefore be incorrect to say the transcendental ideas (which, when conceived of as objects, are noumenal) are subject to the same conditions as “the concept of an object in general”.² This means that the only way to

¹A290-292/B346-349.  
²Ostaric (2009, 158) is wrong to say the real possibility of things is to be considered as being applicable to noumena as well as phenomena. Kant is quite explicit about the real possibility of “things in general” as being not simply pure rational possibility (this is logical possibility, which is equivalent to non-contradictoriness), but rather categorial possibility.

Ostaric is therefore caught in contradiction: If something cannot, qua noumenon, be given in intuition, it is useless to speculate what might be the case were it able to be given in intuition. This is equivalent to saying that, were numbers perceptual objects, were they able to exhibit perceptual properties like colour, they would be determinable with respect to
articulate the import of the transcendental ideas is to formulate them as principles that apply to “the concept of an object in general” (with categorial conditions), and then go on to apply the principles corresponding to them to possible experience (which has both categorial and spatio-temporal conditions).

As we have seen, the “whole of possibility” premised by the PCD begins with Kant’s criterion of logical possibility (non-contradictoriness), but once complete determination is envisaged as a task to be carried out, it must introduce the notion of “categorial possibility”: the intellectual conditions upon “the concept of an object in general”. Such modality is that minimal frame within which a rational agent operates, at least in theoretical enterprises, before they have applied the PCD to possible experience; the categories articulate transcendental-logical modality which will be found, upon reflection on appearances, to necessarily apply for “a possible empirical consciousness”. It is only once the PCD is applied in possible experience that spatio-temporal conditions are imposed, and therefore empirical concepts made possible.

In his otherwise excellent account of Kant's rational theology, Allen Wood conflates the conditions of objects of “reason alone” with those of “the concept of an object in general”. As we’ve just noted, the former is pure logical possibility (non-contradictoriness); the latter is logical plus categorial possibility (intellectual conditions of experience: the logical functions of judgment which make possible the categories along with the concepts of reflection). For Kant, the difference between the conditions of “an object in general” and “an object of possible experience” is that the latter is represented completely determinately, in intuition, under the conditions of sensibility. Crucially, the PCD expresses the task which reason demands to be fulfilled by the understanding in its making of judgments: seek out all possible marks which can found in objects; determine things by ascertaining whether a predicate can be applied to them or not.

determinate colour predicates, like “red”, and shape predicates, like “rectangular”. Such a supposition involves a category mistake.

1 Yet cf. Longuenesse (2005c) for an account of how the categories feature in moral and practical judgments.

2A310/B367. Cf. Kant’s reference to the categories here: “Through them alone is cognition, and determination of an object, possible...no a priori concepts of object precede them, from which they could be inferred.”

3Wood (1978, 47).
The basic difference between “an object in general” and “an object of possible experience” is therefore that the former is determined as the latter: determination requires provision of sensible conditions in order to move from sheer transcendental-logical possibility to empirically-real possibility (based on actuality, or the category of “reality” as corresponding to the presence of sensation, which is “the matter of appearances”). Within possible experience “possibility” then only has the following import: one can ask, given an object of possible experience (or event in possible experience), what can be said about future possibilities for it, in spatio-temporal terms. Observe this crucial remark from the Postulates of Empirical Thinking (following the B Edition Refutation of Idealism):

It certainly looks as if one could increase the number of that which is possible beyond that of the actual since something must be added to the former to constitute the latter. But I do not acknowledge this addition to the possible. For that which would have to be added to the possible would be impossible. All that can be added to my understanding is something beyond agreement with the formal conditions of experience, namely connection with some perception or other; but whatever is connected with this in accordance with empirical laws is actual, even if it is not immediately perceived.

Notice what this commits one to: statements about theoretical entities, such as natural laws and other unobserved posits which explain the observed, are to be regarded as statements about actuality, nor sheer possibility. This means that unobserved posits are to be regarded as much a part of actuality as observed phenomena (perceptibles). This is significant, since such a position is by no means metaphysically innocuous. Kant writes further:

However, that another series of appearances in thoroughgoing [durchgängig] connection with that which is given to me in

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1 Here one should recall Kant’s reference to “the transcendental object = X” in the A Deduction (A109), a section of chapter on phenomena and noumena common to both editions (A246-247/B303-304). See also A250-251: “the concept of an object...this transcendental object cannot even be separated from the sensible data, for then nothing would remain through which it would be thought. It is therefore no object of cognition in itself, but only the representation of appearances under the concept of an object in general, which is determinable through the manifold of those appearances.” Cf. ff.
II.i - Kant’s Kind of Modality

perception, thus more than a single all-encompassing experience, is possible, cannot be inferred from that which is given, and even less without anything being given at all; for without matter nothing at all can be thought. That which is possible only under conditions that are themselves merely possible is not possible in all respects. But this is the way the question is taken when one wants to know whether the possibility of things extends further than experience can reach.¹

And in a footnote shortly following this discussion he adds:

Through the actuality of a thing I certainly posit more than possibility, but not in the thing; for that can never contain more in actuality than what was contained in its complete possibility. But while possibility was merely a positing of a thing in relation to the understanding (to its empirical use), actuality is at the same time its connection with perception.²

These remarks recommend that, if one were to connect Kant’s view with current debates about modality he would figure as a peculiar kind of “actualist”.

In contrast to Kant, Hegel problematised such a “formal” (he does not say “general”) approach to accounting for rational objects of the kind just mentioned; he dramatically altered the distinction Kant drew between general and transcendental logic. For Hegel, something like general logic, so-called, was to be understood as the structure of the “abstract understanding”—the limited standpoint of finite thinking³ that holds fast to a set of categories without attempting to deduce the other categories upon which they might depend. Reason, on the other hand, was understood by Hegel primarily as a negative force that demonstrated the emptiness and moreover, contradictoriness, of the understanding’s general logical

¹A231-232/B284.
²A234-235/B287.
³ More usually, Hegel’s criticisms are directed at “formalism”, rather than “general logic”, where the latter is Kant’s terminology. The point appears to be the same however, since Hegel’s attacks on “formalism” are usually directed at Kant’s views about reason (thus his views of general logic). For present purposes “formalism” can be read as a valorisation of a certain standpoint from either the Phenomenology of the Logic taken in abstraction from its dialectical position. Of course, “Absolute Spirit” and the “Absolute Idea” are to be accorded special, teleologically privileged positions, yet this position is unintelligible when considered in exclusion of the rest of those works.
structure by explicating the other categorial forms upon which it depended—which its basic categories presupposed.

For Hegel, reason thus has a dialectical logical structure which itself determines the understanding and demonstrates every set of categories (which are at the same time phenomenal appearances of actuality) to be self-contradictory. At this level, Hegel’s criticism of Kant is simply that it is no problem that reason generates contradictions, because reality itself is, after all, contradictory.¹ Hegel would therefore dismiss as superficial Kant’s rationalist appeal to a sheer “logical” sense of possibility, grounded in non-contradictoriness, in order to justify the pragmatic employment of the ideas of metaphysica specialis. Hegel’s reworking of Kant’s program in the Science of Logic omits any talk of transcendental ideas; indeed Hegel says this explicitly:

The objective logic thus takes the place rather of the former metaphysics which was supposed to be the scientific edifice of the world as constructed by thoughts alone. – If we look at the final shape in the elaboration of this science, then it is ontology which objective logic most directly replaces in the first instance, that is, that part of metaphysics intended to investigate the nature of ens in general (and ens comprises within itself both being and essence, a distinction for which the German language has fortunately preserved different expressions).

And follows with a remark about metaphysica specialis:

But further, objective logic also comprises the rest of metaphysics in so far as this attempted to comprehend with the forms of pure thought particular substrata taken primarily from figurate conception, namely the soul, the world, and God; and the determinations of thought constituted what was essential in the mode of consideration. Logic, however, considers these forms free from those substrata, from the subjects of figurate conception; it considers them, their nature and worth, in their own proper character. Former metaphysics omitted to do this and consequently incurred the just reproach of having employed these forms uncritically without a preliminary investigation as to whether and how they were capable of being determinations of the thing-in-itself, to use the Kantian expression—or rather of the Reasonable. Objective logic is therefore the genuine critique of them—a critique which does not consider them as contrasted under the abstract forms of the a priori and the a

posteriori, but considers the determinations themselves according to their specific content.\(^1\)

We can represent Kant’s and Hegel’s views graphically:

![Diagram of Kant's and Hegel's views](image)

To see how these differences over metaphysics pan out we observe Kant’s explanation of his second principle, the PCD:

Every thing, however, as to its possibility, further stands under the principle of complete determination: according to which, among all possible predicates of things, insofar as they are compared with their opposites, one must apply to it. This does not rest merely on the principle of contradiction, for besides considering every thing in relation to two contradictorily conflicting predicates, it considers every thing further in relation to the whole of possibility, as the sum total of all predicates of things in general, and by presupposing that as a condition a priori, it represents every thing as deriving its own possibility from the share it has in that whole possibility.\(^2\)

Notice Kant identifies “the whole of possibility” with “the sum total of all predicates of things in general”. We’ve just noted that Kant thinks that not only the principle of contradiction applies to the “concept of a thing in general”, but the categories also. And he thinks

\(^{1}\)Hegel (1969, 63-64).
\(^{2}\)A571-572/B599-600. The italicisation is mine; the boldface exists in the translation.
the categories are the only concepts that apply to the “concept of a thing in general” (clearly no empirical concepts could apply!).

This suggests that “the whole of possibility” must be understood as being the kind of possibility constrained by the intellectual conditions of possible experience given in the Analytic. Only once an object is actually experienced can it be said to be known determinately—qua presented in intuition—and only then can it be said to have sensible conditions (since only then is it known). This renders a further consequence.

It seems that for Kant “the whole of possibility” is equivalent to “the possibilities permitted by transcendental logic”: “the sum-total of all predicates of things in general”. The availability of things that are part of “the whole of actuality”—the empirically real world presented piecemeal—qua presented in intuition, is constrained by its pure form (space and time). Recall the remark I cited above from the Postulates of Empirical Thinking: Kant thinks of possibility is being part of actuality, as encountered in possible experience. The articulation of the content of “the whole of actuality” is sought in the distributive use of the understanding in experience, where the complete determination of individual empirical things and their interconnection is guided by the PCD. It is by this process that the empirical content of parts of the “whole of actuality” are given (the discursive understanding reasons from the part to the whole, whereas the intuitive understanding knows the parts by way of knowing the whole).

We should note at this point an affinity between the PCD and another so-called law of thought: “the principle of sufficient reason” (PSR), and the corresponding idea that for every thing, idea, or concept there is some explanation for it. With his PCD Kant commits himself to the idea that, at least in principle, empirical reality is determinable objectively with respect to transcendental-logical predicates, and subjectively in terms of possible empirical concepts which will turn out to be not only spatio-temporal, but also, if translatable into objective terms, conditioned by the logical functions.

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2 Note here the complementarity between the complete determination of things in judgment and the postulation of empirical laws which provide the idea of a completely determine world of sense: in the former one finds objects for objects (determinative specification) and in the latter one finds concepts for objects (reflective classification). Part of Kant’s project in the 3rd Critique is to show that these dimensions cannot be cleanly separated.
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of judgment insofar as such concepts occur in possible empirical judgments.

I take it that a properly transcendental reading of Kant’s PCD is effectively equivalent to a sound empirical employment of the PSR: both claim that experience can be rendered intelligible to thinking subjects and discoursed about in a way that respects the conditions of a subjective viewpoint. That is to say, a sound application of these principles resists The Metaphysical Urge and is happy instead to construct a conceptual frame that offers conditional explanations of empirical phenomena while avoiding ontological profligacy.¹

We should now say a little more about Kant’s view of the form of the whole of possibility. It can be viewed in two ways: The real use of reason provides the transcendental idea of the *ens realissimum*, which is conceived as a regulative ideal for the complete determination of things, where it is supposed that the “most real being” contains in full perfection all predicates applicable to the world of sense. Meanwhile, the formal use of reason, in positing the idea of the *ens realissimum* as a guide, allows the “whole of possibility” to be represented as the distributive unity² of judgments which together comprise objective experience proper.

This latter claim requires two qualifications: (1) Such a distributive unity is to be envisaged as that achieved by a collective, not a merely a singular judging subject, where assent to only the latter would commit Kant to a solipsism at odds with his thought; (2) Whilst such a distributive unity of judgments is properly thought of as “the whole of actuality”, we are to recall that for Kant, possibility

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¹Longuenesse (2005a, 118) notes Kant (1992b) “distinguishes at least four types of reason, and therefore four specifications of the corresponding principle”: (1) ratio essendi(reason for being, that is, reason for the essential determinations of a thing), (2) ratio fiendi(reason for the coming to be of a thing’s determinations), (3) ratio existendi(reason for the existence of a thing), (4) ratio cognoscendi(reason for our knowing that a thing is thus and so)°.

In her essay, however, Longuenesse claims the PSR manifests itself in Kant’s Critical Philosophy simply as a “proof of the causal principle” (118). I therefore recommend that the PCD is a more fundamental and complete realisation of the PSR insofar as one can determine objects in a way not strictly confined to their causal relations, as instanced in the hypothetical function of judgment, since the categories of relation are one of four families of three concepts (cf. quantity, quality, and modality). I do not think one finds this position articulated explicitly in Kant, although it follows from the reading I am offering.

²A582/B610.
in the world of sense can only be derived from actuality. This is because possibility itself is not manifest empirically, but can only be inferred on the basis of what is given empirically.¹

This formal use of reason is the only way in which reason provides knowledge proper: by guiding the understanding's capacity to judge in order to create a systematic, unified picture of the whole of possibility in its guise as that of the world of sense.

Note at this point the symmetry between the Transcendental Ideal (the *ens realissimum*) as ground of the PCD, and the three ideas of metaphysica specialis as respective grounds of the principles for transcendental psychology, cosmology, and theology, respectively. Given that the critically reduced version of the *ens realissimum* is the ground of the complete determination of things in the world of sense; that it is the master concept of transcendental theology means that for Kant, therefore, “God” is the master concept of his idealist logic. Thus, explication of transcendental theology is for Kant the highest task of such logic. Note also that the real use of reason is the source of all four² of these grounds, and the formal use

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¹ Cf. Sellars’s denunciation of modal realism in (1952/1991, 290-297, esp. 294): “The possible worlds of many neo-Leibnizian treatments of logic are actually what we have called possible states of one and the same world.” Cf. also Leech (2010) for a recent evaluation of the scanty literature on Kant’s views about modality, as well as a presentation of her own view. In various places (A74-76/B99-101, A219/B266, A234-235/B/287) Kant says explicitly that, for him, modal judgments express the relation of a cognition to the cognitive faculty of the subject making the judgment. This is clearly a way of saying that for Kant modality is inherently epistemic, and in any case has transcendental conditions.

² The imagery of an anthropomorphic “God” is the “personified” version of the *ens realissimum*, which is itself a transformation of the *omnitudorealitatis*. It is not entirely clear what name Kant uses to describe the transformation of the *ensrealissimum* into the *omnitudorealitatis*. For its part, the *omnitudorealitatis* also a “hypostatised” instance of the activity of the understanding in experience: a transformation of the “distributive unity” of such use, into a “collective whole” of experience. Cf. Kant’s remarks about these transitions at A582-3/B610-1. There seems to be inconsistency between the tripartite transition in the * note and the text above it. This apparent ambiguity stems from the fact that Kant suggests there is a transformation of the *omnitudorealitatis* (“sum total of all reality”) to a concept of it as “an individual thing containing in itself all empirical reality”. The *ens realissimum* is posited when the concept of the *omnitudorealitatis* as an “individual thing” is “confused with the concept of a thing that stands at the summit of the possibility of all things, providing
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of reason is the activity which employs the ground as a principle for systematic unification of the world of sense.

Before proceeding any further, some additional remarks about the original rationalist version of the PCD and its connection with Kant’s critical version are in order. Firstly, in The Amphiboly, Kant provides a basis for what he later calls the PCD by denouncing a purely rationalist conception of determination:

The intellectualist philosopher could not bear it that form should precede the things and determine their possibility; a quite appropriate criticism, if he assumed that we intuit things as they are (though with confused representation). But since sensible intuition is an entirely peculiar subjective condition, which grounds all perception a priori, and the form of which is original, thus the form is given for itself alone, and so far is it from being the case that the matter (or the things themselves, which appear) ought to be the ground (as one would have to judge according to mere concepts), that rather their possibility presupposes a formal intuition (of space and time) as given.¹

Kant is here criticising Leibniz’s monadic conception of substances as thinkable “in themselves” by a divine intelligence on the grounds of their containing within themselves their complete conceptual determinations.² Kant instead insists that conceptual determination is performed by a subject who is bound also by subjective conditions of sensibility, which place spatio-temporal conditions on the conceptual determination of substances. (The account of the concept of “matter” demonstrates the level of generality he was after: entirely non-empirical.) The idea of a complete conceptual determination of things outside the conditions of sensibility is misguided not only for us, but in general: Kant takes himself to debunk the traditional conception of a “divine intelligence” supposedly capable of determining reality this way. We can connect

the real conditions for their complete determination.” (A583/B611; translation modified)

In the * note Kant goes on to talk of “realisation” and “hypostatisation” of the ens realissimum, but this now makes his explanation of the above-mentioned transition sound odd. It seems Kant thinks there are simply several similar transitions that occur here; he has not given an unambiguous name for each.

¹ A267-268/B323-324. Cf. what Kant says about the “formal intuition” of space and time in the B Deduction at §26 in the * note.
this point with the famous * footnote in the B Deduction at B160-161, thanks to an editorial addition:

Inserted in Kant’s copy of the first edition: “The thoroughgoing \[durchgängig\] determination as principle \([Princip]\) is grounded on the unity of consciousness: existence determined in space and time. Hence in \(noumena\) the highest reality contains the matter and the form contains the perfection. The formale is the best.” (E CXLIX, p. 45; 23:37)¹

Note here that the “form” which “contains the perfection”, is indeed God. Here we first should ask: “What is grounding?”, and indeed, such a question would be timely, given the recent interest in the topic. Here it seems clear that to say the PCD is grounded on the “unity of consciousness”, which is “existence determined in space and time”, should be taken to mean the singular framework of knowledge, the “set of sensible and transcendental conditions” qua “concept of an object of possible experience”, because the “unity of consciousness” is that which finds its satisfaction in the thought of an object, which is itself a unification of the manifold of sense.

Thus the idea of a fully-determined object depends on the presumption of the conditions of complete judgmental determination, and this seems fair and consistent with Kant’s view. The restriction on knowledge of “the One” does, however, demand an open future of possible empirical predicates, and this seems to be one of the consequences of Kant’s nominalism, in its form as a restriction on knowledge about empirical content. One does not know the “world of sense” as a “collective unity”.

In this remark above, Kant is effectively telling us that his conception of “thoroughgoing” or “complete determination”, later discussed in the Transcendental Ideal under the guise of the PCD, is limited to “existence determined in space and time”; that is, to the conditions of possible experience as defended in the Aesthetic and the Analytic. On this basis, the “whole of possibility” of which he speaks should be understood as “the whole of possible experience” because “existence determined in space and time” necessarily involves the categories and therefore the intellectual conditions of possible experience as well as the sensible.

In the B Deduction, Kant speaks of the “comprehension of the manifold given in accordance with the form of sensibility in an intuitive representation” as the “formal intuition” that “gives unity

¹Kant (1998, 370 n.A). The interpolation of “durchgängig” is mine.
to the representation”\(^1\) that, in the A Deduction, was explained as involving the “synthesis of *comprehension*”:\(^2\) The contrast between *comprehension* and *apprehension* is crucial: In the former case Kant is speaking of what is given in experience as available to the understanding, whereas in the latter case he is speaking of the same thing in its guise as sensible. We should not see any conflict here; Kant is simply speaking of our experience in two different ways. We should not think that “conceptual stamping” of a “formless given” is the appropriate imagery; rather, we should see Kant as insisting on two distinct conditions of cognition: the receptivity of sensibility and the spontaneity of the understanding.

Why is this relevant here? The point is that when Kant speaks of “formal intuition” at B160 he is conceiving of the form of our experience as sensible but also intellectual: he is employing a turn of phrase that makes it clear we can only determine “things” under the sensible and intellectual conditions of possible experience. Therefore, that the rationalist’s talk of “complete determination” errs insofar as it ignores the sensible conditions of the possibility of the determination of things (rather than the mere determinability of concepts).

It is useful to recall in this context Kant’s discussion of “inner” and “outer” as concepts of reflection in The Amphiboly. In that crucial section, Kant insists that not simply can things only be determined in space, but also only in virtue of the relations which they bear to other things in space:

The inner determinations of a *substantia phaenomenon* in space...are nothing but relations, and it is itself entirely a sum of mere relations. We know substances in space only through the forces that are efficacious in it, whether in drawing others to it (attraction) or in preventing penetration of it (repulsion and impenetrability); we are not acquainted with other properties constituting the concept of the substance that appears in space and which we call matter.\(^3\)

Kant is here rejecting Leibniz’s recommendation that monads have inner determinations whose coherence with the rest of the universe is granted simply by the pre-established harmony bestowed upon the world by God. (Kant’s discussion of the other three pairs of concepts of reflection—“identity” and “difference”, “agreement” and

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\(^1\)B160, n.\(^g\).
\(^2\)A98-100.
\(^3\)A265/B321.
“opposition”, and “matter” and “form”—also serve to establish his case against Leibniz’s account of both space and conceptual determination.

Longuenesse agrees with this assessment of The Amphiboly:

the point of the Amphiboly chapter is to show that Leibniz confused logical reflection or comparison, as I just characterized it (comparison of concepts to form judgments, whatever the origin of those concepts), with a comparison of objects. Leibniz thought that at least for an infinite understanding, things could be known by concepts alone, and therefore, the concepts or rules for comparison of concepts could be understood as concepts or rules for comparison of things.¹

So Leibniz thought of complete determination as something only possible for a divine intelligence; that is, one capable of knowing what Kant called “things-in-themselves” in purely conceptual terms to a maximally determinate extent. And this is because Leibniz regarded human knowledge and Godly knowledge to simply differ in degree, rather than kind.

In fact, if Kant is seen as committed to a critically-reduced conception of the ens realissimum, he would appear to agree to these terms, but not their metaphysical import. This is because the idea of “God”, qua critically reduced ens realissimum, can only have the transcendental function of being the ground of the PCD: one can only understand what complete determination would involve by applying the PCD to possible experience, and therefore by understanding completely determinate knowledge as a completely determinate knowledge of the world of sense. Aiming for completely determinate knowledge of a thing is an epistemological or semantical task and not an end of inquiry one arrives at. In application of the PCD the ens realissimum is the ground of such complete determination and only comprehensible with respect to it.² This would mean that knowledge of a completely determined world of sense is Kant’s critically-reduced substitute for Leibniz’s conception of Godly knowledge: expressed with his idea of the caracteristica universalis.


² I am here using “comprehension” in Kant’s technical sense (A311/B368): reason allows us to “comprehend” reality as a systematic, unified nature through the principles followed in formal uses of reason.
Moreover, Kant’s notion of a PCD seems to be a critical reduction of Leibniz’s PSR: one should expect explanations, reasons or “complete determinations” of things to always be possible tasks to take on, but ultimately unfulfillable demands to satisfy; such is a consequence of our receptive, sensible intuition. Although he never says so, Kant is committed to saying that Leibniz’s conception of a completely determinate monad is something we posit as an ideal to be sought in our attempts to gain systematic, unified rational knowledge of nature; a Leibnizian monad seems to be the idea of a completely determinate thing as posited by the PCD.

Kant however insists upon the necessity of sensible conditions on knowledge, so his version of a completely determined world of sense appears to be an “All of reality” which contains all perspectival judgments that could be made about all things from all perspectives possible within experience. But this means “knowledge of God” is incoherent because it is meant to be aperceptival. That is, the idea that God, or an intellectual intuition that could know things as well everything taken together as a whole in a completely unconditioned manner, must be replaced by the idea that all that is available is a total set of conditioned representations, and this hardly amounts to either an unconditioned representation of each thing, or an unconditioned representation of “the whole”.

Yet Kant nevertheless insists we need the idea of something purely rational that stands outside knowledge; since the PCD is unsatisfiable and the rationalist conception of the ens realissimum not an object of possible experience. After all, we cannot say what determinations would need to apply to the “world in itself”. Thus, Kant must rule out in advance not only that we can ever completely determine the world of sense (this is, rather, the “regulative ideal” of empirical science), but also, that transcendental idealism must retain a cognition-transcendent, rational idea of “God”, that serves as an “Other” to the “I think” of self-consciousness.

As we will see in §IV, Hegel questions this Kantian move, at least in the sense that such an “Other” to self-consciousness is for Hegel contained in self-consciousness itself, and not external to it. This recalls our discussion from Chapter 2, §V.i. Indeed, Hegel should be seen as rejecting the idea that “God”, or “knowledge of God”, could coherently exclude points of view, or perspectives on the world.

So far we have been concerned with the interpretation of the “matter” and “form” of thought that Kant rejects. Kant’s positive
account of “matter and form”¹, qua concepts of reflection, in The Amphiboly provides further support for his contention that cognition is only possible given sensibly conditioned intuitions. Recall that for Kant only intuitions can provide fully determinate cognitions (even if thought under general concepts), since purely conceptual thinking could only ever be general.² This point is crucial.

This point should be connected with a remark on the idea of a determining consciousness, whose structure Kant attempts to detail in the B Deduction:

The I think expresses the act of determining my existence. The existence is thereby already given, but the way in which I am to determine it, i.e., the manifold that I am to posit in myself as belonging to it, is not yet thereby given. For that self-intuition is required, which is grounded in an a priori given form, i.e., time, which is sensible and belongs to the receptivity of the determinable. Now I do not yet have another self-intuition, which would give the determining in me, of the spontaneity of which alone I am conscious, even before the act of determination, in the same way as time gives that which is to be determined, thus I cannot determine my existence as that of a self-active being, rather I merely represent the spontaneity of my thought, i.e., of the determining, and my existence always remains only sensibly determinable, i.e., determinable as the existence of an appearance. Yet this spontaneity is the reason I call myself an intelligence.³

Kant is here clearly endorsing the idea here that the determination of the sensibly determinable does not include, as its corollary, a “self-intuition” that is somehow “given”. This anticipates his rejection of the soul of rational psychology in the Paralogisms.¹ We should understand the claim here to be connected with his rejection of a “given” whole of possibility, even qua “world of sense”; we only encounter the world of sense piecemeal. It is useful to attend to Kant’s expression of the point in the Analytic because it drives home the continuity of Kant’s thought across the Critique as a whole: the

¹A266-268/B322-324.
²It is striking how the capacity for the kind of endless conceptual determination possible in aesthetic judgment depends upon this fact about the determination of singular intuitions by particular instantiations of universal concepts. The analytical tradition is all the poorer for not recognising this basic contrast that was so important for German Idealism.
³B157-158.
⁴See Ameriks (2000, see esp. Chs. II "Immateriality" and IV "Identity").
overall coherence of the understanding’s capacity to judge depends upon the regulative employment of the three ideas of *metaphysica specialis*.

One can feel suspicious about this claim because Kant typically insists that transcendental conditions have their origin in sensibility and the understanding. As we noted in Chapter 2, §II.i, this claim is ambiguous. It is at least clear that, by Kant’s own lights, insofar as reason brings unity to the understanding’s activity the former ought to be recognised as conditioning the latter.¹

By connecting these themes with Kant’s explanation of his view of “real” and “logical” possibility from The Ideal of Pure Reason, we are able to see that the PCD is correlated with the former, and the PD is correlated with the latter. The Leibnizian rationalist’s error is to mistake the idea of logical possibility entailed by the PD with the real possibility of things, the discovery of which is presupposed as a task in the insistence upon there begin such a thing as the PCD. Therefore, it can be said that Kant’s reformulation of the rationalist conception of a “completely determinate object” (for Kant, “the concept of an object of possible experience”) involves the coupling of conceptual conditions (the logical functions of judgment, from which flow the concepts of reflection and the categories) with sensible ones (space and time).

¹ See Grier (1997) on the tension between Kant’s apparently conflicting attitudes to transcendental ideas. She identifies the tension as that between a reading that sees the transcendental ideas “transcendental” (objective) or “merely ‘methodological or heuristic’” (subjective) (2). I take it that Kant simply uses “subjective” and “objective” in two different ways: “subjective” can be interpreted as “relative to a subjective knower” but also as “non-veridical”; “objective” can be interpreted as “satisfying the conditions of knowledge claims” or as “not relative to a subjective knower”. And, further, a principle can be relative to (the interests of) a subjective knower, yet also satisfy the conditions for an objective knowledge claim.


II.ii Transcendental idealism without transcendental theology?

We must consider a caveat at this point. Longuenesse notes correctly that

the logical form of complete determination has to be jointly grounded in the forms of both infinite and disjunctive judgments.¹

Further, such a process of determination must be thought of as performed by oneself (and communicable to others; therefore as a process conceivably performed by others); the process thus depends upon Kant’s theory of self-consciousness. This reading is a sound one, although her motivations for insisting on the inessential role of the idea of the *ens realissimum* in the context of Kant’s theoretical philosophy can be questioned. In fact, the connections she rightly makes between the PCD and both The Amphiboly chapter of the first *Critique* and the First Introduction of the third can be read in a way that *throws light on* the idea of the *ens realissimum* and its place in Kant’s argument, rather than in a way that *supports rejection of* the idea itself. And this is due to the essential role the idea of “God” plays for Kant in reason’s achievement of systematic unity in both practical and theoretical contexts.

Observe Kant’s statement of his position on this unity in the “Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason” (Book II of the *Critique of Practical Reason*):

> if pure reason of itself really can be and really is practical, as the consciousness of the moral law proves it to be, it is still only one and the same reason which, whether from a theoretical or practical perspective, judges² according to a priori principles...in the union of pure speculative and pure practical reason in one cognition, the latter has primacy, assuming that this union is not contingent and discretionary but based a priori on reason itself and therefore necessary. For, without this subordination a conflict of reason with itself would arise, since if they were merely juxtaposed (coordinate), the first [speculative] would of itself close it boundaries strictly and admit nothing from the latter into its domain, whilst the latter

² Note the peculiarity of this claim: the *understanding*, not *reason*, is the capacity to judge (the faculty of judgment), whereas reason is the faculty of principles or the faculty of inferring. Of course, reason is the ground of synthetic a priori judgment (A11/B24).
[practical] would extend its boundaries over everything and, when its need required, would try to include the former within them.

Kant then says:

But one cannot require pure practical reason to be subordinated to speculative reason and so reverse the order, since all interest is ultimately practical and even that of speculative reason is only conditional and is complete in practical use alone.¹

Longuenesse thinks the inclusion of the *ens realissimum* as a highest idea applies in the theoretical case only because it applies in the practical; therefore that, in principle, it is not (or, ought not to be) required for the theoretical use of reason (our comments about the relation just made notwithstanding). Yet since Kant says that theoretical (or, speculative) employment of reason “is ultimately practical” and “only conditional and complete in practical use alone” such a claim, it seems, can be called into question; for the very idea of separate theoretical or speculative rational grounds would seem, given this admission, to be foreign to Kant’s thought.

The point is that reason is unified even if it can be employed in either theoretical or practical contexts; this dissolves the idea that theoretical enterprises are influenced by independent practical principles. Rather, as Ostaric has suggested, the idea of the *ens realissimum* might simply only be able to be given an “adequate proof in the practical”.² Indeed, a *reflexion* from the silent decade confirms that this was Kant’s view at one point, and given everything else he says there seems to be little reason to think he gave this view up. The *reflexion* runs:

The need of reason to cognize a highest being is that of a necessary hypothesis of the employment of reason: 1. Of pure reason; 2. of empirical reason (both are speculative); of practical reason. *Later addition.* Hence, 1. transcendental theology; 2. natural theology: cosmotheology, physicotheology; 3. moral theology. All of these are: 1. to determine the concept of the highest being; 2. to demonstrate its existence. All this cognition is a belief, as is always the case when we return to first causes. Transcendental theology alone is deistic; natural theology alone is anthropomorphic; moral theology alone is

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¹ See Kant (1996b, 5:107-148, 226-258). The quote is from 5:121, 237-238. The emphasis is mine.

² Ostaric (2009, 155 & ff.). This phrase occurs at 157.
adequately secured against objections. Transcendental theology safeguards them.)

I will not attempt to fully develop a response to this idea; a schema for a response will have to suffice. I suggest that the theoretical and practical aspects of reason actually both need to be understood in two ways:

**Theoretical:**
(i) As theoretical: God is not to be understood as an object of rational knowledge, where this would constitute a confusion of the role of the real use of reason. Rather, belief in a “first cause”, the idea of “God” and the ideal of the *ens realissimum*, is necessary (as Kant says in the quote above).
(ii) As practical: God is a transcendental idea employed as the principle or “schema” for transcendental theology in the formal use of reason in syllogising. “God” is also the ground of the principle of complete determination: the *ens realissimum*. The “philosophical kernel” of the idea of “God”, the Transcendental Ideal of the *ens realissimum*, is to be understood as “the concept of an object of possible experience”, which makes possible all objective empirical knowledge.

**Practical:**
(i) As theoretical: “God” is conceived of as having a certain structure: the “most real being” (*ens realissimum*), “most perfect being” (*ens perfectium*), “being of beings” (*ens entium*), which depends on the results of the 1st Critique. Religion therefore serves to embed a certain theoretical dimension in the practical uses of reason. This is the essence of Kant’s moral theology. There is an essential connection between the idea of “God” as “the most real

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2 Something like this division seems to have been alluded to by Fichte (1982, I 472, 46), where he speaks about Kant’s treatment of The Categorical Imperative and the idea of intellectual intuition.
being” as well as “morally perfect”. The “perfection” is construed by Kant as the “most real” and “the best”\(^1\).

(ii) As practical: “God” is understood as the source of the moral law, where the commands of that law are heard “as-if” uttered by the voice of God. (Recall Kant on conscience from Chapter 2, §VI.)

I take this merely implicit structure in Kant’s theoretical and practical aspects of the idea of “God” to be made explicit in Hegel’s chapter on “The Absolute Idea” in the *Science of Logic*. There Hegel tells us:

> The absolute Idea has shown itself to be the identity of the theoretical and practical Idea. Each of these by itself is still one-sided, possessing the Idea only as a sought-for beyond and an unattained goal; each, therefore, is a *synthesis of endeavour*, and has, but equally has *not*, the Idea in it; each passes from one thought to the other without bringing the two together, and so remains fixed in their contradiction.\(^2\)

Now, note Longuenesse’s words in the closing paragraph of her paper:

> There remained the question: why is Kant so intent on asserting, again and again, the necessity of the idea [of the *ens realissimum*], the unavoidable illusion it carries, and even the positive, regulative role it plays in cognition? My suggestion is that none of this would be necessary unless Kant was intent on maintaining its role for practical reason. The unity of theoretical and practical reason is what drives the admissions of theoretical reason itself. Whether the practical grounds for endorsing the idea of *ens realissimum* are any stronger than the theoretical grounds, is a question I had no ambition to answer in this chapter.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) See the editorial edition in Kant (1998, 370, n.A): “Inserted in Kant’s copy of the first edition: “The thoroughgoing determination as principle [*Principi*] is grounded on the unity of consciousness: existence determined in space and time. Hence in *noumena* the highest reality contains the matter and the form contains the perfection. The *formale* is the best.” (E CXLIX, p. 45; 23:37)

\(^2\) Hegel (1969, 824).

\(^3\) Longuenesse (1995/2005, 235). See remarks at 233 also: “I do think that the Analytic, together with its Appendix, was sufficient to offer an account for systemacticity which does away with the ontological illusion carried by the ideal of pure reason.” This comment expresses pessimism about Kant’s
Although Longuenesse could not be better situated to provide a reconstructive account of Kant that involves sorting the plausible from less than plausible theses, Kant’s talk about “God” and the three ideas we mentioned does not seem to be an accidental accretion of his thinking, but rather the touchstone of his philosophical approach as a whole. Kant’s ties to the rationalist tradition should not be down-played, but rather understood in a more sympathetic fashion.

As Ostaric has insisted, the push to the unconditioned is not simply a requirement of practical reason alone, but is “the need of reason as such.” And “the unconditioned” appears in an anthropomorphic guise as “God” in both practical and theoretical contexts; therefore, as far as Kant is concerned, reason as such leads to a quite peculiar idea of “God”, in its role as a condition of the possibility of unified, systematised thinking. So not just moral cognition, but also teleological judgments about nature which occur in theoretical reason require this idea. Kant makes this point in the *Jäschke Logic*:

> One cannot provide objective reality for any theoretical idea, or prove it, except for the idea of freedom, because this is the condition of the moral law, whose reality is a maxim. The reality of the idea of God can only be proved by means of this idea, and hence only with a practical purpose, i.e., to act as if there is a God, and hence only for this purpose.

And in a paragraph immediately following this he writes, startlingly:

> In all sciences, above all in those of reason, the idea of the science is its universal abstract or outline, hence the extension of all the cognitions that belong to it. Such an idea of the whole – the first thing one has to look to in a science, and which one has to seek – is architectonic, as, e.g., the idea of jurisprudence. Most men lack the idea of humanity, the idea of a perfect republic, of a happy life, etc. Many men have no idea of what they want, hence they proceed according to instinct and authority.

Dialectic; I attempt to show how the ambitions expressed there might be better defended in an alternate theoretical and practical tenor.

1Cf. Guyer (1990b, 33).
3Kant (1992a, 591). Here recall Kant’s statement regarding God, freedom, and immortality at B395.
Kant says explicitly that whilst the practical use of reason in moral contexts may indeed be the cause of the generation of the *theistic* concept of “God”, the theoretical use of reason nevertheless generates a *deistic* conception.\(^1\) So even if one accepts an in principle separation between these two uses, the idea of “God”, qua *ens realissimum*, is for Kant ineradicable. Moreover, the idea of “God” presupposed by practical uses of reason itself has a certain theoretical structure.\(^2\) This should in fact be unsurprising; after all, recall that the *ens realissimum* serves as the ground for a principle that acts as an epistemological injunction: “completely determine things one encounters in possible experience”.

This task is itself *practical*; acts of judging are elements of theoretical inquiry which is itself a practice; practical uses of reason presuppose certain theoretical results just as theoretical uses of reason presuppose practical imperatives.

Our conclusion is that rather than being chided for retaining a theoretical conception of “God” in transcendental theology, Kant ought to be rather chided for not providing an adequate account of the idea of “God” itself such that his “rational necessity” claim from the postulates in the *Critique of Practical Reason* regarding it could be interpreted charitably.

It is easy to feel uneasy about insisting Kant was committed to an idea of “God” in theoretical uses of reason because everything else Kant says in his theoretical philosophy gives the impression that he thinks theological claims are to be cast aside as the relics of a bygone age of misguided metaphysical speculation. And yet, if one is to fully appreciate the nature of Kant’s systematic project, one must appreciate the extent to which his philosophy is, at bottom, a kind of transcendental theology. Against Longuenesse, there does not seem to be reason to think making Kant palatable requires one reject his philosophical theology.

If one does so, one is left with but a shadow that is the other side of the limit he places on knowledge: negative noumena; the realm of the unconditioned. It is central to understanding Kant that one appreciates how he could have thought that confecting a “scientific metaphysics” that adumbrated “transcendental conditions of possibility” still required theological claims. Moreover, it is central to understanding Hegel’s reaction to Kant that one appreciates the

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\(^1\)Kant (1978, 30).

\(^2\)Wood (1978, 25) acknowledges this point.
former's attempted correction of the latter, and therefore the relation of this criticism to the currently most prominent views.

Another difficulty stems from the fact that Longuenesse claims the *ens realissimum* is to be thought of as something akin to the rational ideal of “the concept of an object of possible experience”.¹ It is clear that for Kant such a concept is determined negatively by the concept of “noumenon”; after all, “the concept of an object of possible experience” is equivalent to “phenomenon” (in the universal sense). And because both phenomena and noumena are each correlated with a certain conception of a knower, the kind of knower associated with each is dependent on the other.

Kant’s ambitions to provide a critical version of the PCD become clearer in the remarks immediately following his explanation of it, where he reveals an important commitment of his idea of *transcendental content*, as mentioned in the Metaphysical Deduction:

The principle of complete determination...deals with the *content and not merely the logical form*. It is the principle of the synthesis of all predicates which are to make up the *complete concept of a thing*, and not merely of the analytical representation, through one or two opposed predicates; and it contains a transcendental presupposition, namely, that of the material of all possibility, which is supposed to contain *a priori* the data for the particular possibility of every thing.²

This remark can be compared with Kant’s famous account of the homologous structure of judgment and intuitional content:

The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition, which, expressed generally, is called the pure concept of understanding. *The same understanding, therefore, and indeed by means of the very same actions through which it brings the logical form of judgment into concepts by means of the analytical unity, also brings a transcendental content into its representations by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general*, on account of which they are called pure concepts of the understanding that pertain to objects *a priori*; this can never be accomplished by general logic.³

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²A572-573/B600-601; my emphasis.
³A79/B104-105; my emphases.
The basic point is revealed here: Kant’s critical version of the PCD is an attempt to transform a rationalist principle that for Leibniz invited a confusion of the mere “logical reflection or comparison of concepts to form judgments”\(^1\) with “a comparison of objects”, into one that operates within the sensible (and intellectual) conditions of the possibility of experience. It is precisely this point about the cooperation between the sensible and intellectual transcendental conditions of experience (and therefore objects of experience) that is expressed in the Metaphysical Deduction’s account of the homology of intuitions and judgment. The question remaining is whether the sensible/intellectual bifurcation will do as it stands, if what Kant \emph{really} wants to say is that they are both required if we are to have genuine cognition, as insisted upon in his most famous remark, in the Introduction to the Transcendental Logic:

> Without sensibility no object would be given to us, and without understanding none would be thought. Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind.\(^2\)

From Hegel’s point of view, Kant’s retention of a distinction between “general logic” and “transcendental logic” evinces a residual rationalism inherited from Leibniz, and therefore indicates what might be objectionable about even his \emph{critically-reduced} conception of the \emph{ens realissimum}.

In offering an exposition of the PCD we seek to establish the claim that Hegel has a more plausible theory of the structure of the rational determination of \emph{things}, as well as \emph{concepts}. If successful, this would have the consequence that both Kant’s conception of an “object of possible experience” as well as his idea of “God” stand to be reformulated in Hegelian terms. I suggest that Kant neglects the competing demands that different modes of thought place on their objects, and so fails to see that there is not only \emph{one} “logical” mode or manner in which determination can occur.\(^3\) This basic Hegelian objection is the starting point for a dialectical exposition of the PCD.

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\(^{2}\)A51/B75.

\(^{3}\)Horstmann (2006a) discusses this issue in connection with what he calls the “monistic ontology” of the \emph{Phenomenology of Spirit}. Following Redding (2007a), I refer to this thesis as Hegel’s “cognitive contextualism”.

III Kant and Hegel on judgment

An examination of Kant’s and Hegel’s respective views regarding (1), the nature of judgment in general, and (2), the significance of particular forms which it takes, serves to clarify the related idea of the “unity of the understanding”. And given that both Kant’s and Hegel’s conceptions of the “unity of the understanding” is intimately connected with their views about the “unity of reason”, the provision of a skeletal structure which connects these two ideas serves to explain what shape a Hegelian transformation of the critically-reduced PCD in Kant would take, insofar as the PCD expresses a key task performed under the assumption of “the unity of a possible empirical consciousness” (the idea of a completely determined thing serves as a guide for unifying thoughts about individual things; thus for achieving unity in one’s thoughts).¹

Moreover, given that attention to Hegelian dialectical insights into the forms of judgment reveals what criticisms Hegel could have developed more explicitly in connection with Kant’s transcendental philosophy, taking this expository path allows for an outline of Kant’s and Hegel’s respective views of a “form of a system” to emerge.²

This is crucial, because if one attends carefully to Hegel’s remarks in the introduction to Section Two of The Subjective Logic, “Objectivity”, we find him telling us how certain accounts of the “sum-total of all realities”, provided in The Doctrine of Being and The Doctrine of Essence, find their sequel in certain sections in The Doctrine of the Concept.³ Key themes to keep one’s eye on here are found in Hegel’s discussions of “Teleology” and “Life”: Hegel’s reconstruction of the idea of a “sum total of all realities” in The

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¹ In the section entitled “The regulative principle of pure reason in regard to the cosmological ideas” (which discusses, amongst other things, the regulative function of the transcendental idea of the “world-whole”), Kant says: “in order to determine the sense of this rule of pure reason appropriately, it must first be noted that it cannot say what the object is, but only how the empirical regress is to be instituted so as to attain to the complete concept of the object.” (A509-5110/B537-538)

² Cf. the First Introduction to Kant (2000, esp. IV and V).

³ Hegel refers to the discussion of “Quality” in (b) of Section One, Chapter Two of the Doctrine of Being; “Determinate Being” (111-114, esp. 112). Hegel also refers to “Remark 3: The Law of Contradiction”, in Section One, Chapter Two of the Doctrine of Essence, where he discusses “Contradiction” (see 431-443, esp. 442). Hegel refers to these passages at (1969, 705).
Subjective Logic involves a radical transformation of Kant’s views about self-consciousness as adumbrated in the Transcendental Deduction (with respect to the concept of the “I”), as well as Kant’s views regarding an intuitive understanding found in the 3rd Critique (with regard, therefore, to the concept of “God”). Kant’s Dialectic of Teleological Judgment has a successor in Hegel’s chapters on “Mechanism” and “Teleology” in the “Objectivity” section of the Doctrine of the Concept, and his account of self-consciousness is radicalised by Hegel in Chapter IV of the Phenomenology where its emergence is connected with “Life”, which is also the title of Chapter One, Section Three of The Subjective Logic.¹

We cannot account for these complexities presently, and our purpose is in any case to offer as much as is minimally necessary to explain the role of infinite and disjunctive judgment in the formation of a system of rational knowledge; nevertheless, a brief remark is necessary.

In the Doctrine of Being Hegel’s reference to the idea of a “sum total of all realities” occurs within a discussion of “reality” and “negation”; there it is impressed upon us that the idea of a “sum total of all realities” cannot be construed as purely positive. This point is structurally similar to the point made in the earlier chapter on “Being”: the concepts of “reality” and “negation” are, in the chapter on “Determinate Being”, the descendants of “being” and “nothing”. Hegel’s point in this part of the Doctrine of Being is that such an idea of a “sum total of all realities” cannot exclude negation.² He makes the same point in the Doctrine of Essence in his discussion of contradiction and one supposes the account offered in the Doctrine of

¹ A reading similar to mine is suggested in Pinkard (2002, 261, n.33): “If the existence of God were to be proven, it would [for Hegel] have to be a matter of showing that the concept of God is itself a further commitment necessary to sustain all our other logical commitments and not some kind of deduction of necessary predicates of some entity…although Kant had thought he had shown that the concept of God could not be a condition of the possibility of cognitive experience – although it might well be a practical presupposition of morality – Hegel thinks that something like his very unorthodox conception of God could in fact be shown to be a commitment that one implicitly undertakes when thinking about ‘being’ in general.” Further, that “the Logic is conceived to be about the norms of judgment and how those norms are themselves to be generated out of what is necessary for our own mentality to be possible, that is, out of the Idea itself (as the space of reasons).” (262)

² At (1969, 665) Hegel speaks of “God, freedom, right and duty, the infinite, unconditioned, supersensuous” as being “only negative objects”.

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2 At (1969, 665) Hegel speaks of “God, freedom, right and duty, the infinite, unconditioned, supersensuous” as being “only negative objects”.
Chapter Three: The Principle of Complete Determination

the Concept will therefore be the same again, yet taken from the standpoint of the unity of these two ideas. This theme is developed below in our discussion of infinite judgment.

Given our task of explaining Hegel’s critique of Kant’s account of the “unity” of the understanding and reason, and their relation, we begin by turning to a passage where Hegel speaks critically of Kant (albeit implicitly):

In conformity with the...interpretation of the syllogism as the form of what is rational, reason itself has been defined as the faculty of syllogising, while the understanding, in contrast, has been defined as the faculty of forming concepts. Quite apart from the underlying superficial representation of the spirit as a mere ensemble of forces or faculties subsisting side by side, there is this to be said about the association of the understanding with the concept and of reason with the syllogism: that we ought not to regard the Concept as a mere determination of the understanding any more than we ought to regard the syllogism as rational without qualification. For, on the one hand, what is usually dealt with in formal logic as the doctrine of the syllogism is nothing but the simple syllogism of the understanding. It does not deserve the honour of counting as the form of the rational, of counting indeed as what is rational purely and simply. Nor yet, on the other hand, is the Concept as such just a mere form of the understanding. On the contrary, it is only the abstractive understanding that depreciates the concept in this way.¹

An interpretation of what Hegel means by “the Concept” will be offered in §IV. For now, note that Hegel’s main complaint, and

¹Hegel (1991b, §182, Addition). Cf. Hegel (1971, §467, Zusatz) for his remarks on Kant’s distinction between “the understanding” and “reason”: “Prior to Kant, no distinction had been made between Understanding and Reason. But unless one wants to sink to the level of the vulgar consciousness which crudely obliterates the distinct forms of pure thought, the following distinction must be firmly established between Understanding and Reason: that for the latter, the object is determined in and for itself, is the identity of content and form, of universal and particular, whereas for the former it falls apart into form and content, into universal and particular, and into an empty ‘in-itself’ to which the determinateness is added from the outside; that, therefore, in the thinking of the Understanding, the content is indifferent to its form, while in the comprehensive thinking of Reason the content produces its form from itself.” This distinction clearly applies also to judgment and syllogistic inference, respectively; it gives a clue as to why Hegel would refer to the syllogism as the “truth” of the judgment Hegel (1969, 664).
therefore of the relation between reason and the understanding, is with the idea of concepts as mere “universal and reflected representations”; for Hegel, the paradigm of a concept, one whose essence entails its existence, is the “I”; Hegel’s objection to Kant’s account of concepts is part of his critique of Kant’s “formal” and “subjective” account of the “I think” of self-consciousness. Hegel’s basic point is that to conceive of a concept as a mere subjective “function” is to undermine the purpose which concepts are to serve: they are meant to articulate more than a merely subjective take on reality. And yet we should remind ourselves that Hegel nevertheless holds a fallibilist position in both semantic and epistemic senses (this was discussed in Chapter 2, §III).

Hegel offers an important programmatic statement at the beginning of “The Syllogism” in the Science of Logic.

The understanding is regarded as the faculty of the determinate Concept which is held fast in isolation by abstraction and the form of universality. But in reason the determinate Concepts are posited in their totality and unity.¹

The insistence that the understanding and its determinate concepts are not independent of reason gives a clue as to how one should interpret the significance of infinite judgment: Hegel’s discussion there constitutes an attempt to show how positive and negative judgments are not independent, but rather, find their sequels in the two sides of infinite judgment. And it is the rational connection between these moments that is the key: at the level of a finite understanding’s judgings, positivity and negativity can seem to independent moments, yet as Hegel argues, they turn out to be far more complex than this.

Immediately following the above-cited remark Hegel complains that the connection between what Kant called the “real” and “formal” uses of reason has never been satisfactorily explained. Hegel is adamant that the syllogism itself is “the rational”; thus, for Hegel, it is both the “form” and “content” of a system; thus “reason as syllogiser” (for Kant, “formal”) and “reason as lawgiver”² (for Kant, “real”) signal two sides of one phenomenon.

We here take a clue from Longuenesse as to how Hegel’s critique of Kant’s account of judgment may reveal something general about

¹Hegel (1969, 664).
²Cf. the discussion of this theme in Hegel (1977b, Chapter V, C., (b) "Reason as lawgiver" and (c) "Reason as testing laws").
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their positions; she proposes to show “that in Hegel’s transformation of Kant’s conception of judgment, the move from Kant’s dualism to what we might call, with some precaution, Hegel’s ‘monism’ stands out with particular clarity.”¹ And further, that despite the shift in Hegel’s treatment of judgment from Faith and Knowledge to the Science of Logic, the explanations given in Faith and Knowledge are still helpful to understand the status Hegel assigns to judgment in the Science of Logic: for him, judgment is a mode of being itself rather than a mere psychological process, or rather the latter is the manifestation of the former for a finite consciousness.²

We offered a detailing of some of the elements involved in this characterisation of judgment when discussing Hegel’s account of the emergence of linguistic consciousness (in Chapter 2, §§V and V.i); the present discussion therefore adds to our portrayal of the role of rational activity in the emergence of freedom.

Note that in the context of discussing the origin of the categories Kant speaks of the understanding as “absolute unity” and says that the connection among the pure concepts of the understanding must therefore be “in accordance with a concept or idea”³. The objective validity of this connection, which Kant here says “provides a rule by means of which the place of each pure concept of the understanding and the completeness of all of them together can be determined a priori⁴, and its relation to sensibility, is the topic of the Transcendental Deduction. Kant’s task in the preceding section of the Critique, the Metaphysical Deduction, is however to explain the nature of the logical functions of judgments and categories, which themselves must also be somehow determined by the idea of “absolute unity”. It is also the purpose of the Metaphysical Deduction to explain the necessary connections between the forms of judgment and the categories, and thereby pave the way for a justification of the a priori status of both with respect to the deliverances of sensibility.⁴

³A67/B92.
⁴Note that Kant’s famous footnote (in Kant (2004, 474-476, 10-12, n.†)) where he admits not only the obscurity of the Transcendental Deduction, but also the lesser importance of it, when compared with the account of the functions of judgment and the categories. This tells us Kant came to believe that it was his transcendental idealist thesis, articulated in the details of transcendental logic that was most important. See the defence of Kant in Longuenesse (2001/2005), guided by an examination of disjunctive
Unfortunately, it has been standard procedure in Kant scholarship to dismiss the majority or entirety of this section of the *Critique*. I shall here continue to express solidarity with Longuenesse by insisting this aspect of Kant has largely been misunderstood and unfairly dismissed.¹

When attempting to understand what Kant means by “absolute unity” here we should recall his remark that the categories “contain nothing more than the unity of reflection upon appearances, insofar as these appearances must necessarily belong to a possible empirical consciousness.”² Hegel applauds Kant’s strategy here, although he is sceptical about Kant’s exact procedure:

The various types of judgment are to be interpreted not just as an empirical multiplicity, but as a totality determined by thinking; and one of Kant’s great achievements was to have been the first to draw our attention to this. Kant’s classification of judgments according to the schema of his table of categories into the judgments of quality, quantity, relation, and modality, cannot be regarded as adequate, partly because of the merely formal application of the schema, and partly because of its content. But all the same, what underlies this classification is the genuine intuition that the various types of judgment are determined by the universal form of the logical Idea itself.³

Turning to the text of the *Critique*, we find that the connection between the unity of the understanding and the unity of a systematic mode of inquiry, here the “scientific metaphysics” whose principles Kant is bent on discovering and elucidating, is outlined on the first judgment and the correlated categories of “community” and “reciprocity”, and the related account of synthetic a priori judgment in the Third Analogy of experience (A211-218/B256-265).

Note the curiosity of the fact that the elements of Kant’s position that he regarded as most central are those which are typically excluded in analytical reconstructions of transcendental arguments. It is simply wrong to say that the Transcendental Deduction on its own forms the core of Kant’s transcendental philosophy; the arguments set out there lose their significance if one ignores Kant’s account of the transcendental-logical functions of judgment and the categories.

¹ See her (1998) for an extended defence, as well as the development of her position in (2005b, esp. Chs. 1-4).
² A310/B367.
³ Hegel (1991b, §171, Addition, 248). The emphasis is mine. Notice that Hegel here has reversed the order of quality and quantity in Kant’s table. This is discussed below.
page of the Transcendental Logic under the heading “Transcendental Analytic”, where Kant writes, regarding the fourth item of his list of tasks for that portion of the *Critique* (“4. That the table of them [the Categories] be complete, and that they entirely exhaust the entire field of pure understanding.”):

Now this completeness of a science cannot reliably be assumed from a rough calculation of an aggregate put together by mere estimates; hence it is possible only by means of an *idea of the whole* of the *a priori* cognition of the understanding, and through the division of concepts that such an idea determines and that constitutes it, thus only through their connection in a system.¹

We see here that Hegel is at least correct in his estimation of Kant’s ambition to provide a system for thinking under an² “idea of a whole”. Kant says further of the pure understanding that

the sum total of its cognition will constitute a system that is to be grasped and determined under one idea, the completeness and articulation of which system can at the same time yield a touchstone of the correctness and genuineness of all the pieces of cognition fitting into it.³

Although we are not yet concerned with the key points of difference between Hegel’s conception of the “universal form of the logical Idea itself” and Kant’s “idea of a whole”, such a comparison is intimately related to that of comparing their respective accounts of the “unity of the understanding” and “unity of reason”.⁴

Hegel thinks of the elements of Kant’s Transcendental Logic as requiring a dialectical exposition: if such a thing could ever be philosophically convincing, its concepts and the unity in which they participate require justification by way of demonstration of their interconnectedness.⁵ Although Kant does attempt to explain the relation between the logical functions of judgment in the

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¹ A64-65/B89.
² I say “an” and not “the” because Hegel clearly thinks of this conception (“idea of a whole”) in unique terms that depart from Kant as well as common usage.
³ A65/B90. Cf. the remarks in sections IV and V of the First Introduction of the 3rd Critique.
⁴ On the distinction between the unity of the understanding and the unity of reason see A326/B382-383.
⁵ A similar point is made in Pinkard (1979/1985).
Metaphysical Deduction and goes on to detail the structure of apperception in the Transcendental Deduction, Hegel thinks Kant simply presupposes the adequacy of this table—therefore, that the table itself is unjustified; it is merely presupposed, but not posited and recognised as the outcome of free activity, in Hegel’s stronger sense of “free”. Of course, to say that something is unjustified is not to say it is unjustifyable, and the fact that Hegel spends much of his time in the *Science of Logic* (especially in The Subjective Logic) giving a kind of “speculative deduction” of the logical forms themselves demonstrates that he thinks they do play some key role in the “metaphysics” of self-conscious, discursive thought.

Before examining the Metaphysical Deduction, it will be helpful to present the table of judgments in juxtaposition to Hegel’s own names for the same. Thus, we have:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kant</th>
<th>Hegel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Judgments of Quantity</td>
<td>Judgments of Reflection (or: <em>Subsumption</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal</td>
<td>Singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Particular</td>
<td>Particular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Judgments of Quality</td>
<td>Judgments of Existence *(or: <em>Inherence/Thereness)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infinite</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Judgments of Relation</td>
<td>Judgments of Necessity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categorical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothetical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disjunctive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 I have not repeated the ordering where Hegel makes no modification.
2 The German reads “Das Urteil des Daseins”. Miller translates this as “judgments of existence”, yet the last word here is ambiguous, since the German “existenz”, which the English suggests is possible translation of, departs from Hegel’s meaning. “Dasein” is rendered as “determinate being” in the Doctrine of Being, Section One, Chapter 2; we might therefore understand such judgments as pertaining to this moment (this is the translation employed in Hegel (1991b)).
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4. Judgments of Modality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problematic</th>
<th>Assertoric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertoric</td>
<td>Problematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apodictic</td>
<td>Apodictic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the chapter on “The Judgment” in the *Science of Logic* Hegel switches the order of (1) and (2) by treating what he calls “judgments of existence” before “judgments of reflection”; and given Hegel’s names for these forms of judgment as well as the common meaning associated with “existence” and “reflection” generally, no mystery is to be met with in such a reversal of order. To make the point cheaply, we can say that one cannot “reflect” unless one has something to “reflect” upon and thereby *posit*, namely, “existence”, or “determinate being”, qua *presupposed*. Cheapness aside, this does actually seem to be (part of) what Hegel has in mind. This, however, does not dispense with the question of why Hegel would rename Kant’s quantitative and qualitative judgments this way—as judgments of existence and judgments of reflection, respectively—or, why he would rename them at all.

An answer emerges when we take a high altitude perspective of the structure not only of the *Logic*, but of Hegel's philosophy as a whole. Hegel’s standard philosophical approach of commencing with what he takes to be a “most basic” concept and then proceeding to examine its logical structure and inherent presuppositions, as well as contradictions that arise when attempting to think these through, depends on taking the logical functions of qualitative judgments (affirmative, negative, infinite) as primitive forms for thinking. In the *Encyclopaedia Logic*, under the heading “(a) The Qualitative Judgment” Hegel says:

> The immediate judgment is the *judgment of thereness*, the subject [is] posited in a universality (as its predicate) which is an immediate (and hence sensible) quality.”

And in §171 preceding this he says of the table:

> Thus we obtain, first of all, three main types of judgment [existence, reflection, necessity], which correspond to the stages of Being, Essence, and Concept.¹

¹ The interpolations are mine.
So Hegel evidently understands his treatment of judgments of “quality” to somehow correspond to his analysis of “Being”, in Book One of the *Science of Logic*—an attitude already suggested by the fact that the section begun with that analysis is titled: “Quality (Determinateness)”. Before proceeding we must caution against finding superficial likeness here: Section Two of Book One of the Objective Logic is entitled “Quantity (Magnitude)” and this seems to conflict with the suggestion that Book Two, the Doctrine of Essence, corresponds to judgments of quantity.

What we must say at this stage is that Hegel has different conceptions of these functions operating at different levels in his *Logic*. Clearly insight is to be gained by distinguishing the placement of these functions themselves, for they demonstrate how similar logical moves are made at distinct logical levels.\(^1\) In particular, insofar as judgments of reflection “attribute to a subject, i.e. to some individual entity in relation to other entities, or to a plurality of individual entities, determinations that reflect their relations to one another” it is the second section of the Doctrine of Essence, “Appearance”, to which we need to look to discover the categories of reflection that express related phenomena from a distinct standpoint.\(^2\)

As is frequently pointed out, Hegel’s analysis of “Being” in the *Logic* mirrors the opening chapters of the *Phenomenology* where Hegel’s dialectical analysis of “Sense-Certainty” demonstrates the problematic character of a “mere this”.\(^3\) The problematic character of

\(^1\) We should be cautious about attributing to Hegel a systematic logical “method”, such as the erroneous “thesis-antithesis-synthesis” dialectic. On this see Kaufmann (1951) and Mueller (1958). Cf. also deVries (1993, 242-243) where he claims that individual stages of the dialectic ought to be treated individually.

\(^2\) Longuenesse (1992/2007, 210) discusses this point.

\(^3\) Within analytical scholarship Hegel’s point is now frequently associated with Wilfrid Sellars’s attack on the “Myth of the Given”, due in part to Sellars’s mentioning of “Meditations Hegeliènnes” in Sellars (1956/1997, §20), yet somehow the claim is usually confusedly attributed to Sellars, rather than his interlocutor’s mischaracterisation of him. And, given the fact that Pittsburgh Hegelianism is self-consciously conceived as an extension of Sellarsian themes, one might think that this confused attribution played some role in the related readings of Hegel. This would require a lot of evidence in order to be established; something we cannot do here. The point is that Hegel’s position should not be seen as simply an attack on the so-called “Given”; he has something quite specific in mind, which nevertheless may include an ancestor of Sellars’s point.
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a “mere this” supposedly given to thought lies, in part, in the fact that such apparent “immediacy” turns out to be “mediated” in that the apparent singularity of the this taken to be apprehended by thought turns out to actually be a universal: a mere “something” having the form “this, here, now”. Moreover, in addition to being internally contradictory (what is really “this, here, now” is something determinate, whereas such universal terms are, on their own, indeterminate), the category itself is epistemically and semantically empty; so whilst internal contradictoriness is a dialectical feature of categories in general, according to Hegel, this initial stage is also empty.¹

The essentially indexical character of such modes of thought demonstrates their universality in virtue of the fact that such form is that which is most general, not most specific. This dialectical transition is thought of by Hegel as the initial step taken by spirit on its long and frenzied journey. Meanwhile, in the Science of Logic, Hegel begins in a similar way with the category of pure “Being” and shows such a category to be, if left unqualified, in no way distinct from its opposite: “Nothing”. This dialectical tension results in the positing of the category “Becoming” which is taken to contain both “Being” and “Nothing” as moments within it. We might think the claim is grounded intuitively this way: with the passage of time implied by “Becoming”, something proceeds from being what it is to being what it was not. This would not entail that such logical categories are in fact temporal ones, but rather that such connections are only apparent given a certain temporal form in which to demonstrate them.

Even without yet committing ourselves to a defence or elaboration of this strategy, we can appreciate the point at hand: Hegel thinks that the logical functions of judgments, simply assumed by Kant,² actually bear dialectical relations to one another. That is to

¹ We must be cautious here, since the aufgehoben dialectical positions results in such rejected categories being served up in alternate forms at later stages; the “immediacy” of both “Being” (logical/semantic) and “Sense-Certainty” (epistemic/semantic) constitute necessary moments in thought, even if empty in isolation.

² Standard objections that Kant’s imported his table from the Port Royal logic textbooks of his day, notwithstanding, Kant’s table is actually unique. See Forster (2008, Chapter 11). See Kant’s words at A70-71/B96:
say, the logical forms of judgment themselves must be conceived of as *forms of judgmental thought* that unfold out of one another through attempts to *judgmentally* determine objects, or, to rehearse a theme from Kant’s original statement of the PCD: “things” and “concepts”. Recall that objects can be both.

While Kant thought of the logical functions of judgment as twelve forms, some of which constitute the pure reflective unity of objective judgments, technically the judgments of relation are categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive *syllogistic forms*. And *modality* is not so much a form of judgment that characterises the thing judged about, but rather pertains to the strength of inferences able to be made about it.\(^1\) So, although one may offer a “metalinguistic” account of modality as expressed in judgments one makes by “making explicit” their modality in judgments of the form,

| S is p has existence/non-existence. | (Assertoric) |
| It is possible/impossible that S is p. | (Problematic) |
| It is necessary/contingent that S is p. | (Apodictic) |

we should not think Kantian modality takes this form. Rather, all judgments contain a modal flavour, although quite clearly one could make that explicit in such forms as iterated above.\(^2\)

So, we may say take the permissibility of an inference granted or denied to express epistemic modality.\(^3\) Modal judgments thus make

> “Since this division seems to depart in several points, although not essential ones, from the customary technique of the logicians, the following protests against a worrisome understanding are not necessary.”

2. See A75/B101, where Kant says problematic judgments are “thought only as an optional judgment, which it is possible to assume”. Kant thinks with such judgments there is “a free choice” of admitting that which they assert (qua proposition); that here one is confronted by “a purely optional admission” of them “into the understanding”.

We should here remind ourselves that for Kant a proposition is just some asserted content (propositions are, for him, by their nature assertoric), whereas judgments express a certain objective unity in thought. This is why they may be part of distinct modal contexts without making explicit their modality in the form of modal predicates (possibly, necessarily, etc.).

Leech (2010) argues that Kant’s kind of modality is not “epistemic” or “doxastic” modality, since Kant’s claims it does not contribute to the content of a judgment, but rather only its relation to the unity of
explicit the implicit inferential structure of one’s discourse, for the three modal functions just expressed are to be viewed, when so expressed, not as statements within the empirically real framework of possible experience, but rather within its transcendental structure. That is, for Kant, modality expresses the permissibility of further claims one can make, given one’s empirically real experience and its transcendental conditions. They thus seem to be very much like what Gilbert Ryle referred to as “inference tickets”.

Note how this follows from Kant’s view that only judgments with corresponding intuitional matter for their subject (and therefore predicate)\(^1\) can be said to be part of empirical reality; according to the Postulates of Empirical Thinking, one can infer to further truths about actuality given knowledge of that to which such judgments refer in addition to the structure of transcendental logic.

The objectively real judgments one can make about the empirically real world together with those judgments about unexperienced phenomena one can make on their basis (and the requisite transcendental conditions) constitutes the realm of the actual. As we’ve noted, Kant tells us in “The Postulates of Empirical Thinking” that the possible is, so to speak, part of the actual: it is that to which we can infer but have not yet experienced.\(^2\) This is part Kant’s peculiar sense of “real possibility”, as discussed above in §II.i.

For his part, Hegel thought of the logical functions themselves as expressing a dialectic of particular modes of determination. Hegel’s synopsis of his chapter on judgment demonstrates this point.\(^3\) There Hegel makes it clear that he thinks the four forms of judgment are patterns of determination that can be “speculatively deduced” from one another in a progressive fashion, where in the final form of consciousness. I think this is a false dichotomy, and in any case it is unargued for; Leech simply assumes epistemic modality could not be that which is expressed by the permissibility of an inference from one claim (or set of claims) to another claim (or set of claims). In fact, I think it is perfectly in concert with Kant’s view that what one might call epistemic modality—what additional modal beliefs one is entitled to on the basis of what one knows is actual—that which is expressed by adumbrating permissible and impermissible inferences. This in any case seems to be the view recommended in Kant’s discussion of “real possibility” in “The Postulates of Empirical Thinking”.

\(^1\) Any intuitional matter subsumed under the subject of a judgment is, in virtue of the function of the copula, subsumed under the predicate.

\(^2\) See the crucial remarks on A230-232/B282-284 and n.* at A234-235/B587.

\(^3\) Hegel (1969, 630).
judgments of the concept the two sides of the judgment are “identical” with one another.

The structure of the dialectic here implies something quite peculiar: since Hegel regards the three judgmental forms under each heading as a whole, where the inter-connection of the first two, taken as a pair, is taken to be expressed in the third form, it is this third logical function under each heading that both demonstrates the unity of the former two as well as motivates the dialectical transition from one heading to the next:

Positive, Negative $\rightarrow$ Infinite $\rightarrow$ Singular

Singular, Particular $\rightarrow$ Universal $\rightarrow$ Categorical

Categorical, Hypothetical $\rightarrow$ Disjunctive $\rightarrow$ Assertoric

Assertoric, Problematic $\rightarrow$ Apodictic $\rightarrow$ “The Syllogism”

If we compare Kant’s remarks about the dialectical relation between the three members of each class of category in the Metaphysical Deduction, we find him expressing agreement at least of the level of individual headings of the table of judgment:

that each class always has the same number of categories, namely three, which calls for reflection, since otherwise all a priori division by means of concepts must be a dichotomy. But here the third category always arises from the combination of the first two in its class.¹

Despite this commonality, the place of “judgment” as a moment in Hegel’s Logic raises the question of how one is to connect Kant’s transcendental logic with dialectical logic. If we are to understand this connection with Kant, we must take the chapter’s structure and systematic location seriously.

Hegel says that the “objective logic, then, takes the place rather of former metaphysics which was intended to be the scientific construction of the world in terms of thoughts alone.”² And although he regards its primary concern to be with that part of metaphysics

¹ B110.
² Hegel (1969, 63). He also refers explicitly to “the soul, the world and God” here, which are of course the transcendental ideas Kant had attempted to give a transcendental, regulative function to in the second section of the Appendix to the Dialectic.
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corresponded with “Being” and “Essence”—ontology—the validity of other parts of metaphysics receive explanations through concern with this basic mode of metaphysical thinking, and his Subjective Logic is in any case meant to articulate the “truth”, at the level of “the Concept”, of these former two. Regarding metaphysical forms, however, “[O]bjective logic is...the genuine critique of them—a critique which does not consider as contrasted under the abstract forms of the a priori and a posteriori, but considers the determinations themselves according to their specific content.”

This explicit statement therefore prohibits a straightforward matching of the Metaphysical Deduction in the Transcendental Analytic with Hegel’s “Judgment” chapter, since the former is constitutive of transcendental logic: combined with the sensible conditions of spatio-temporality, it is the central feature of transcendental logic. Hegel’s chapter on judgment, however, falls in Volume Two of the Logic (“Subjective Logic” or “Doctrine of the Concept”); a theoretical move that at once further reveals just how different Kant’s and Hegel’s views about logic are, and also reveals an odd symmetry.

We’ve seen that Kant viewed general logic as a source of necessary principles for thinking; the highest of which he took to be the principle of contradiction. General logic, through its role in reason, does, for Kant, shape the pure understanding and therefore cognition as a systematically unified whole. Read this way, not only is the Transcendental Dialectic, as is frequently pointed out, largely a negative piece of philosophy (in “The dialectical inferences of pure reason”, especially), it is precisely transcendental logic itself that plays the negative role: the positive results of the Dialectic in determining the role of reason in our thought rest on the non-contradictoriness of the “ideas” and “ideal” appealed to, in accord with “general” logic. And whilst transcendental-logical conceptions are spoken of and included in the analysis of this terrain, their employment is restricted to showing what cognition cannot do, what empirical knowledge could not be.

Compare Hegel. The dialectical pathway through the Doctrine of Being and the Doctrine of Essence is meant to parallel transcendental logic’s setting out of the conditions of the possibility of experience (of objects). And there is no mirror of the Metaphysical Deduction in Hegel’s Logic simply because Hegel’s conception of idealist logic is not committed to static logical functions that set out

1Hegel (1969, 64).
conditions for thought. Those familiar with Hegel’s Dialectic will recall that he purports to presuppose nothing;\(^1\) therefore, that the structure of thought about “Being” and “Essence” cannot rest on anything pre-given. But what, then, is the role of the Doctrine of the Concept? Here we run into some deeper complications.

In brief, The Subjective Logic appears to be Hegel’s way of setting out some of the basic principles of his own dialectical, speculative logic, whose application we would have already observed at work in Book One and Book Two. If this is the case, then we can say that the principles detailed here can be connected with specific parts of The Objective Logic. That is not our task in the current work, although it pays to be mindful of the possibility of such a reading, since it helps to dispel some of the mystery we have so far taken account of, in attempting to connect Hegel’s account of judgment with Kant’s.\(^2\)

Hegel does offer an explanation of Volume Two of the *Logic*:

The subjective logic is the logic of the *Concept*, of essence which has sublated its relation to being or its illusory being [*Schein*], and in its determination is no longer external but is subjective—free, self-subsistent and self-determining, or rather it is the subject itself. Since subjectivity brings with it the misconception of contingency and caprice and, in general, characteristics belonging to the form of *consciousness*, no particular importance is to be attached here to the distinction between subjective and objective; these determinations will be more precisely developed later on in the logic itself.\(^3\)

Whilst we have cautioned against an overly simplistic extension of this thesis that would accord Hegel’s account of judgment a central but static role structurally isomorphic to Kant’s Metaphysical Deduction, we are in a position to insist that Hegel’s account of judgment reveals many important features of his conception of the relation between thought and reality. Observe the following:

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\(^1\) The sceptic may say with confidence that Hegel presupposes the applicability of his “method”. It is not clear exactly how one is to deal with such a criticism.

\(^2\) We mentioned above that Hegel offers a critique of the idea of a “sum-total of all realities” in all three books of the *Logic*. There are obviously many other connections one can make between parts of the work; the *Logic* is no linear narrative; in order to understand it one must understand how certain key sections elucidate Hegel’s various attempts of working out dialectical details in different ways in different sections of the work.

\(^3\) Hegel (1969, 64).
The judgment is the *determinateness* of the Concept *posited* in the *Concept* itself...The judgment can...be called the proximate *realization* of the Concept, inasmuch as reality denotes in general entry into *existence* as a *determinate being*:¹

And:

The *judgment* is the Concept in its particularity, as the distinguishing *relation* of its moments, which are posited as being-for-themselves and at the same time identical with themselves, and not with each other...It is true that the determinations of singularity and universality, or subject and predicate, are also distinct, but the absolutely universal *fact* remains, nonetheless, that every judgment expresses them as identical.²

This second remark demonstrates an extremely important point. Throughout the argumentative dialectic of judgment Hegel continually reminds us that there are two common conceptions of judgment that arise. The first is the conception of a judgment as a concatenation of independently meaningful items: a subject and a predicate. Taken this way the predicate is a universal (qua concept) applied to a particular subject (qua object), where the former is superficially understood as an “item in the mind” that is to be connected with the latter, in its existence as a phenomenon “in the world”.³ Hegel says elsewhere that, from this perspective

the subject is in general the determinate, and is therefore more that which *immediately* is, whereas the predicate expresses the *universal*, the essential nature [*Wesen*] or the Concept; therefore the subject as such is, in the first instance, only a kind of *name*; for what it *is* is first enunciated by the predicate which contains *being* in the sense of the Concept.⁴

The judgment is usually taken in a *subjective* sense, as an *operation* and a form, which occurs only in thinking that is *conscious of itself*. But this distinction is not yet present in the logical [realm]; [here] the judgment is to be taken as entirely universal: *every thing is a judgment.*—That is, every thing is a *singular* which is inwardly a

¹Hegel (1969, 623).
²Hegel (1991b, §166, 243-244).
³See the discussion in Hegel (1969, 623-630) in the preamble to “The Judgment” chapter.
⁴Hegel (1969, 624).
universality or inner nature, in other words, a universal that is made singular; universality and singularity distinguish themselves [from each other] within it, but at the same time they are identical.¹

The following discussion of Hegel's account of the dialectical complexities of infinite and disjunctive judgment takes its departure from this idea. Namely, that judgment is a stage of “the Concept” where finitude manifests as an initially superficial valorisation of the subject-predicate form; that is, the form of judgment, where something (a predicate) is said of something else (a logical subject).

It is crucial to see how Hegel's critique of judgment is therefore not only a critique of Kant’s transcendental logic, but also a critique of the subject-predicate form. Yet Hegel does not simply reject such a form; he wishes to show how it contains many complex logical transitions that depend on the intermingling of reason and the understanding.

¹Hegel (1991b, §167, 246).
II.iii Infinite judgment

The degree of elaboration by Kant of the topic we are about to discuss is, I wish to suggest, almost inversely proportional to its significance. I have so far been claiming that this point holds for many of the themes discussed in this work (e.g., symbolic representation, the PCD, the Transcendental Ideal, etc.), although presently we are faced with a narrower topic. Since Kant says so little about it we must make much of what he says; I therefore begin by citing at length a lucid reflection from the Critical Period that explains the function of infinite judgment (which Kant at one point refers to the “judgment of complete determination”; see footnote 1 on the next page):

That something is actual because it is possible in accordance with a general concept does not follow. But that something is actual because it is completely determined by its concept among all that is possible and distinguished as one from all that is possible means one and the same as that it is not merely a general concept, but the representation of a particular thing through concepts completely determined in relation to everything possible. This relation to everything possible in accordance with the principle of complete determination is the same with respect to [the] concept of reason as the somewhere or sometime with respect to sensible intuition.* For space and time do not merely determine the intuition of a thing, but at the same time they determine its individuality by means of the relation of its place and point in time, since [in] the case of space and time possibility cannot be distinguished from actuality, since they both together contain all possibility in appearance in themselves as substrata that must be antecedently given. From this it follows only that the ens realissimum must be given antecedently to the real concept of all possibility, thus that just like space it cannot be antecedently conceived as possible, but as given; but not as [space is not given as] an object that is actual in itself, but rather a merely sensible form in which alone objects can be intuited, so the ens realissimum is also not given as an object but as the mere form of reason for thinking the difference in everything possible in its complete determination, consequently as an idea that is (subjectively) actual before something can be conceived as possible; from which however it does not follow at all that the object of this idea is actual in itself.¹

¹ The emphases in the first paragraph are mine.
A brief comment: Kant here quite clearly draws a parallel between the pure forms of intuition (space and time) and the form of reason (*ens realissimum*), where all three of these are singular. It seems fair to suppose that, since sensibility, the understanding, and reason must cooperate in order to make possible rational, knowledgeable judgments, that the understanding must also be able to be conceived as logically singular. I take it that if anything is a candidate for a conception of the understanding as singular it is its unity in the form of the “I think”, which is the counterpart (at the level of the understanding) of the regulative function (at the level of reason) that Kant allows for the idea of the soul at the level of transcendental psychology. We return to this in §IV.

Kant says further:

Nevertheless, one sees that in relation to the nature of human understanding and its concepts a highest being is just as necessary as space and time are in relation to the nature of our sensibility and its intuition.

*(Something whose relation to everything possible is determined in absolute space and time is actual. Similarly, that whose relation to everything possible is determined in the absolute representation of a thing in general is actual. Both belong to the complete outer determination with regard to possibility in general and thereby also constitute the complete inner determination of an *individuo*).*

These remarks serve as a preliminary text; their importance will be rendered clearer as we proceed.

As we’ve noted, Kant’s table of judgments and categories consist of four headings each of which encompass three forms. In the case of judgments of quality Kant insists upon a form that is irrelevant to general logic, yet which to transcendental logic is indispensable.¹ Note that because this form of judgment is not recognised by formal logic the philosophical point Kant extracts from it does not apply for objects of reason, because objects of reason are determined by general logic, not transcendental logic. This fact supports the claim that the *ens realissimum* must be regarded as

¹Kant (2005, 1783-1784, 18:558-559, 353). This is cited in Longuenesse (1995/2005, 229), although she provides a slightly different translation. Longuenesse (217, n.9) refers to “Reflexion 3063, AAXvi, p. 636” in which Kant characterises infinite judgment as the “judgment of complete determination”.

²A71-72/B97.
having transcendental-logical form, rather than general logical form; therefore it supports the claim that the form of modality in question when speaking of the “whole of possibility” against which predicates are defined negatively in infinite judgment is real possibility, rather than logical possibility.¹

Moreover, since Kant conceives of the third element (here infinite judgment) under each heading for both the logical functions of judgments and the Categories (“limitation” is correlated with infinite judgment) as being somehow derivable from but not reducible to the other two, we expect that both infinite judgment and the corresponding category of “limitation” are in some way a combination of positive and negative judgments and the categories of “reality” and “negation”, respectively. (Note that in §57 of the Prolegomena Kant contrasts “limit” with “boundary”, where the former are considered to contain “mere negations” and the latter are taken to instance a limit encountered within possible experience, as in the case of a physical surface.)²

We also suggested that there is something distinctly Hegelian about this apparently dialectical approach to the logical functions of judgments and Categories—even if Kant stops short of saying that the triads falling under each judgmental heading are, as a whole, internally and holistically related, as Hegel does.

The transcendental import of infinite judgment is explained by Kant this way:

General logic abstracts from all content of the predicate (even if it is negative), and considers only whether it is attributed to the subject or opposed to it. Transcendental logic, however, also considers the value or content of the logical affirmation made in a judgment by means of a merely negative predicate, and what sort of gain this yields for the whole of cognition.³

The “gain” yielded for the whole of cognition here seems to be that, by positively affirning a negative predicate in infinite judgment, a whole sphere of possible predicates is alluded to. We can think of this in more than one way, and Kant’s actual example of the Metaphysical Deduction is ill-chosen; he selects an example of a negative predicate whose affirmation entails a single alternative; his example is: “The

¹Longuenesse (1995/2005, 217) also makes this point.
² On this compare also the reflexion in Kant (2005, R 5270, 1776-1778, 18:138, 224-225).
³A72/B97; my emphasis.
soul is not mortal”. And although his claim is that the predication of “not mortal” divides the whole of reality into dying and undying beings, one wonders whether an example of a subject of which could be predicated a range of contraries at different conceptual levels, might have made the point better.

Now, it is crucial that Kant is clearly considering judgment as an act of attributing a predicate to a subject, an Aristotelian position that Hegel sought to undermine by dialectically developing the assumptions embedded in it. For instance, since for Kant only perceptual individuals—objects of intuition—can be judged determinatively, every judgment involves attributing some predicate to a subject (recall that the subject predicate structure is mirrored by Kant’s categories of substance and accident). This is, of course, unlike the way in which non-perceptual phenomena are thought about: since they are not objects of perception, empirical laws are not subjects of predication but rather rules that explain the subsumption of subjects under predicates. In other contexts, this difference in logic is cashed out as a difference between logic that possesses a determinable-determinate structure and that which consists simply of determinants that mutually determine one another. I take it that the latter kind of logic, which Arthur Prior has linked to Leibniz and which we might profess to find in modern propositional logic, is a structure of thought that lacks ontological commitments of this kind, in virtue of not embedding assumptions of our epistemic relation to the world.

The relevance of this point here is that, for Kant and Hegel, the structure of judgment does express certain epistemic features of our thought. Propositions, however, do not. I suggest the logic of propositions is, unsurprisingly, propositional logic. The logic of judgment, we might say, is dependent upon the epistemic relation the objects judged about. This is as much as saying it embeds epistemic features.

1 If we recall remarks from Wittgenstein (1929) regarding the structure of atomic propositions, we may wish to conclude that such propositions necessarily involve “saying something (predicate) about something (subject)”, where things that may be said materially exclude other things (this exclusion may be inferred without the construction of an argument). Developing this thought would constitute a way of defending Kant’s categories as necessary conditions of base level empirical vocabularies. We can do no more than suggest that such an analysis may follow from Kant’s transcendental philosophy.

2 See Prior (1949a, b).
Recall Hegel’s words from the *Encyclopedia Logic*.

Judgments are distinct from propositions; propositions contain a determination of the subject which does not stand in a relationship of universality to them—a state, a singular action, and the like...A proposition like: “A carriage is passing by”, would be a judgment, and a subjective one at that, only if there could be doubt whether what is passing by is a carriage, or whether the object is moving, and not, on the contrary, the standing from which we observe it; for then the concern would be to find the [right] determination for [my] not yet appropriately determined representation.¹

Hegel seems to say here that judgment is, paradigmatically, a mode of determination involving the attribution of a predicate to a subject, itself which is an act of combining a universal with a particular. Of course, exactly what the subject-predicate and universal-particular-singular distinctions amount to are far more complex than this; nevertheless there is a certain starting in logic which Hegel seems to think Aristotle was right to press on and it is this. What “saying something (a predicate) about something (a subject)” turns out to involve is extremely complex, and the relation between elements of judgments are not static and turn out to depend upon the nuances of rational contexts.

In any case, for Hegel, to “appropriately determine” a representation seems to involve finding universal form in the particular, where the logical form of particularity mediates between singularity and universality.² One can see why this activity counts as rational for Hegel, since he, like Kant, sees reason as proceeding by subsuming the particular under the universal: reflectively determining things by postulating principles that offer more and more general explanations.

Further, Hegel’s account of judgment proceeds as a dialectic between the subject and predicate of the judgment in a way that mirrors his account of consciousness’s development in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. In the context of the logic of judgment the


²The treatment of this issue begins in the chapter on “The Concept” in the “Subjectivity” section of *The Subjective Logic* and is discussed throughout “The Judgment” and “The Syllogism”.

For the resolution of this dialectic see the example of a judgment about the character of a house in the discussion of apodictic judgment in the section “Judgments of the Concept” in Hegel (1969, 661-663).
dialectic occurs in terms of the reflective categories of “identity” and “difference”, where the transitions between the four logical families of judgment involve transformations of the relation between these categories of reflection. Hegel says that:

It is the aim of the movement of the judgment to reconstitute this identity of the concept, or, rather, to posit it. What is already given in the judgment is partly the independence but also the determinateness of subject and predicate as against each other, and partly also their relation, which, however, is abstract. The judgment at first affirms that the subject is the predicate; but, since the predicate is held not to be what the subject is, there is a contradiction which must be resolved, or pass over into some result. But, since in and for themselves subject and predicate are the totality of the concept and the judgment is the reality of the concept, its progress is only development.\(^1\)

The parallel with the *Phenomenology* can be seen if we turn to its Introduction:

Since consciousness thus finds that its knowledge does not correspond to its object, the object itself does not stand the test; in other words, the criterion for testing is altered when that for which it was to have been the criterion fails to pass the test; and the testing is not only a testing of what we know, but also a testing of the criterion of what knowing is. *Inasmuch as the new true object issues from it,* this dialectical movement which consciousness exercises on itself and which affects both its knowledge and its object, is precisely what is called *experience* [*Erfahrung*].\(^2\)

Note that Kant tells us that it is the “logical affirmation” performed through *predicate* negation that can “yield a gain” for the whole of cognition tells us that understanding infinite judgment as involving the introduction of negative predicates through logical affirmation, rather than negation of positive predicates via denial, allows the “sphere of determination” corresponding to the negative predicate to be regarded in a quasi-positive manner.

Viewed this way, the transcendental-logical function of infinite judgment, in its capacity to “yield a gain for cognition”, depends on


\(^2\) Cf. Hegel (1977b, 54-55). Citation from Longuenesse (2007, 238, n.10). In the essay to which this is cited as a footnote Longuenesse makes a similar point. See Longuenesse (1992/2007, 207 & ff.).
Chapter Three: The Principle of Complete Determination

the subject-predicate structure it exemplifies: Kant capitalises on the ambiguity of predicate negation (“The soul is not mortal”) to mean either propositional denial or term negation, and sides with the latter interpretation. And Kant’s commitment to asymmetry about negation, as evident in his equation of positivity with reality, and the latter with the presence of sensation, forbids him from thinking of the role and status of such negative predicates in any but regulative terms. This echoes remarks already made about the regulative function of transcendental ideas. Kant says further that:

If I had said of the soul that it is not mortal, then I would at least have avoided an error by means of a negative judgment. Now by means of the proposition “The soul is not mortal” I have certainly made an actual affirmation as far as logical form is concerned, for I have placed the soul within the unlimited domain of undying beings. Now since that which is mortal contains one part of the whole domain of possible beings, but that which is undying the other, nothing is said by my proposition but that the soul is one of the infinite multitude of things that remain if I take away everything that is mortal.¹

This calls for substantial commentary. We see here for the first time an anticipation of the point Hegel exploits in his own discussion of infinite judgment, regarding the dialectical relation between “positively infinite” and “negatively infinite” moments of infinite judgment;² an appearance of a thesis that supports the claim that Kant anticipated Hegel’s dialectical approach to logic and which, therefore, supports the claim that dialectical logic is a development of the revolutionary project of transcendental logic.

Kant says that statements of the form

“The soul is not mortal”

are affirmations, when viewed in general logical terms, since they involve locating a subject in the “sphere” of some predicate, rather than, as in negation, excluding that subject from such a sphere. Yet Kant writes that such a statement, viewed otherwise, does no more than place its subject within an indeterminate conceptual “sphere” defined by its exclusion of the predicate—as in negation.

Notice the ambiguity in predicate negation Kant trades on: infinite judgment involves a shift of focus from conceiving of a

¹A72/B97; my emphases.
subject as excluded from the sphere defined by a predicate, to conceiving of a predicate as excluded by the definition of the subject. We thus have two forms with different emphases, which themselves arise out of Kant’s own ambiguous phrase:

(1) The soul is not mortal. (Predicate negation as contradiction: ambiguous.)

Scrutiny of this sentence reveals that its clarification involves siding with one of two interpretations:

(2) ~ The soul is mortal. (External, propositional negation: contradiction.)
Interpretation: “It is not the case that the soul is mortal.”

(3) The soul is non-mortal. (Predicate negation: contrariety.)
Interpretation: “The soul has some other character than mortality.”

The first alternative is an externally negated proposition that does not introduce any independent conception of the items included in it (the soul, mortality), whereas the second alternative involves the negation of the predicate and, therefore, appears to entail an Aristotelian, term-logical conception of the sentence’s structure of the form

S is non-P,

since “non-P”, if it is at all distinguishable from “~P” must be understood as tied to a certain construal of “S”; what the array of alternative predications is determines whether particular cases are, in principle, true or false, as opposed to nonsense. Kant’s example is ill-suited to demonstration of this point because we need to show how the sphere of certain predicates is not only defined by a sphere of inclusion and exclusion, yet is also structured by the essential and accidental properties of the subject for which it is a predicate. Consider:

(4) The leaf is green.

One can say that

(5) The leaf is not green,
And thereby quite easily mean either

(6) ~ The leaf is green. (External negation of the proposition: “It is not the case that the leaf is green.”)

Or,

(7) The leaf is non-green. (Term negation.)

Where (7) implies that the leaf is some other colour; i.e., red, orange, yellow, brown or some combination of these and where this suggests the negation of “green” with respect to the leaf is utterly unlike the negation of the sentence

(8) ~ The cubic object is in the kitchen.

Where the negation of this proposition tells us that some state of affairs is not the case; i.e., that some cubic item is not in my kitchen. Complications emerge at this point which cannot detain us, so we must be satisfied with saying simply that the coherent account allowed by propositional logic for n-adic relational statements such as this notwithstanding, such an account of logic does not have an inbuilt structure suitable to the logic of perceptual objects, like green leaves, as does term-logic, wherein it is presupposed that there is some object about which one judges and that all one is doing is attempting to determine its character in a relevant way. It is of course difficult to show how one might ground this claim: that there is some other logical form that captures certain intuitions about seen things (that they seem to be a substance with an array of accidents).

The point at issue is that the determination of things via concepts involves fitting things into some conceptual sphere, with its own conditions of inclusion and exclusion. The function of inclusion and exclusion in the allowance of certain determinations of a subject, where the latter is understood to be the paradigm of a determinable,\(^1\)

\(^1\) Note the necessity of interpreting “Some”: (8) seems to imply that some particular thing is not in some particular location, whereas one can equally be interpreted as saying one cannot say that there is any object of such-and-such kind (the kind in question) in a certain location (the location in question).

\(^2\) We might thereby replace this phrase with “determinates of a determinable”.
is structured in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions that allow certain predications and forbid others.\textsuperscript{1} By this it is meant that possible predicates must be either essential or accidental features of a subject; essential features of a subject are features that, in accordance with the rules of the language in question, allow for certain accidental features, whilst accidental features are ones that are permitted by the conceptual structure of the subject to which predications attributing such features apply.

Kant completes his explanation of infinite judgment this way:

the infinite sphere of the possible is thereby limited only to the extent that that which is mortal is separated from it, and the soul is placed in the remaining space of its domain. But even with this exception this space still remains infinite, and more parts could be taken away from it without the concept of the soul growing in the least and being affirmatively determined. In regard to logical domain, therefore, this infinite judgment is merely limiting with regard to the content of cognition in general, and to this extent it must not be omitted from the transcendental table of all moments of thinking in judgments, since the function of understanding that is hereby exercised may perhaps be important in the field of its pure a priori cognition.\textsuperscript{2}

We do well to here compare Kant's official discussion from the manual for his lectures on logic, the \textit{Jäsche Logic}.

As to quality, judgments are either affirmative or negative or infinite. In the affirmative judgment the subject is thought under the sphere of a predicate, in the negative it is posited outside the sphere of the latter, and in the infinite it is posited in the sphere of a concept that lies outside the sphere of another.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1} Such an approach to conceptual determination is encountered in Robert Brandom's recent work, where it is construed in terms of material incompatibilities (see Brandom (1994, 94-107), 2008, Chapter 5)). This line of thinking has its roots in Brandom'sSellarsian account of material inference (Sellars (1953)). Brandom derives a different moral from this story however, since he systematically denies the need for an Aristotelian logical structure (either in general, or in his interpretation of Hegel) and therefore denies the need for an account of objects in terms of essential and accidental features, which I have just argued is essential to the notion of a logical subject in Hegel and Kant, at least in the present context.

\textsuperscript{2}A72-73/B97-98; my emphases.

\textsuperscript{3}Kant (1992a, 103-104, 600).
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This seems to substantiate the interpretation just given of the peculiar character of infinite judgment, namely, that it involves placing the subject in an “indeterminate” sphere defined by opposition to the predicate. Kant provides some illumination of infinite judgment in three notes which can be considered in turn.

Note 1. The infinite judgment indicates not merely that a subject is not contained under the sphere of a predicate, but that it lies somewhere in the infinite sphere outside its sphere; consequently this judgment represents the sphere of the predicate as restricted.

This agrees with our remarks made thus far. Kant says further:

Everything possible is either $A$ or non-$A$. If I say, then, that something is non-$A$, e.g., the human soul is non-mortal, some men are non-learned, etc., and then this is an infinite judgment. For it is not thereby determined, concerning the finite sphere $A$, under which concept the object belongs, but merely that it belongs in the sphere outside $A$, which is really no sphere at all but only a sphere’s sharing of a limit with the infinite, or the limiting itself. Now although exclusion is a negation, the restriction of a concept is still a positive act. Therefore limits are positive concepts of restricted objects.

Not only does this passage indicate the plausibility of our reading, it also affirms that Kant is anticipating a distinctly Hegelian thesis: that “although exclusion is negation, the restriction of a concept is still a positive act,” where this is taken to imply that determinations of a thing involve negative moments that are nevertheless in some sense positive; in common language, we can determine (specify determinatively or classify reflectively) an object or concept by excluding certain predications of it. Such a procedure is encountered in the theoretical strategy of elimination of alternatives and aids the observational moments of falsification inherent in any scientific theorising. Consider specificatory determinative judgments whose predication is that of an appropriate determinate with respect to a determinable:

(9) The leaf is non-green
(10) The leaf is non-red
(11) The leaf is non-yellow

Note the determinations here are a family of contrary “marks” or “determination-specifications” (recall the distinction between
“specification” and “classification” from the 3rd Critique). We therefore consider also reflective classificatory judgments, of the kind that suggest conceptual hierarchy: “determinations-classifications”:

(12) This thing is non-animal
(13) This thing is non-vegetable
(14) This thing is non-mineral

We then have Note 2, which simply reminds us of the distinction between formal logic (which he is discussing) and transcendental logic:

According to the principle of the excluded middle (exclusi tertii), the sphere of one concept relative to another is either exclusive or inclusive. Now since logic has to do merely with the form of judgment, not with concepts as to their content, the distinction of infinite from negative judgments is not proper to this science.

Note 3 further confirms our interpretation of infinite judgment:

In negative judgments the negation always affects the copula; in infinite ones it is not the copula but rather the predicate that is affected, which may best be expressed in Latin.

Here Kant appears to be appealing to our distinction, drawn above, between external propositional negation which affects the copula, where we say that

“The soul is mortal”,

And negate this by saying

“The soul is not mortal”, where this is equivalent to “~The soul is mortal,” or, “It is not the case that the soul is mortal.”

Note that Hegel portrays what he calls “judgments of necessity” (a transformation of Kant’s judgments of relation: categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive) as instancing distinct moments of the genus-species relation in the context of predication.

Kant (1992a, 104, 600).
And term negation, where we negate the predicate “mortal” and have

“The soul is ¬mortal,” where this is equivalent to “The soul is something other than mortal.”

Kant thinks this is best expressed in Latin because in Latin word order can be altered to express precisely this difference, without involving changes in word choice (where in English a difference between “not” and “non” has been introduced to express contradiction and contrariety, respectively). In *The Blomberg Logic* Kant notes that we can express “The soul is not mortal” in two different ways:

(15) *Anima non est mortalis* (~The soul is mortal)
(16) *Anima est non mortalis* (The soul is non-mortal)\(^1\)

Kant says explicitly that “[T]he negation *no*, or the *non*, does not affect the matter at all, but instead only the form of the judgment”. According to this line of thinking, “[I]t must be posited, then, not with the subject or with the predicate but instead with the copula,” as with (14). This quite clearly commits Kant to saying that the form of negation operant in formal logic, which he is here discussing, is propositional negation.

As a consequence of this, transcendental logic cannot be regarded as having the same form as propositional logic, as if the only difference between such logic and Fregean and Quinean extensional logics was that Kant tied his version to different metaphysical commitments. On the contrary, Kant thinks of the form of determination operant in transcendental logic as logically unique. He recognises that allowing sentences like (15) to occur in formal logic introduces a form of judgment foreign to it. One must resist this, since “otherwise the negation of the judgment of reason does not affect the form but instead the matter of the judgment, and consequently it is then not a negative, but instead a so-called *judicium infinitum* [infinite judgment].”\(^2\)

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\(^1\)Kant (1992a, 274, 220).

\(^2\) Note that infinite judgments are here said to affect the “matter” of the judgment. Cf. our discussion above of matter and form in “The Amphiboly”: “the matter” of a judgment is the concepts and the form is the way the concepts are related by the copula.
Now, if we shift our attention to the discussion of table of categories we see that, after defending the triadic structure of the four classes of categories, in his “second remark” on the pure concepts of the understanding, where he says that each class, always has same number of categories, namely three, which calls for reflection, since otherwise all *a priori* division by means of concepts must be a dichotomy...here the third category always arises from the combination of the first two in its class.¹

Kant says of the corresponding category for infinite judgment, “limitation”, that it “is nothing other than reality combined with negation”.² As we move to discuss Hegel’s views about infinite judgment we must bear in mind Kant’s distinction between transcendental and logical negation, since this reveals to us the role negation plays in Kant’s account of the *omnitudo realitatis* and the *ens realissimum*.

We know that Kant allows for certain ideas to play a role in cognition in virtue of their merely regulative function. Further, this regulative function appears to be instantiated in infinite judgments that involve a blend of logical affirmation and predicate negation—which leads to a negated term being regarded as delimiting the infinite sphere of possible determinations left once its antithesis is removed. Our question then becomes: “How does such a form of judgment define the role of the idea of an “All of reality” (*omnitudo realitatis*) and that of a “most real being” (*ens realissimum*)?”

For Kant, the idea of the *omnitudo realitatis* can be conceived as regulative with respect to the distributive unity of judgments made by the understanding in experience. This is one way in which the unity of reason and the unity to the understanding are in concert. The *omnitudo realitatis* can be regarded as a principle (recall that for Kant ideas function as principles) which guides the complete determination of individuals in the world of sense, where this complete determination requires reflection and comparison with all predicates which are and could be instanced in such a totality of judgments. It is crucial that, because the *omnitudo realitatis* cannot actually be determined, it cannot itself be judged about, as in the major premise of a syllogism. This is what it means to say it functions as a principle; rather than an object of determination it is a principle

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¹ B110.
² B111.
which guides determination. We redress these points with respect to disjunctive judgment in §III.ii.

The *ens realissimum*, for Kant, also functions as a principle of that which contains the “perfection” of all possible predicates *within itself*. It is also the form and content of a rational system, conceived of as a singular, which is alluded to in thinking of a “whole of possibility”. The thought of an *ens realissimum* is therefore the thought of that which contains the whole of possibility for the distributive unity of judgments made in experience. It is also the thought of that in which a subject is placed if one affirms a negative predicate, as in infinite judgment. Again, the *ens realissimum*, like the *omnitudo realitatis*, cannot be determined, so it cannot be instanced in the major premise of a disjunctive syllogism. Rather, it is the idea which guides the operation of determination in the world of sense. This claim is developed in our discussion of disjunctive judgment below in §III.ii.

We now consider Hegel.

Hegel’s account of infinite judgment in the *Science of Logic* appears to capitalise on some of the *Ur*-speculations of Kant’s in the latter’s own treatment, although no such acknowledgment can be found in the pages where the exposition occurs. Hegel begins with some characteristic remarks:

The negative judgment is as little a true judgment as the positive. But the infinite judgment which is supposed to be its truth is, according to its negative expression, negatively infinite, a judgment in which even the form of judgment is set aside. But this is a nonsensical judgment. It is supposed to be a judgment, and consequently to contain a relation of subject and predicate; yet at the same time such a relation is supposed not to be in it.¹

First, by denying that negative and positive judgments are “true judgments” Hegel is repeating a tactic applied in other areas: when a form of thinking is purportedly incomplete, and therefore deficient in some respect, Hegel offers an interpretation of its presuppositions whose justification involves clarification of further conceptual distinctions which ground it. And, as is clear, such a process could in principle persist indefinitely; yet the plausibility of Hegel’s philosophy requires that it does not: the trajectory of the Doctrine of the Concept is meant to reach a terminus in “The Absolute Idea”.

¹Hegel (1969, 641-642).
Here we need to recognise that for the three forms of judgments of existence, as in the other triads of forms of judgment, such a clarification involves showing how the triad consists of three *internally related* moments. We therefore find Hegel referring to the “negatively infinite judgment” and the “positively infinite judgment”, where such a division reflects the conviction that infinite judgment is an amalgam of these two forms; further, that these two forms are not independently intelligible and only sensical in the context of the triad.

A second insight to be extracted from this paragraph is that the negatively infinite judgment violates a relation basic to the logical form of judgment: Hegel thinks of judgment as involving the “reciprocal determination” of a subject and a predicate,¹ yet in the case of negatively infinite judgments we have a form akin to two bits of logical matter placed side by side without any *relevant* conceptual determination occurring (two individuals, two particulars, or two universals; this lesson is that this combination cannot be in principle separated; for Hegel a properly connected UPS form is essential).²

We can see what Hegel has in mind when we examine his examples in the following sentences:

> Though the name of the infinite judgment usually appears in the ordinary logics, it is not altogether clear what its nature really is. Examples of negatively infinite judgments are easily obtained: determinations are negatively connected as subject and predicate, *one of which not only does not include the determinateness of the other but does not even contain its universal sphere*; thus for example spirit is not red, yellow, etc., is not acid, not alkaline, etc., the rose is not an elephant, the understanding is not a table, and the like. These judgments are *correct or true*, as the expression goes, but in spite of such truth they are nonsensical and absurd. Or rather, they are *not judgments at all*.³

¹Hegel (1969, 633 & ff.). One of the main points to be gleaned from Hegel’s chapter on judgment is that subject and predicate (and therefore the copula) may relate to one another in different ways.
²Cf. “The Concept” in Section One of The Subjective Logic.
³The italics in the second sentence are mine. Hegel is able to say that “they are not judgments at all” because they do not attribute a predicate to a subject; they do not involve the determination of a subject by a predicate (or, as we want to say, a determinable by a determinate). Cf. the remarks above regarding how a judgment is distinct from a *mere* proposition.
In speaking of “negatively infinite judgments” Hegel appears to have in mind something distinct from, Kant’s example of an infinite judgment in the Metaphysical Deduction: “The soul is not mortal”, once rendered as predicate negation, was meant to involve transcendental-logical commitment to an idea of an infinite whole of possibility left after the exclusion of that of which “mortal” is predicable. This way of excluding a subject from the sphere of a predicate is defined by Hegel as having the positive moment of logically affirming the negative predicate and the negative moment of excluding the subject from the sphere of the predicate.

In contrast to this, the nonsensical predications Hegel is attacking resemble those whose possibility is suggested by the kind of infinite judgment implicated in the PCD, as it is found in the Transcendental Ideal. Kant’s two principles there, the PD and the PCD, both fail to include the necessary qualification that some predications are category mistakes: some predications are nonsense because they violate the categorial structure of the language in which they occur; others are nonsense because they simply do not determine the subject in any relevant way. Hegel’s examples seem to encompass both errors.

It is therefore incorrect for Kant to say that for any concept, “that of every two contradictorily opposed predicates only one can apply to it”, because not every pair of contradictorily opposed predicates are predicable of every concept. And it is no use to say that this is so only because qua indeterminate every concept is receptive to such determination, for the determinability of concepts depends on their determination by appropriate determinates. For each determinable there is an array of determinates, or determinations, which specify it, and it is simply not required, let alone possible, to determine such concepts with every possible concept. Rather, one need only consider every relevant concept which stands to its determinable as a determinate. It seems that this is what Hegel has in mind by ridiculing, amongst others, the predication “is a table” of “the understanding”; a simple point perhaps, but a crucial one.

To consider Hegel’s position from another point of view, we can say that the indifference with which “rose” stands to “elephant” and “understanding” to “table” is equivalent to the indifference with...
which the *determinants* of propositional logic stand to one another, a case particularly clear where a conjunction of predicates is formulated.\(^1\) Hegel seems to be here attacking views of judgment that construe its parts as symmetrical, rather than as an asymmetrical subject-predicate pair, where the implication is that the whole structure of determination his logic requires, *in some contexts*, goes missing in the former.

In this case, Hegel’s discussion of the logical structure of judgments is intended to show the limitations of one-sided conceptions; here the conception of he wishes to reveal as falsifying is that of the elements of the judgment as indifferent to categorial structure.\(^2\) This might appear to commit Hegel to a form of Platonism, yet this response is too quick if by it one means that Hegel is simply siding with one interpretation of judgmental structure over another and then being done with it.

If the above-given account is true, Hegel quite clearly cannot be interpreted as being committed to an inferentialist semantics tied to a purely propositional conception of logic in the modern sense, for whilst such a form of thinking might be accurately attributed to Hegel in other contexts, he intends for acts of judgment to involve a distinct asymmetry, and this asymmetry is fundamental to his Dialectic as a whole. It should also, given the potential for a Hegelian reading of something akin to Kant’s PCD, be permissible to offer a speculative version of it. The grounds for this I explore in §IV.

In any case, to address the point mentioned above, we can put it like this: in Brandom’s terminology,\(^3\) one would have to say of negatively infinite judgments that “one is not entitled to say” that the rose is not an elephant and that the understanding is not a table, since inferential commitments and entitlements follow from the material inferences permitted by the grammar or structure of the natural language in question.

This feature of determination in judgment may also seem to force upon one certain Platonistic considerations, for is not the symmetry of logical variables a thesis that enables one to avoid commitment to independent notions of substance, itself which is typically exemplified by the subject role in judgment, with accidental

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\(^1\) The ability of the two logical traditions stemming in modern philosophy from Leibniz, in opposition to Spinoza and Descartes, to cope with conjunctions is a topic in Prior (1949a).

\(^2\) Cf. the project in Strawson (1959/2006).

\(^3\) I have in mind the inferentialist semantics in Brandom (1994).
properties predicated of it? Indeed; yet exactly what place such an apparently Platonist thesis has in Hegel's logic is unclear.

Hegel goes on to elaborate his position in a curious way:

A more realistic example of the infinite judgment is the evil action. In civil litigation, something is negated only as the property of the other party, it being conceded that it should be theirs if they had the right to it; and it is only the title of right that is in dispute; the universal sphere of right is therefore recognised and maintained in that negative judgment. But crime is the infinite judgment which negates not merely the particular right, but the universal sphere as well, negates right as right. This infinite judgment does indeed possess correctness, since it is an actual deed, but it is nonsensical because it is related purely negatively to morality which constitutes its universal sphere.

In offering “evil action” as an example of infinite judgment Hegel is not speaking loosely, for as he had said earlier,

The judgment is the determinateness of the Concept posited in the Concept itself...the opposing of its determinations is its self-determining activity. The judgment is this positing of the determinate Concepts by the Concept itself.\(^1\)

And in so doing confirms that judgment must doubtlessly be regarded as, in a broad sense, a kind of act and not just a propositional content. Hence the analogy with “evil action” can be interpreted as perfectly coherent; but what of the specifics? Hegel's basic point is clear: negatively infinite judgment, as he interprets it, involves the negation of the “universal sphere” of the predicate occurring in it. If we allow for the analogy to be extended we are pushed to say that just as evil action negates the very idea of right—it rejects the concept itself, or rejection is implied by the evil action itself—so too do the so-called negatively infinite judgments—

(17) Spirit is not red, yellow, etc., is not acid, not alkaline
(18) The rose is not an elephant
(19) The understanding is not a table

—negate the “universal sphere” of the predicates “red”, “yellow”, “elephant”, “table”, and so forth. Moreover, this negation of the universal sphere entails that the sentence, in failing to have a sense,

\(^1\)Hegel (1969, 623).
in lacking determination of a relevant kind, in falling short of the requirements of an actual judgment, fails to have consequences. This all means that such sentences cannot play a premise or conclusion in inferences, since, at least informally, they neither exclude nor entail anything.

What are the consequences of all this? What Hegel calls the “negatively infinite judgment” seems to be that “moment” of infinite judgment that Kant draws attention to in saying that such judgment involves a “logical affirmation” of a “negative predicate”. Viewed this way, infinite judgment posits some property from whose “sphere” the subject in question is excluded and, in so doing, introduces a division of all possibility into the somewhat determinate sphere of “mortal” and the negatively determined, but otherwise completely indeterminate, sphere of “not mortal”, where the subject is included in the latter.

The conclusion Kant draws from this is that infinite judgment relies on the idea that the indeterminate sphere in which the subject is located is potentially determinable; a “gain” is thus “yielded” for cognition through the positing of such a “sphere” that stands in need of determination because, after all, “cognitive gain” simply is the extension of knowledge of which conceptual determination is a necessary, and indeed, the paradigm feature. In fact, it would be illuminating to suggest that the potential determinability of the remaining conceptual sphere left undetermined reflects the fact that the “world of sense” is itself inherently determinable.

What is meant by this is that one can say more about “the world” than that what composes it are logical subjects of predication (the lesson in the Transcendental Ideal’s account of the omnitudo realitatis, as well in the account in the Antinomies of the rational cosmologist’s “world itself”, is that the “world-whole” is not itself a subject of predication).

A lesson here, which Hegel would agree with, is that one cannot predicate anything of “the One” (qua whole) in the way that one enacts predications of its “parts” (singulars), and this is partly because of the nature of infinite judgment: if one were to predicate something of “the One”, with such judgment (which Kant insists all things can be judged in terms of), one would have the following form,

“The One is P. the One is ~non-P”,

where it is thereby presupposed that there is a conceptual determination, i.e., “non-p” from whose sphere “the One” is excluded.
This of course contradicts the claim that “the One” includes every-thing and all conceptual determinations within it.

The claim that “the ‘world of sense’ being inherently determinable is something known by reason” can be seen as entailed by Kant’s remarks that, although it is not “reason’s insight” into the inner nature of “ideas” but rather its “interest” in the consequences of employing those ideas as principles, this nevertheless means that it is rationally perspicuous to one that following principles, such as the PCD, leads to gains in objective knowledge. So reason’s interest leads to the acquisition of knowledge through the cooperation of sensibility and the understanding. But it is difficult to say this is mere “interest” if the activity of syllogising itself is constitutive of the system of rational knowledge.

In any case, Hegel draws a different moral. For when he says that “infinite judgment does indeed possess correctness...but it is nonsensical because it is related purely negatively” to that “which constitutes its universal sphere”, he seems to assume that negatively infinite judgments by definition involve category mistakes. Here a “negative” relation between a subject and the “universal sphere” of that which is predicated of it seems to be distinct from Hegel’s usual conception of negation in its guise as a mode of determination; “negation” here seems to have the sense merely of “conceptual exclusion”, without the typical kind of sublation involved with Determinate Negation. This is to say that the predications involved in negatively infinite judgments entail negating categorically irrelevant predicates. Following this thought through, Hegel seems to think of negatively infinite judgment as involving a carving up of conceptual space by excluding the subject from the “universal sphere” of categorically irrelevant predicates.

This interpretation bears a peculiar structural resemblance to the point Kant apparently intended to make about the Aristotelian substance-accident structure of logical subjects. Recall that, once clarified, Kant’s account of infinite judgments such as “The soul is not mortal” could be interpreted as either external propositional negation or as term negation, where the latter, as tied to contrariety rather than contradiction, invited the positing of a “conceptual sphere” of the subject of which the predication was made.\footnote{Confirmation of this point was found in The Blomberg Logic, in Kant (1992a, §292). See also Kant (1992a, 274, 220).} This kind of carving up of conceptual space occurs with respect to some particular logical subject: a logical subject is placed in an
indeterminate sphere defined by opposition to a conceptual sphere which it itself defined by one predicate only.

Putting these two thoughts side by side we have the following: Hegel’s account of negatively infinite judgment involves the exclusion of a subject from the sphere of incorrect predications—which in all of Hegel’s examples involve category mistakes. This moment of infinite judgment, if performed exhaustively to completeness, would therefore involve the delimitation of possible, i.e., categorically permitted, predications of some given subject. Hegel’s result at the end of such a process would be a negatively defined sphere of possible predication for a given subject, including both essential and accidental predicates. Of course, nothing at this point would allow the distinction between essential and accidental, because if a viable conception of the former was antecedently available then the whole procedure of negative determination via the exclusion encountered in infinite judgment would be moot.

Kant, however, would view the function of infinite judgment this way: Exclusion from the conceptual sphere of a given predicate places a logical subject in an indeterminate sphere which therefore stands in need of further determination. Under the interpretation made available by the construal of term negation as involving contrariety rather than contradiction, in saying of souls that they are not mortal we are placing “soul” in the indeterminate conceptual sphere of “non-mortal”, which of course in such an example which admits of no alternate contraries but only a contrary, “immortal”.

We noted above that Kant’s “soul” example provides no material for this point about contrariety, since although it allows him to group together all possible subjects into “mortal” and “non-mortal”, yet it does not allow him to draw attention to the role of term-negation with respect to the individual subject in question, such that the array of alternative predications of it could be accounted for.

Kant’s example is employed for an alternate purpose, however, since it employs a predicate whose negation is applicable only to non-experiential items. “Immortality” cannot be predicated of any objects in experience because we cannot, as it were, experience the immortality of something, for all the same reasons that we cannot “experience” the truth of any of the theses or antitheses in the Antinomies, since these overstep the bounds of possible experience.

We can now evaluate Hegel’s attitude toward the other dialectical moment he finds in infinite judgment. Here he tell us that
Chapter Three: The Principle of Complete Determination

The positive moment of the infinite judgment, of the negation of the negation, is the reflection of individuality into itself, whereby it is posited for the first time as a determinate determinateness. According to that reflection, the expression of the judgment was: the individual is individual.

The first sentence suggests to us that Hegel is interpreting positively infinite judgments as involving the recoil from the categorially irrelevant predications encountered in the negatively infinite moment. This recoil, in accordance with our interpretation of the significance of such categorially irrelevant predications above, would have to amount a “negation of the negation” in the following sense: if the negation of the spheres of the categorially irrelevant predications of a given subject (e.g. “The rose is not an elephant”, “The understanding is not a table”) were performed to completeness we would have a negatively defined sphere of predicates categorially relevant to the subject in question. As such, this would involve a “reflection of individuality into itself” insofar as that is equivalent to the individual becoming a “determinate determinateness”, that is, to it becoming an individual as such.¹

And yet can such an exercise be performed to completeness? And would Hegel actually stake such a claim?

He writes further:

In the judgment of existence, the subject appears as an immediate individual and consequently rather as a mere something in general. It is through the mediation of the negative and infinite judgments that it is for the first time posited as an individual.

Attention to these sentences rewards us with insight into Hegel’s dialectical account of epistemic and semantic development and enables a close analogy with points made in the opening chapters of the Phenomenology. As we remarked earlier, Hegel’s judgments of existence are concerned with the most primitive judgmental forms, ones that arise in connection with the idea of “quality”. We noted above that Hegel interpreted such judgments as corresponding to the idea of “Being” and therefore, somehow, to the Doctrine of Being in the first volume of the Science of Logic. Yet we can say more.

¹ Notice the commonality of Hegel’s understanding of an individual as a “determinate determinateness” and Kant’s conception of the logical structure of intuition as singular (and therefore of a particular thing with the form of universality in its status as an “allness” collected in one thing).
Hegel seems to think that it is the dialectic between positive and negative moments encountered within the third form of the triad of judgments of existence that shows how one proceeds from the epistemically immediate, semantically indeterminate “something” to the idea of an individual. This corresponds to the transition from “Sense-Certainty” to “Perception”.

The individual is hereby posited as continuing itself into its predicate, which it is identical with it; consequently, too, the universality no longer appears as immediate but as a comprehension of distinct terms. The positively infinite judgment equally runs: the universal is universal, and as such is equally posited as the return into itself.

Hegel adds to this:

Now through this reflection of the terms of the judgment into themselves the judgment has sublated itself; in the negatively infinite judgment the difference is, so to speak, too great for it to remain a judgment; the subject and predicate have no positive relation whatever to each other; in the positively infinite judgment, on the contrary, only identity is present and owing to the complete lack of difference it is no longer a judgment.

Hegel here makes two important points about how the negative and positive moments of infinite judgment are to be taken, once their character is understood correctly.

First, the negative moment of infinite judgment, as involving circumscription of the sphere of categorically relevant predications of a subject by a negative process of exclusion of categorically irrelevant predications, forbids the supposed subject and predicate from having any positive relation to one another, therefore of appropriately determining one another. Second, the positive moment of infinite judgment, as the dialectical pole to which one is swung after recoiling from the negative, does not have sufficient “difference” between the (supposed) subject and predicate to be called a judgment.

Hegel gives no examples of this second kind and it is not entirely clear what he might have in mind, since the point suggested by our reference to the *Phenomenology* above is that the positive moment arises when one is forced to consider the individual as defined negatively in the first moment. And this positive moment does not seem to be a kind of judgment, even in the sense that the negative moment is superficially like a judgment. The positive moment seems
to deliver a negatively defined individual, qua subject of a sphere of categorically possible predications made available in the negative moment.

Hegel closes his discussion this way:

More precisely, it is the judgment of existence that has sublated itself; hereby there is posited what the copula of the judgment contains, namely, that the qualitative extremes are sublated in this their identity. Since however this unity is the Concept, it is immediately sundered again into its extremes and appears as a judgment, whose terms however are no longer immediate but reflected into themselves. The judgment of existence has passed over into the judgment of reflection.

We are reminded that the negatively infinite judgment seemed to involve the “is” of identity, not the “is” of predication, since saying “The rose is not an elephant” and “The understanding is not a table” seems to involve placing two objects in opposition and denying that they are identical, rather than predicating an inappropriate term of a subject. This is important for considering the transition to judgments of reflection since both senses of “is” are relevant. As Hegel says elsewhere, playing on the German word for “judgment”, the judgment, as an “original division” or “Ur-teil” is actually a separation out of two elements (subject, predicate) of some cognitive item which are initially identical.

Once the dialectic passes into judgments of reflection, subject and predicate have been separated out from one another by a process of reflection on items encountered in cognition; general terms are predicated of logical subjects where the latter are taken to be the object of one’s thought and the predicate as the mark that defines it, or the mode of its appearance in cognition.

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1Hegel (1969, 641-643).
III.ii Disjunctive judgment

Disjunctive judgment occupies a special place in Kant’s transcendental logic, since it serves to explicitly connect Kant’s arguments in (1), the Transcendental Deduction with both (2), the forms of judgment and, therefore, the role of the latter in the aims of the former, as well as (3): the special functions fulfilled by ideas of reason in systematising and unifying the actions of the understanding (as detailed in Book I and Book II, Chapter III of the Transcendental Dialectic).

The key theme shared by these three families of arguments is the idea of a “unity of consciousness”. (1) Is concerned chiefly with the transcendental unity of apperception and the self-attribution of states of consciousness; defence of (2) consists in explaining the most basic forms of thought which, according to Kant, we are possessed of; (3) expresses the ultimately ideal status of a system of knowledge and therefore reminds us that (1) and (2), as well as being intimately connected, are to be regarded as transcendently ideal conditions of the possibility of having coherent thoughts at all.

Kant introduces the logical family to which disjunctive judgment, as the third member of the triad of judgments of relation, belongs, in this way:

All relations of thinking in judgments are those a) of the predicate to the subject, b) of the ground to the consequence, and c) between the cognition that is to be divided and all members of the division. In the first kind of judgment only two concepts are considered to be in relation to each other, in the second, two judgments, and in the third, several judgments.

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1 For criticism see Hanna (2008a, 26), where he claims Kant “construes disjunction as the ‘exclusive or’, which implies that if ‘P or Q’ is true then ‘P and Q’ is false, and therefore apparently overlooks the correct interpretation of disjunction as the ‘inclusive or’, which implies that the truth of ‘P or Q’ is consistent with the truth of ‘P and Q’. So the joint result of these four apparent confusions is that in this respect Kant’s logic is significantly stronger than elementary logic and in fact is not an extensional logic.” I take it the extensional/intensional distinction is problematic when applied to Kant (and Hegel). I comment briefly on this below.

2 A73/B98. A similar characterisation is offered in Kant (1992a, §23, 104, 601).
After briefly mentioning categorical and hypothetical judgments Kant explains his conception of disjunctive judgment:

the disjunctive judgment contains the relations of two or more propositions to one another, though not the relation of sequence, but rather that of logical opposition, insofar as the sphere of one judgment excludes that of the other, yet at the same time the relation of community, insofar as the judgments together exhaust the sphere of cognition proper; it is therefore a relation of parts of the sphere of a cognition where the sphere of each part is the complement of that of the others in the sum total of the divided cognition...¹

Kant then offers an example:

“The world exists either through blind chance, or through inner necessity, or through an external cause.” Each of these propositions occupies one part of the sphere of the possible cognition about the existence of a world in general, and together they occupy the entire sphere. To remove the cognition from one of these spheres means to place it in one of the others, and to place it in one sphere, on the contrary, means to remove it from the others.²

Note how Kant’s conception of disjunction here is exclusive rather than inclusive; thus, the minor premise of a disjunctive syllogism involves a judgment that concatenates a logical subject with one of its mutually exclusive predicates. This logical function is expressed in the category of “community”.³

In a disjunctive judgment there is therefore a certain community of cognitions, consisting in the fact that they mutually exclude each other, yet thereby determine the true cognition in its entirety, since taken together they constitute the entire content of a particular given cognition.⁴

¹A73-74/B98-99.
²The boldface italicisation is mine.
³Kant (2005, R 3104-6, 1776-1778, 16:660-661).
⁴As a brief aside, one finds confirmation that Kant shares Hegel’s belief that judgments are not simply propositions—not all propositions are judgments—in a note added by the editors of the Cambridge Edition: “The following note occurs in Kant’s copy of the first edition: “Judgments and propositions are different. That the latter are verbis expressa [explicit words], since they are assertoric” (E XXXVIII, p. 23; 23:25). See Kant (1998, 209).
Kant adds detail to his discussion of the category of “Community” on B111-113:

The agreement of a single category, namely that of community, which is to be found under the third title, with the form of a disjunctive judgment, which is what corresponds to it in the table of logical functions, is not as obvious as in the other cases. In order to be assured of this agreement one must note that in all disjunctive judgments the sphere (the multitude of everything that is contained under it) is represented as a whole divided into parts (the subordinated concepts), and, since none of these can be contained under any other, they are thought of as coordinated with one another, not subordinated, so that they do not determine each other unilaterally, as in a series, but reciprocally, as in an aggregate. If one member of the division is posited, all the rest are excluded, and vice versa).¹

The remark is crucial for understanding the import of the subject-predicate relation here. The subject and predicate in Hegel’s judgments of determinate being (or inherence), of which infinite judgments are an instance, have an asymmetrical determinative structure. This determinative structure is unlike the symmetrical relations between judgments.² First, judgments involved in pieces of reasoning are “symmetrical” to one another simply because judgments are connected in relations of entailment and exclusion, for example. Two judgments may stand in such logical relations in many ways, but in no logical sense is any given judgment asymmetrical to any other judgment. Grammatical and categorial asymmetry is another matter entirely, but that is beside the point.

Second, to say subject and predicate are logically asymmetrical is to say their logical relation to one another is not like this. That is to say, in infinite judgment a predicate is one of a range of determinates of a determinable subject, when that subject is being thought in terms of some determinable character or other, i.e., colour, pitch, shape, etc.³ Note that this asymmetry is unsurprising, since infinite judgment is a member of the forms also called by Hegel “judgments of inherence”, where the predicate in such shapes “inheres”, or does not “inhere”, in the subject. Hegel’s other name for the form following this group is “judgments of subsumption” where, as in

¹ The italics are mine; the boldface exists in the translation.
² P.F. Strawson was a long-time defender of this asymmetry. See, especially, Strawson (1959/2006), but also (1956, 1957a, b, 1961, 1972).
³ See Rosenberg’s (1966) account of this.
Kant’s account, the copula conveys that everything subsumed under the subject is also subsumed under the predicate. In such a form of judgment there is no logical asymmetry between subject and predicate.

We saw this bear out in our discussion of the way in which the conceptual sphere of a logical subject was related to the affirmation of a negative predicate. We noted in Hegel’s discussion of the positive and negative moments of infinite judgment, however, that this apparent asymmetry involved a dialectical tension which, according to him, led to the shape of judgments of reflection.

Hegel’s point regarding judgments of quality (positive, negative, infinite) in its place as the initial stage of a dialectically developing form of judgmental determination, was that only in the transition to judgments of reflection (singular, particular, universal) did the elements of the judgment become “separate”. For Kant, in the third family of logical functions, judgments of relation, the connection between judgments themselves, taken as wholes, is important, rather than the elements within the judgment. For Hegel, the corresponding judgments of necessity involve various shapes of the genus-species relation.¹

But we run into trouble if we think this is all there is to say, since Kant claims that the “sphere” exhausted by a family of judgments, related to one another disjunctively, is an aggregate. Does Kant not continually remind us that a system of objective knowledge is a unity, rather than a mere aggregate? Quite clearly Kant is committed to thinking of families of disjunctive judgments as aggregates which, if they are to be significant parts (therefore, parts at all) of a system of knowledge, must be unified under an idea. It is important that the highest idea corresponding to such unity one grasps toward in empirical cognition is the idea of “God”, and the Transcendental Ideal, the ens realissimum. Here one should recall that the progression of forming categorical judgments and hypothetical judgments to form a system of rational knowledge is the activity of transcendental psychology (attributing a predicate to a subject is akin to attributing thoughts to a soul) and transcendental cosmology (connecting antecedens and consequens in the progress to infinity is the basic activity involved in forming a conception of a law-governed, mechanistic, causally-determined world-whole).

Such a goal of rational knowledge should also be understood in the context of the remarks cited at the beginning of §III from the

¹Hegel (1969, 650-657).
opening section of the Transcendental Logic, regarding the unity of the understanding: it is reason’s task to guide the understanding in its connection of empirical judgments into a rational whole, by employing categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive syllogisms.

By way of filling this out, Kant adds:

Now a similar connection is thought of in an entirety of things, since one is not subordinated, as effect, under another, as the cause of its existence, but is rather coordinated with the other simultaneously and reciprocally as cause with regard to its determination (e.g., in a body, the parts of which reciprocally attract yet also repel each other), which is an entirely different kind of connection from that which is to be found in the mere relation of cause to effect (of ground to consequence), in which the consequence does not reciprocally determine the ground and therefore does not constitute a whole with the latter (as the world-creator with the world).

He then completes his discussion with a crucial point:

The understanding follows the same procedure when it represents the divided sphere of a concept as when it thinks of a thing as divisible, and just as in the first case the members of the division exclude each other and yet are connected in one sphere, so in the latter case the parts are represented as ones to which existence (as substances) pertains to each exclusively of the others, and which are yet connected in one whole.

This bears directly on comments thus far made regarding the asymmetrical structure of determination within a judgment (between subject and predicate) and the symmetrical relations of determination between judgments.

First, Kant makes an analogy between the “sphere” of a concept and a divisible thing, yet he does not thereby confuse the different principles that apply to these (the PD and the PCD, respectively); his point does entail, however, that concepts are wholes with logical parts just as things are wholes with material parts. Where does this thought lead? Directly, I suggest, to the question of the status of logical wholes and material wholes. The latter, as encountered in their guise in empirical intuition, require subsumption under concepts to be objects of knowledge: an individual object is subsumed under the empirical concept “body”, or reflected under the pure concept “substantia”, for instance. Meanwhile, logical wholes are that whose form and content is determined by the judgments in which they occur. And not only are concepts definitively judgeables, they
are also something whose status as universal, particular, or singular is determined by their use. Kant makes this point in the Jäsche Logic.

All cognitions, that is, all representations related with consciousness to an object, are either intuitions or concepts. An intuition is a singular representation (repraesentatio singularis), a concept a universal (repraesentatio per notas communes) or reflected representation (repraesentatio discursiva). Cognition through concepts is called thought (cognitio discursiva).

In a note to this he adds:

It is a mere tautology to speak of universal or common concepts – a mistake that is grounded in an incorrect division of concepts into universal, particular, and singular. Concepts themselves cannot be so divided, but only their use.¹

A result of this view is that the logical whole of a concept is something determined by the appropriate circumstances in which it is instantiated in judgment. Another way of putting this is to say that logical wholes are found in intensional contexts, material wholes in extensional contexts.² Bearing in mind the above point, this yields the thesis that extensions of concepts are determined by the intuitions subsumed under them, whilst intensions are determined by the judgments made about the experiences in which the intuitional content figures. Most importantly, the fact that logical wholes (concepts) are only given at the level of thought means that empirically the entire conceptual sphere that is divided disjunctively is never “given”; thus one has only an aggregate at the empirical level that, at the transcendental level is a unity.

For Kant at any rate, his phenomena/noumena distinction entails that one cannot reach a metaphysical conclusion about the priority of appearances: that we only have aggregates and all unities are illusory (nominalism). Hegel seems to affirm a similar view about empirical laws, even if his view of metaphysics, and thus of the empiricist’s conclusions, is distinct. He gives air to sentiments on this topic in his references to empirical “allness” in a discussion of the

¹Kant (1992a, §1, 91, 589).
²Cf. the discussion of the mutually modifying relation between extension and intension when thought by a conscious entity, in Chapter 2, §§II.iii and V.i.

In §27 of the *Jäsche Logic* Kant writes:

A judgment is *disjunctive* if the parts of the sphere of a given concept determine one another in the whole or toward a whole as complements (*complementa*).

And in §28 connects with our central theme of matter and form:

The several given judgments of which the disjunctive judgment is composed constitute its *matter* and are called the *members of the disjunction or opposition*. The *form* of these judgments consists in the *disjunction* itself, i.e., in the determination of the relation of the various judgments as member of the whole sphere of the divided cognition which mutually exclude one another and complement one another.

To this he in a note adds:

one member determines every other here only insofar as they stand together in community as parts of a whole sphere of cognition, outside of which, in a certain relation, nothing may be thought.\(^2\)

The final clause is important. The import that disjunctive judgment has for transcendental logic is distinct from its import for formal or general logic: in the former, since cognition involves both concepts and intuitions for Kant, the idea of a “sphere of cognition” is restricted to possible experience, rather than simply “intelligible”, qua non-contradictory, thoughts.

In §29 Kant adds some further important details. He says of the moment of relation in disjunctive judgment that it consist in this:

the members of the disjunction are all problematic judgments, of which nothing else is thought except that, taken together as parts of the sphere of a cognition, each the complement of the other toward the whole (*complementum ad totum*), they are equal to the sphere of the first.

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\(^1\) Hegel (1969, 648).

\(^2\) Kant (1992a, 107, 603).
Kant thinks this has the consequence

that in one of these problematic judgments the truth must be contained or – what is the same – that one of them must hold assertorically, because outside of them the sphere of the cognition includes nothing more under the given conditions, and one is opposed to the other; consequently neither something outside them nor more than one among them can be true.

This means that one member of the family of problematic judgments, qua possible judgments, that compose the disjunction is not only possible but actual, or, in his striking words: “assertible” or “true”. This is the case since, if the disjunction holds, then one and only one of the disjuncts, qua possible, is actual: it excludes and is excluded by its fellow disjuncts. Kant adds:

in disjunctive judgments the sphere of the divided concept is not considered as contained in the sphere of the divisions, but rather that which is contained under the divided concept is considered as contained under one of the members of the division.¹

This connects our theme of “matter and form” with that of “part and whole”. Kant’s point is that one cannot consider the content of the concept to be distributed across its disjuncts; rather, the truly assertible disjunct, as an assertoric judgment, contains the “content” of the concept in question. What does this mean? Consider Kant’s own example of a learned man. According to Kant, the sphere of the predicate “learned” when applied to “this man” can be divided to render the disjuncts:

(20) “This man is learned in matters of history.”
(21) “This man is learned in matter of reason.”

Where each excludes the other (foregoing the conjunction presents no problems here). According to Kant’s analysis, saying

(22) “This man is learned”,

is saying something that could be said more specifically—note Kant’s view that determination is specification and reflection is classification—as (20) or (21). Kant is therefore able to say that the

sphere of the concept “learned” instantiated in the more general case, (22), is actually contained under the true member of the division. This has two consequences.

First, Kant is able to insist that one could “mean” the same thing regardless of the determinateness of one’s judgment, which seems to commit him, in one sense, to an extensional account of the judgment because the more specific thought content in (20) and (21) is, strictly, a different intension, whereas Kant wants to say (22) could be taken to mean the same thing. This suggests he thinks the reference to the property that makes a judgment true (the learned character of the man in question) can be the same even if the specification of it at the level of the judgment is distinct.

Second, this remark marries well with Kant’s prioritisation of the positive, where he insists that “reality” is to be equated with that which in judgments corresponds to sensation. As we’ve seen, Hegel questions both of these theses, and his various critiques of the idea of a purely positive “sum-total of all realities” reveals this most clearly. Indeed, we should take Hegel’s account of judgments of determinate being as an attempted refutation of this idea at the level of judgmental determination.

In section C of the chapter on “The Judgment” Hegel discusses judgments of necessity. It will be remembered that, for Hegel, the dialectic of forms of judgment has passed through its moment of judgments of reflection (universal, particular, singular) and has been sublated, through inner conflicts in these forms, to a consideration of the relations between judgments. Just as the transition from section A to section B involved the emergence of a distinct, separate conception of subject and predicate within a judgment, the transition from B to C sees the emergence of a structure within which subject and predicate are seen to belong to one another as part of a certain categorial structure as taken to exist in virtue of a concrete universal.

At this point we must be reminded that Hegel, unlike Kant, does not regard forms of judgment as applicable to any judgment whatever; he regards the forms of judgment as moments in a progression of the Concept from the initial stage in positive judgment to the final stage in apodictic judgment, where the form of each judgment is intimately connected with its content. The judgments of relation are a stage roughly equivalent to the stage of the progression of spirit in the Phenomenology entitled “Force and the Understanding”, where the categorial status of entities is invoked in order to form unified scientific explanations in terms of
laws, which are definitively formed in accordance with the *categorial* status of the objects in question.

Of categorical judgments Hegel writes:

[I]f, for example, the judgments “the rose is red,” “the rose is a plant,” or “this ring is yellow,” “it is gold” are confounded into one class, and if so external a property as the color of a flower is taken as a predicate of equal rank with its vegetable nature, then a distinction is overlooked which must be obvious to the most vulgar apprehension. – The categorical judgment must therefore be definitely distinguished from the positive and the negative judgment; in these that which is predicated of the subject is an individual and contingent content, in the categorical judgment it is the totality of the intro-reflected form. In it therefore the copula signifies necessity, but in the positive and negative only abstract and immediate being.¹

As Hegel moves to discuss hypothetical judgments we find he appears to think of them as articulating the relations between two phenomena which were judgeable in isolation in the categorical form, where the concept with which the subject is expressed involves the subsumption of its object under the concept expressed by the predicate (“The rose is a plant”). A hypothetical judgment is therefore a “judgment expressing the fact that an existence determined with respect to its genus is conditioned by another existence equally determined by its genus”.² Where does this leave disjunctive judgment? The view Longuenesse rightly attributes to Hegel is the following:

a disjunctive judgment expresses the division of a genus in the exhaustive totality of its species, which supposes a rational division that is never completely possible in the cognition of nature. Because of this, no empirical judgment can legitimately have the form of a disjunctive judgment.³

It follows disjunctive judgment plays a special role in determining the *categorial* structure of a genus by specifying all the species that are included in it. Yet a disjunctive judgment has a genus or universal as its logical subject and a series of species, or more specific universals, as its predicables, and as Hegel remarks, no empirical judgment can have the form of a disjunctive judgment because the

¹Hegel (1969, 651).
III.ii – Disjunctive Judgment

genus can never be completely determined empirically since the relevant species can never all be given.\(^1\)

The determinable-determinate distinction may be useful here. In fact, Hegel employs an example that seems relevant for such a connection:

A colour is either violet, dark blue, light blue, green, yellow, orange, or red; – such a disjunction shows plainly its empirical admixture and impurity; and considered from this side, and by itself, it may even be called barbarous.\(^2\)

Of the emergence of disjunctive judgment from the two prior forms of judgments of relation Hegel writes:

In the categorical judgment, the Concept is objective universality and an external individuality. In the hypothetical judgment, the Concept in its negative identity emerges in this externality. Through this identity, its moments receive the same determinateness, now posited in the disjunctive judgment, that they possess immediately in the hypothetical judgment. Hence the disjunctive judgment is objective universality posited at the same time in union with the form. It therefore contains first concrete universality or the genus in simple

\(^1\) Note that the judgments of necessity are different ways in which the genus-species relation can be conceived; this is important since such a relation is unlike that of determinables and determinates, because a genus is taken to be intelligible independently of its species (one can give a definition of a genus by adumbrating conditions anything being subsumed under it must satisfy (e.g., the reasons for which a canine is a mammal), where determinates of a determinable are simply the ways in which that determinable can be instanced, where the determinable itself cannot beindependently defined (the concept of colour, at the phenomenal level, cannot be defined except by appealing to instances of colour which exclude alternatives being actualised at an identical spatio-temporal point in the visual field).

Cf. the discussion of the universal moment of judgments of reflection, where Hegel discusses “empirical allness” (Hegel (1969, 648). The remarks here, which give us insight into Hegel’s view about induction, seem to speak against the attribution to Hegel of the view that philosophy’s knowledge of that which is “true” in what happens (588) could be conceived of as anything like realism in contemporary metaphysics. I take it the view problematised by this point is that defended by Stern (2009a).

\(^2\)Hegel (1969, 656).
form as the subject, and secondly the *same* universality but as totality of its distinct determinations. *A* is either *B* or *C*.¹

We here find Hegel’s analogue of Kant’s point that division of the sphere of a concept in logical disjunction involves positing the former as a “simple form as the subject”, and the family of judgments in the latter as a “totality of distinct determinations”. Kant remarks of the category of totality (as correlated with the logical function of “singularity”) that “*allness* (totality) is nothing other than plurality considered as a unity”,² and this seems to be Hegel’s point also, in employing the term “totality”.

That “the disjunctive judgment is objective universality posited at the same time in union with the form” seems to follow from the possibility of transforming the logical function of “plurality” (category: particularity) into “totality” (category: singularity); something that would, for Kant, in the context of judgmental unity effected in apperception, seem to constitute the erroneous transformation of a distributive unity into a collective unity. In this case, however, such a transformation seems to be legitimate because judgmental content has direct import for experience through its combination of intuitions with concepts. Kant’s standard damnation of this error of reason pertains to cases where the collective unity delivers a constitutively functioning idea, rather than one employed in a regulative capacity.

The basic conclusion one should take from the functioning of disjunctive judgment in Kant’s transcendental logic seems to be that the division of a sphere of a logical subject at the level of concepts can appear to be complete, simply because one can specify in a definition what one would think counted as an exhaustive division of conceptual sphere. Yet one cannot claim to have garnered all the relevant appearances in intuitional form, because one can always

¹Hegel (1969, 653). The emphasis in the fourth sentence is mine. Quite clearly, for a disjunctive judgment to bear determinative results the judgment “*A* is either *B* or *C*” must be rendered as the major premise of a syllogism. As Kant informs us in the first chapter of the Transcendental Dialectic, “the relation between a cognition and its condition, which the major premise represents as the rule, constitutes the different kinds of syllogisms. They are therefore threefold – just as are all judgments in general – insofar as they are distinguished by the way they express the relation of cognition to the understanding: namely, *categorical* or *hypothetical* or *disjunctive* syllogisms.” (A304/B361; boldface in translation)

²B111.
gain more empirical information which may lead to the division of empirical concepts and therefore lead to the revision of them. At the level of transcendent functions, that is, pure concepts, one can regard divisions as complete simply because those concepts are secured through reflection and not open to revision on the basis of experience. I take it the regulative function of the omnitudo realitatis and the ens realissimum in Kant depends upon this point: these purely rational entities are “given” in some sense; they are given in reason’s formal use and guide the action of the understanding in its making of judgments. Yet because they are not given intuitional content they simply represent the unity of a system of judgments about nature (omnitudo realitatis) and the basic idea of a concept of an object of possible experience which is to be completely determined (ens realissimum).

Hegel agrees with Kant that the “spheres” of empirical concepts are not given, yet he rejects Kant’s pure concepts of reason, so he does not agree with the abstract idea of a unity of empirical judgments that together constitute an “All of reality” (omnitudo realitatis); nor does he seem to think the idea of “the concept of an object of possible experience” employed to guide determination of things in the “world of sense” (the radicalised reading of the ens realissimum I’ve advanced) is coherent either. Rather, to grasp Hegel’s sequel one needs to attend to his account of Erfahrung in the Phenomenology, to see that the various conceptual frameworks instanced in consciousness all break down due to dialectical tensions. But for Hegel it is important that these frameworks are not thereby dispensed with; one cannot but rely on the immediacy of “Sense-Certainty”, the mediated-immediacy of “Perception”, and the postulation of unobserved laws to explain the observed in the “Understanding”. But these shapes of consciousness are part of much more complex forms of life that need to be taken into account; there is no reason to consider them as universal and necessary “transcendental conditions of the possibility of experience” in the way Kant does.1

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1Kreines (2007, 327) says of our topic that “it is easy to see how Hegel aims to argue, from here, that the goal by which reason guides our theoretical inquiry cannot be anything akin to knowledge of an absolutely unified and unconditioned totality. If the object of such knowledge would be too abstract or indeterminate to explain the determinate phenomena of the world, then clearly this cannot be what we are seeking when we pursue explanatory insight into such phenomena. Perhaps the goal of reason is akin to what Kant calls a ‘systematic unity of nature’. But, if so, then the
According to Hegel the key step is taken when one sees how “shapes of consciousness” find their truth in “shapes of spirit”: subjective spirit of the kind spoken about as “experience” cannot be rendered intelligible in absence of a social context. Hegel offers the beginnings of this account in Chapter IV of the *Phenomenology*.

In our final section we examine some of the general features of Kant’s and Hegel’s views on the theme of self-consciousness in order to draw together our discussion.

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systematic unity of nature would have to differ in important respects from an unconditioned totality of everything.” And further: “In Hegel’s terms, Kant’s argument for the limitation of our knowledge depends on taking the goal of reason to be the unconditioned in the sense of something opposed to or other than the determinate.” (328)

In support of this Kreines cites Hegel (1991b, §45): “Our empirical cognitions are not appropriate for this identity that lacks determinations altogether...When an unconditioned of this sort is accepted as the absolute and the truth of reason (or as the idea), then, of course, our empirical awareness is declared to be untrue, to be appearance.”
IV Apperception and the ground of complete determination

My reading of Hegel’s Subjective Logic has so far been, at a very general level, in harmony with Pippin’s view of it as a “metalevel account of the process of thought’s self-determination”.

In turning to a brief discussion of self-consciousness we raise the question of how self-determination relates to complete determination of “things” by a self (an “I”).

First, note Longuenesse’s characterisation of the role of apperception in Kant’s account of the complete determination of things:

only if one and the same act of comparison and reflection and before this, one and the same act of synthesis achieved in order to compare and reflect, organizes our perceptions, can all predicates be compared to all other predicates, and therefore can concepts of objects be ever further specified. This is how the unity of apperception gives rise to the unity of experience: the unified act of synthesis and analysis (comparison and reflection) is what connects objects in one space and one time, and reflects them under concepts. The infinite sphere whose division would yield all concepts of possible entities, in which infinite judgment thinks the object thought under its subject-concept is then the infinite sphere of the concept: “object given in space and time,” that is to say “object of experience.” The form of disjunctive judgment is the logical form according to which this infinite sphere is determined.

We need to understand Kant’s main goal in the Transcendental Deduction and how he attempts to achieve it. One of the most important issues to keep one’s eye on here is the structural parallel

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1 Pippin (1989, 234). Cf. Pinkard (2002, 257): “Hegel thus intended his “Doctrine of the Concept” (the third “book” of the Logic) as the theory of normativity that would cash out his overall claim that our ascriptions of knowledge are not *comparisons* of any kind of subjective state with something non-subjective; they are *moves within* a social space structured by responsibilities, entitlements, attributions, and the undertakings of commitments; and as the place in his theory where the ‘Kantian paradox’ would be formulated and dealt with.” Shortly after this, Pinkard attributes to Hegel the view that the “theory of the concept” is a “theory of normativity”.

2 Cf. B157-158, n.8: “The I think expresses the act of determining my existence.” (Boldface in translation.)

between the faculties of sensibility, the understanding, and reason. It was suggested earlier that the structure of all three of these faculties can be thought of as singular, and this is simply because they are unities of some kind or other. Space and time are singular qua pure forms of intuition; the unity of the understanding at the level of the “I think” is a formal singular, and the transcendental-psychological function of “the soul” is that of a singular substance thought of in a regulative capacity. Lastly, the unity of reason is found in practical contexts in the Categorical Imperative whose “complete determination” is the Kingdom of Ends, where this can be construed as the merely intelligible circumstances where the will of “God” is completely determined in the actions of rational beings; in theoretical contexts, the unity of reason is found in its “transcendental concept”: the postulation of conditions for conditions, where this is expressed by the PCD. In both cases the unity of reason is grounded in a singular; in practical contexts, “God” is a morally necessary postulate exemplifying the moral perfection that is the ultimate ground of moral judgment; in theoretical contexts, the ens realissimum is posited as the source of all possible predications which are supposed to be contained “in their perfection” within itself, thus it is the ultimate ground of determination in epistemic contexts. The idea of “God” thereby impels us to actualise moral perfection in the empirical world, in practical contexts, as well as giving systematic unity to the idea of completely determinable empirical objects, in theoretical contexts.

Why mention this here? A clue is found in the famous §26 of the B Deduction, where Kant gives an answer as to how sensibility and the understanding, the pure forms of intuition and the forms of the pure understanding (logical functions of judgments, the concepts of reflection, and the categories), are to be regarded as two sides of one synthetic unity that is a product of both receptivity and spontaneity:

Space, represented as object (as is really required in geometry), contains more than the mere form of intuition, namely the comprehension of the manifold given in accordance with the form of sensibility in an intuitive representation, so that form of intuition merely gives the manifold, but the formal intuition gives unity of the representation.

The “unity” of the representation as given by the understanding is the “formal intuition qua pure concept of space”. So whilst space is

\[^1\text{A322-323/B379.}\]
indeed neither a category of the understanding, nor a pure concept of reason, the pure intuition of it by sensibility requires an intellectual function for thinking of it as amenable to conceptual determination. Unfortunately Kant does not satisfactorily clarify this idea, so we must speculate as how to best interpret it. He says further:

In the Aesthetic I ascribed this unity merely to sensibility, only in order to note that it precedes all concepts, though to be sure it presupposes a synthesis, which does not belong to the senses but through which all concepts of space and time first become possible. For since through it (as the understanding determines the sensibility) space or time are first given as intuitions, the unity of this a priori intuition belongs to space and time, and not to the concept of the understanding (§24).

We should read this in conjunction with the remark from the Metaphysical Deduction at A79/B104-105:

The same function that gives unity to the different representations in a judgment also gives unity to the mere synthesis of different representations in an intuition, which, expressed generally, is called the pure concept of the understanding. The same understanding, therefore, and indeed by means of the very same actions through which it brings the logical form of a judgment into concepts by means of the analytical unity, also brings a transcendental content into its representations by means of the synthetic unity of the manifold in intuition in general, on account of which they are called pure concepts of the understanding that pertain to objects a priori; this can never be accomplished by general logic.

The peculiar and ill-explained idea of “transcendental content” is of concern here. Given the parallels I have just drawn between the ways in which sensibility, the understanding, and reason may be regarded as singular, we are tempted by the following suggestion: since transcendental content being brought into the understanding’s representations is part of the same action whereby the logical form of a judgment is brought into concepts, “transcendental content” must stand to representations as “logical form of a judgment” stands to concepts.

If we experience a desk lamp’s angularity and form the judgment that “the desk lamp is angular”, the representations, in their guise as intuitional content, must be unified by the same action and in the same way as the judgment is. As Kant says further, the “analytical unity” stands to judgments as the “synthetic unity of the manifold”
stands to representations, so we can say further that “transcendental content” therefore needs to be understood in the additional sense as something found and to be analysed, as when one engages in the analysis of concepts that Kant believes philosophy to consist in. It also need to be understood as something made, because its being a priori means one’s epistemic relation to it is a form of “maker’s knowledge”.

From this one may infer that transcendental content is the battery of transcendental logic in addition to the conditions of sensibility; transcendental content is that which is both found and made by a thinker in the process of thinking and enjoying knowledge. So that which is both found and made is the structure of one’s system of knowledge; to think rationally is to have a grip on the structure of one’s own thought and to therefore be able to navigate a path both through it and with it. Notoriously, Kant’s attempt to cash this idea out with his twin notions of receptivity and spontaneity has always appeared problematic because it may seem psychologistic, or it may seem like a merely formal criterion of self-consciousness (one of Hegel’s reasons for rejecting it), or it may seem like Kant separates what can then not be put back together.

Merely listing objections this way is not helpful, so in this section I will offer some reflections on how the “I think” in Kant functions in distinction from the concept of the “I” in Hegel. This will lead us to consider what the successor of Kant’s idea of “God”, as the ground of the unity of reason, may be in Hegel’s philosophy.

Important to bear in mind in our discussion of Hegel below is the theme of freedom and its connection with the positing of presuppositions. Relations of causality, as thought of as occurring between things in nature, are instances of a certain kind of freedom “acting in accordance with a concept”, only if the things reasoned as standing in causal relations are understood in terms of their concept. If things are understood only as limited and conditioned by other things, then they are not thought of as candidates for that in which the “truly infinite” manifests. That is to say, they are merely finite and abstract parts of more complex wholes. The paradigm of that which may manifest the “True Infinite” are the self-consciousnesses that stand in relations of mutual recognition, because there is a dynamic harmony in them, between what they take themselves to be and what they are. One wishes to say this is so because properly self-

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1Hintikka (1972) uses this phrase to characterise Kant’s view of apriority in the context of a discussion of transcendental arguments.
conscious beings are, in Hegel's sense, “self-determining”, where this means what they take themselves to be in a sense determines what they are.

On this count a problem arises for merely natural objects; one version of the lesson is offered in the Phenomenology where Hegel claims that self-consciousness is “desire” and obliterates and consumes its objects (a structurally similar problem occurs for shapes of spirit, as in the master-slave dialectic). Objects are not “in-and-for-themselves” in any of the “shapes of consciousness” in the “Consciousness” section of the Phenomenology because in each case they fail to be known “in their concept”. Firstly they occur as objects of mere “Sense-Certainty”; secondly, as substance kinds in “Perception”, thirdly, in “Force and the Understanding”, in terms of the conditions that make their substantiality possible. In Chapter 3, whilst things are now known in a “scientific” manner, in terms of forces and conditions that makes them possible, these things have now been subordinated to their conditions and one has an “inverted world” in which one has only laws and explanations, but not things which obey laws, or things which are explained.

The move that surely is essential to get straight at the level of a form of a system, for Hegel, is that this inverted world must be thought of as properly integrated into the framework which it explains. And one surely must then understand that, since perception failed in terms of its adequacy as a “shape of consciousness”, that one must sublate the understanding further, and grasp the conditions which make possible the integration of law-like explanations into the framework which they explain, without ending up with a Kantian subjectivism that only says such laws explain “appearances” and not “things-in-themselves”. Or this is at least part of the story.

One may be inclined to take Hegel's dialectical explanation of these moments of self-consciousness as illuminating advances upon Kant’s formal criterion of the “I think”. With regard to direct engagement however, more is revealed in Hegel's explicit comment regarding Kant's treatment of the categories themselves, and their supposed role in apperception:

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1 Cf. Hegel (1971, §410): “In habit the human being’s mode of existence is ‘natural’, and for that reason not free; but still free, so far as the merely natural phase of feeling is by habit reduced to a mere being of his, and he is no longer involuntarily attracted or repelled by it, and so no longer interested, occupied, or dependent in regard to it.”
Now because the interest of the Kantian philosophy was directed to the so-called transcendental aspect of the categories, the treatment of the categories themselves yielded a blank result; what they are in themselves without the abstract relation to the ego common to all, what is their specific nature relatively to each other, this has not been made an object of consideration. Hence this philosophy has not contributed in the slightest to a knowledge of their nature; what alone is of interest in this connection occurs in the Critique of Ideas.\textsuperscript{1}

Presuming that in referring to the “Critique of Ideas” Hegel is referring to Kant’s account of the transcendental ideas in the Dialectic, this remark supports the general reading advanced here. Hegel adds to these remarks here a claim that echoes Kant’s aspiration to articulate the systematic, unified structure of reason:

if philosophy was to make any real progress, it was necessary that the interest of thought should be drawn to a consideration of the formal side, to a consideration of the ego, of consciousness as such, i.e. of the abstract relation of a subjective knowing to an object, so that in this way the cognition of the infinite form, that is, of the Concept, would be introduced. But in order that this cognition may be reached, that form has still to be relieved of the finite determinateness in which it is ego, or consciousness. The form, when thus thought out into its purity, will have within itself the capacity to determine itself, that is, to give itself a content, and that a necessarily explicated content—in the form of a system of the determinations of thought.\textsuperscript{2}

We now proceed by connecting Hegel’s discussion of the “I” from The Subjective Logic with Kant’s view from the Transcendental Deduction.

In the main section of the Introduction to The Subjective Logic, entitled “On the concept in general”, Hegel introduces his theory of “the Concept” and then proceeds to summarise the results of the Objective Logic.\textsuperscript{3} He first mentions (1) the characterisation of substance as the “in-itself”,\textsuperscript{4} then contrasts this with (2) the characterisation of substance as the “for-itself”.\textsuperscript{5} He says under the second heading that the “in-itself” involves presupposition, whereas the “for-itself” involves positing. It is clear these two stages

\textsuperscript{1}Hegel (1969, 63).
\textsuperscript{2}Hegel (1969, 63).
\textsuperscript{3}Hegel (1969, 577-578).
\textsuperscript{4}Hegel (1969, 578).
\textsuperscript{5}Hegel (1969, 578-579).
correspond to the Doctrine of Being and the Doctrine of Essence, respectively. Under (3), Hegel explains how the former two moments are united insofar as they are internally related in the dialectical sense; he tells us that cause and effect, for example, are determinations that can only be thought together and they cannot be what they are in abstraction from one another. In explaining further the dialectical relation between presuppositions and the positing of them, Hegel says:

Through this positing, then, the presupposed or implicit originativeness becomes explicit or for itself, yet this being that is in and for itself is such only in so far as this positing is equally a sublating of what was presupposed; in other words, absolute substance has returned and so become absolute, only out of and in its positedness.¹

This third heading seems to express the task of The Subjective Logic: of revealing the “truth” of the dialectic of being and essence as actualised in the concept.

As he continues, Hegel offers an alternate expression of the notorious claim from §18 of the Preface to the Phenomenology, where he had said the task is to “to grasp and to express the true not merely as substance but equally as subject.”² In the present context, Hegel appears to be implicitly linking his earlier statement with the project in The Subjective Logic of offering a theory of “the Concept” which is at once manifested in the reasoning practices of rational self-consciousnesses (as concept, the judgment, the syllogism), also intrinsically connected with objective knowledge of nature (as mechanism, chemism, teleology), and united in an identity of these two poles (life, the idea of cognition, the Absolute Idea).

As we will see below, Hegel offers an explanation of what he means by “subject” in his reinterpretation of Kant’s conception of the “I”, which reveals his reason for claiming that this, rather than the naïve conception of “substance”, is to be regarded as the basic concept of metaphysics. At this point we should recall that Hegel is rejecting not only modern pre-Kantian metaphysics, but the general ancient Aristotelian project of metaphysics that attempts to investigate being-qua-being as well.

Hegel continues on from the citation above this way:

¹Hegel (1969, 579).

² This is the translation of the remark in Horstmann (2006b, 71). It is significant Horstmann emphasises the phrase “equally as”.

this reciprocity is the appearance that again sublates itself, the revelation that the illusionary being of causality in which the cause appears as cause, is illusionary being. This infinite reflection-into-self, namely, that being is in and for itself is only in so far as it is posited, is the consummation of substance. But this consummation is no longer substance itself but something higher, the Concept, the subject. The transition of the relation of substantiality takes place through its own immanent necessity and is nothing more than the manifestation of itself, that the Concept is its truth, and that freedom is the truth of necessity.¹

Notice that Hegel here equates “the subject” with what he calls “the concept”. As Longuenesse points out,² “the concept” is equivalent to what Kant calls “pure reason”.³ Therefore, in this context, by “the subject” Hegel means what Kant means by “reason”, from which it follows that the unity of reason in Kant is equivalent to the unity of the subject for Hegel. And whereas the ens realissimum, qua Transcendental Ideal, is for Kant the ground of both a unified system of reason as well as the complete determination of individual things in possible experience, Hegel’s “exposition” of the concept of “God” is the “content” of his Logic.

We might indeed say that for Hegel, “God” is the ground of the unity of the subject, where the subject, qua “concept” (or, Kant’s “reason”) is a historically evolving, socially mediated process grounded in various shapes of recognition. In such a theory, “God” would be the ground of the capacities of self-conscious, reasoning

¹Hegel (1969, 580). See the closing sections of the Doctrine of Essence, Section Three: Actuality. These sections, according to Longuenesse (1992/2007, 213) should be read in connection with “The Judgment of Necessity” and “The Judgment of the Concept”, where the former should be connected with Chapter 2 “Actuality” as a whole (but see esp. 541-543), and the latter should be connected with the third sub-section of that chapter, “Absolute Necessity” (550-553). See also 570-571, for an anticipation of Hegel’s attitude to the connections between the material concept of “causality” and the modal concept of “necessity”, and the key concept of “freedom”, as is crucial for understanding The Subjective Logic as a whole, in particular, the basic thesis that the content of the Logic is “God”, qua necessary.


³ Although Longuenesse (1992/2007, 1995/2007) takes Faith and Knowledge as her main text for examining the Kant-Hegel relation, she notes that there is good reason for thinking Hegel did not abandon the way of defining his ideas vis-à-vis Kant’s as exemplified there.
individuals, insofar as they are themselves individual manifestations of Geist at the level of subjective consciousness, just as the predicates exemplified by things which one strives to completely determine, in Kant’s sense, are to be considered as part of, and grounded in, the idea of a “whole of possibility”.¹

This of course raises the question of what the relationship between “the Concept” and Geist is in Hegel. I take it that these are closely related ideas, and that Geist is the idea of self-conscious subjectivity as a historical, evolving process, whereas “the Concept” is that process articulated in terms of the logical structure of a self-conscious subjectivity that is at once “Subjective”, “Objective”, and “Absolute”, in Hegel’s senses.²

If this were appropriate it would clarify somewhat the relation that the Phenomenology and the Logic stand in to one another: the Logic offers an account of the logical stages “contained in” Absolute Knowing; the path from Being to the Absolute Idea is only intelligible as a path of such a kind; the individual moments one passes over in the Logic do not have independent intelligibility or application in the same sense outside Absolute Knowing.³

One should remind oneself of the apparently regressive argumentation in which Hegel writes: he clearly thinks the phenomenological “We” is presumed all through the Phenomenology, although such a perspective on oneself and the world is only

¹ Note Kant’s recognition of the social basis of the concept of the “I” in the Anthropology lectures: “The fact that the human being can form a conception of the I [das Ich] raises him infinitely above all other beings living on earth. Because of this he is a person...an entirely different being, because of his rank [Rang] and dignity, from things, such as irrational animals, to whom one can do as one pleases. (7:127; cf. Starke II, 9, 207–8; Groundwork 4:434-435)"

And also, in the Menschenkunde: “The I contains that which distinguishes the human being from all other animals. If a horse could grasp the thought of I, then I would climb down and it would have to be viewed as a member of my society [alsmeineGesellschaft]” (25:859; both cited in Louden (2000, 67)).


³ This qualification is important; it reminds us that although Hegel often writes as if he is speaking of a temporal process, he is concerned all along with the grounds of determination, and such grounds and such determination as is detailed in his writings are always essentially connected with other grounds and other determinations he has discussed elsewhere (this is the reason for his emphasis on the necessity of “positing one’s presuppositions”).
supposedly available to one when one has grasped the norms of one’s community by which, ultimately, such shapes of consciousness and spirit are bound. This standpoint of “Absolute Spirit” is an ongoing development, however, and never static, but always dynamic.¹

This indeed sounds very alike the claim that normative standards are those which allow for communicative interaction, and if this were appropriate, we ought to say that, whatever else the idea of “God” expresses or represents, it at least shares some of the semantic content possessed by the phrase “grounds of normative constraint”.² And insofar as Hegel can be understood as attempting to give a modern reading of the significance of religion, he can be thought of as offering a defence of a positive idea of “God” that is not mired in the errors of traditional metaphysics of substance, but rather entirely congenial to the modern conception of self-determining rational subjectivity, rather than externally constrained finitude, which, for Hegel, is necessarily coupled with an inadequate conception of “infinite”.

In line with this, Hegel’s criticism of Kant’s idea of “God” is that it is one-sided and abstractly negative: “God” is something Kant claims we cannot know; but must nevertheless think; presumably, Hegel believes that if the idea of “God” is to have the import that it must, then it must be essentially knowable. For, even in Kant’s terms, there was something odd about likening the regulative function of the idea of “God” to a principle, if one could be said to “know” the content of this principle in applying it successfully, yet unable to “know” the idea which the principle expressed. The error that Kant really should have emphasised is that of confusing a principle

¹ See similar sentiment expressed in Pinkard (1994, 266).

² Cf. Pinkard (2007, 9): “The Idea, moreover, is more than just a set of norms; it also includes within itself the ground of intelligibility of those norms, that is, some fairly comprehensive conception of why these norms should and do matter to us, why we should care about realising them.”

Cf. Hegel’s remarks from his aesthetics: “The Ideal is unity within itself, a unity of its content, not merely a formal external unity but an immanent one. This substantial self-reliance which is within itself at one with itself, we have already described above as the Ideal’s self-enjoyment, repose, and bliss. At the stage we have now reached we will bring out this characteristic as self-sufficiency, and require [for artistic representation] that the general state of the world shall appear in the form of self-sufficiency so as to be able to assume the shape of the Ideal. (Hegel, A 1:179 / VA 1:236)” Cited in Pinkard (2007, 26, n.25).
(existence as unity) with an object (existence as being), rather than that of confusing “thinking” with “cognising” or “knowing”.

Hegel follows up the thoughts just discussed with a summary of some of the arguments of the Doctrine of Essence, where he mentions the dialectical stance which a philosopher must take to the philosophical systems to which he responds. Hegel’s target here is Spinoza’s pantheism:

the true system cannot have the relation to it of being merely opposed to it; for if this were so, the system, as this opposite, would itself be one-sided. On the contrary, the true system as the higher, must contain the subordinate system within itself.\(^1\)

He says further that

the refutation must not come from outside, that is, it must not proceed from assumptions lying outside the system in question and inconsistent with it. The system need only refuse to recognise those assumptions; the defect is a defect only for him who starts from the requirements and demands based on those assumptions...the genuine refutation must penetrate the opponent’s stronghold and meet him on his own ground; no advantage is gained by attacking him somewhere else and defeating him where he is not.\(^2\)

We should of course bear this remark in mind when reflecting on Hegel’s relation to Kant. For now, however, notice how Hegel is attempting to recast Spinoza’s idea of “God”, and that he refers to his Objective Logic as “the one and only true refutation of Spinozism.”\(^3\) Given that Hegel thinks of the Doctrine of Being as a transformation of transcendental logic, he has used Kant against Spinoza in order to form a unified idea of “God”.

In the context of this discussion, Hegel offers one of his many versions of the same solution to the Parmenidean problem of “the One and the Many”:\(^4\)

\(^1\)Hegel (1969, 580).
\(^3\)This would direct us to one way of interpreting Hegel’s equation of the content of his Logic with “God”, although I am presently arguing that it is clear the Subjective Logic is equally important since it is the culmination of Hegel’s reworking of the idea of “God”.
\(^4\)To which there is in any case a section explicitly devoted, in the Doctrine of Being (Hegel (1969, 164-170)).
Chapter Three: The Principle of Complete Determination

Each of them, the universal and the individual, is the totality, each contains within itself the determination of the other and therefore these totalities are one and one only, just as this unity is the differentiation of itself into the free illusion of this duality—of a duality which, in the difference of the individual and the universal, appears as a complete opposition which is so entirely illusory that in thinking and enunciating the one, the other also is immediately thought and enunciated.¹

This peculiar dialectical relationship wherein universality and singularity are united is, so says Hegel, “the concept of the concept”. He believes this characterisation to distil certain of the general results of the Objective Logic, which he believes to offer an “immanent deduction” of what he calls “the Concept”. Recalling the reference to Spinoza just made, this means that Hegel believes this “immanent deduction” to have vindicated his own account of “God”, as finding its truth in the Absolute Idea at the end of the Subjective Logic: the immanent deduction of “the concept” (the “I”) in the Objective Logic has for Hegel led to a clarification of the relationship between the “I” and “God”, where the former finds its absolute form and content to be maximally clarified through its relationship to the latter, where the latter takes the form of the “Absolute Idea”.

When Hegel says shortly after these remarks that the philosophy of his time was improperly wary and sceptical of philosophical accounts of “the Concept” one is reminded not only of the British empiricism which, he often took the chance to remind his readers, misconstrued the nature of thinking and knowledge; yet one is also reminded of his critical attitude to Kant. Recall that Kant was likened to the empiricists in §40 of the section in the Encyclopedia Logic entitled “Positions of Thought with Respect to Objectivity” (the three of which are metaphysics, critical philosophy, and immediate knowing):

Critical philosophy has in common with Empiricism that it accepts experience as the only basis for our cognitions; but it will not let them count as truths but only cognitions of appearances.

We are here reminded that, insofar as Hegel means by “the Concept” what Kant meant by “reason”, he would be perfectly correct in saying of Kant that he was sceptical of an account of “the Concept”, insofar as Kant was sceptical of “reason’s insight”, and instead

¹Hegel (1969, 582).
content to speak only of the practical and theoretical virtues of its “interest”.

At this point Hegel begins his response to Kant’s account of the “I”:

The Concept, when it has developed into concrete existence that is itself free, is none other than the I or pure self-consciousness. True, I have concepts, that is to say, determinate concepts; but the I is the pure concept itself which, as Concept, has come into determinate existence.

It is very tempting to read this claim in the following way. “I” is unique as a concept, because the subjective “taking-onself-to-be-an-I” is equivalent to oneself actually being an “I”; that is, if one truly possesses the concept “I” one is an I; the subjective and objective reality of the concept are intertwined; the subjective taking-to-be-an-I, in Hegel’s words, brings the “I” “into determinate existence”, and, conversely, cannot occur unless the one taking themselves to be an “I” is an “I”; the two moments presuppose each other.

From here we have a short route to saying what the conditions of there being “I”s are, for these will be the same as the conditions of there being beings who take themselves to be “I”s. And recalling Hegel’s account of self-consciousness in the famous Chapter IV of the Phenomenology of Spirit, we note that being an “I” requires a kind of dialectical relationship with a “not-I”, which if self-consciousness is to be actualised, must be another “I”. That is, the “I” and the “We” are necessarily thought together; “I”s must recognise one another as well as themselves in mutual recognitive interaction; they must, importantly, recognise themselves in the other’s recognition of themselves. All this means that recognitive interaction “brings into

1 See the second section of the Appendix to the Dialectic (esp. A676/B704).
2 Hegel (1969, 583).
3 This would seem to be the case for applying the concept to others as well as applying it to oneself; after all, in (1977b, §§177-178) Hegel gives the impression that such capacities are interdependent. In §177 he says, famously: “What still lies ahead for consciousness is the experience of what Spirit is—this absolute substance which is the unity of the different independent self-consciousnesses which, in their opposition, enjoy perfect freedom and independence: ‘That is ‘We’and ‘We’that is ‘I.’” And in §178: “Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged.”
existence" a “We”: a community that can itself be identified with the grounds of “the concept”.

Given the arguments offered above, it becomes clear that if the community of the “We” that is the ground of the possibility of the concept of the “I”, and if “the concept” is this concept of the “I” of pure self-consciousness, then the ground of the possibility of the “I” is the ground of what Kant calls “reason”, which, we recall, is the ens realissimum: the ground of the complete determination of things within the context of possible experience. From this it follows that, since Hegel’s idea of “God” can be thought of as the ground of “the concept”, his concept of “God” is none other than the “We” which is the ground of all determination in self-consciousness.

To connect this with Kant’s conception of the “unity of reason” and the “unity of the understanding”, we can say that, from a Hegelian perspective, the former is properly “constitutive” of the latter and does not bring mere “regulative” unity to it: the very possibility of being an “I thinking” being depends on the existence of the community—the “We”—to which such a being belongs. In other words, Kant is wrong to say that the transcendental idea of “God” is to be employed simply as a heuristic; rather, the very possibility of the concept of both the “I” and “God” implies their existence; further, that the two concepts are opposite sides of one coin.

To guard against misunderstanding, we must note that it is precisely the concrete existence of the concept—the existence of it in thought—that entails its object being actual; Hegel is not saying that the “I” or “God” have the same sense when one is speaking of Natur: he is speaking here of the “I” and “God” as necessary concepts at the level of Geist.

We therefore now have a positive Hegelian response to Kant’s PCD (where our previous sections—§§III-III.ii—offered a negative response): given that the principle is only applicable within possible experience, and given that all possible experiences find their “truth” in the determinations that are made possible by the dialectical progress of reason, in its active function in thinking, the principle of complete determination is best understood as grounded in the normative structures that make a “We”, a social self-consciousness, possible. The complete determination of individual things is best thought of as an historically evolving process of conceptual transformation, whose guiding ideal is not an ego-logical battery of logical functions of judgments and categories, but a dialogically evolving process of constraint on processes of thinking, that nevertheless do have a certain dialectical structure.
Crucially, Hegel regards his account of “the Concept” to express the essential truth of “that which happens”:

philosophy is not meant to be a narration of happenings but a cognition of what is true in them, and further, on the basis of this cognition, to comprehend that which, in the narrative, appears as a mere happening.¹

This we could quite easily take to be an endorsement of the possibility of philosophical knowledge of the Absolute Idea, where this is taken to be, in the context of religious thinking, “God”. And if we connect the point with Kant’s account of the ens realissimum, we find that Hegel is attempting to resuscitate what he takes to be true in that idea that Kant rejects. In Hegel, however, what is “true” is a certain essential narrative structure, rather than a particular narrative. And oftentimes one is tempted to suppose that this essential narrative structure is that captured by the peculiar Trinitarian model expressed in the Christian religious imagery in the form of “the Father”, “the Son”, and “the Holy Spirit”, and in philosophical thinking by the triad of “Being”, “Reflection”, and “the Concept”.

Now, when discussing the “I”, Hegel adduces two moments which he says must be “grasped at the same time both in their abstraction and in their perfect unity” if the nature of the “I” and “the Concept” are to be understood.² These are “purely self-referring unity” and “immediately self-referring negativity”, where these seem to be taken by Hegel to be two dialectical moments contained in what Kant calls the “synthetic unity of apperception”.³

These two connections can be seen if we understand Hegel to, in first place, be referring to none other than the necessary minimal condition of the possibility of being self-conscious: our thoughts being able to be accompanied by the “I think”. In this context, the “I” is

¹Hegel (1969, 588).
²Hegel (1969, 583).
³§16 of the B Deduction first mentions the “pure” or “original apperception”, which Kant conceives of as the unity of the manifold of intuition prior to conceptual thought. Kant refers to the “transcendental unity of self-consciousness” and says that this is the “unity” of the former kind of apperception (B132). He then says “[F]rom this original combination much may be inferred.” (B133).
nothing other than the principle of analytical unity\(^1\) among our cognitions; a principle which requires, for example, that all one’s thoughts can be held simultaneously without contradiction, and in a way that satisfies the requirements of the transcendental unity of apperception, whose conditions are, first and foremost, the logical functions of judgment and the categories.

In second place, Hegel refers to the negative unity among our thoughts: they are our thoughts insofar as they are not only had by us, but also are necessarily not us. In this second case, by distinguishing thought from the thinker that has them, we implicitly refer to the unity of the thoughts in this thinker. If we note Kant’s repetition of the claim that the “I” is a simple representation “through which nothing manifold is given”, we can see what Hegel is responding to. For Kant appears to hold apart this simple representation from the manifold in intuition, even though he admits that “I am...conscious of the identical self in regard to the manifold of the representations that are given to me in an intuition because I call them all together my representations, which constitute one.”\(^2\)

Yet Hegel seems to insist that since consciousness of the manifold of intuition in original apperception and the consciousness of the unity of this in the transcendental unity of self-consciousness are essentially connected with the synthetic activity of the pure understanding (in its guise as the imagination), they must be construed as internally related dialectical moments.

It is not entirely clear that Kant would disagree. Hegel does choose to emphasise the specifically dialectical character of Kant’s claim, however, and it might in any case be useful to see that these two aspects of self-consciousness are not to be thought of as two capacities “coming together”, but rather as two distinguishable moments of the phenomenon of self-consciousness.\(^3\)

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\(^1\) See B133-134, esp. n.*. Cf. Kant’s remark at B135: “Now this principle of the necessary unity of apperception is, to be sure, itself identical, thus an analytical proposition, yet it declares as necessary a synthesis of the manifold given in an intuition, without which that thoroughgoing identity of self-consciousness could not be thought.”

\(^2\) B135.

\(^3\) Close attention to the famous footnote at B160-161 reinforces the impression that Kant moved closer to something like this view in the B Edition, and yet his remark that “objects can indeed appear to us without necessarily having to be related to functions of the understanding, and therefore without the understanding containing their a priori
Now Kant, in the Paralogisms, rejects the possibility of knowledge of the traditional object of rational psychology—the Soul—and Hegel cannot be understood as committing the error against which Kant had warned; Hegel cannot be understood as insisting we have knowledge of a “noumenal self” in the sense Kant rejects. Indeed, Hegel agrees with Kant’s denunciation of rational psychology in saying:

If we cling to the mere representation of the I as it floats before our ordinary consciousness, then the I is only the simple thing; also called soul, in which the Concept inheres as a possession or property. This representation which makes no attempt to comprehend either the I or the Concept cannot serve to facilitate or bring nearer the comprehension of the Concept.¹

Despite Hegel’s agreement with Kant in this context, given our explanation of the “I that is ‘We’ and ‘We’ that is I”, he nevertheless thinks of the negative unity of the “I” as the unity of the thoughts in a stronger sense than Kant only insofar as having thoughts, in the fully determinate sense intended by Hegel, requires one is a participant in a world of dialogical practices; that is, that one is an element in the spirit of one’s time. And although one cannot here refer to a “reason transcendent” entity to capture the concept of the “I”, one does not need to; after all, the concept of the “I” is that of “the Concept” itself (what Kant thought of as a systematic, unified reason), and this is not a possible concept except in the context of a “We”. As we have already argued, the “I” only comes into existence in the context of the “We”, so there is no need for anxiety about referring to reason transcendent, immaterial, metaphysical entities known as “Is”. And this possibility is in harmony with the fact that it is possible to offer a non-transcendent, but irreducible, idea of “God”.

¹Hegel (1969, 585).
Conclusion

As indicated in the Preface, this thesis, whilst expressly about the structure and function of the idea of “God” in the logics of Kant and Hegel, is thematically centred on the idea of conceptual determination. One motivation for this approach to the topic is that it provides a frame which allows arguments found in the systematic approach to philosophy characteristic of German Idealism to be integrated into debates within analytical philosophy, as I explicitly indicated at several points. Moreover, there is clear evidence in both Kant and Hegel for defence of the claim that their most basic philosophical points are essentially ones pertaining to what ought to be thought of as philosophical logic. In employing a broad classification like this I do not mean to needlessly exclude alternatives, but simply emphasise what I see to be the basic point: rational reflection, a process that is for Kant and Hegel essentially syllogistic at its core, leads naturally to a certain vision (I should like to say “image” to emphasise the fact that I do not think believing the idea consists in believing a proposition) of the conceptual, rational order.

I mean to say that the dual directions of conceptual activity are, quite naturally, toward both maximal generality and maximal specificity (abstracting harmlessly from questions of the relativity of generality and specificity). The ideal termini under investigation here were the infima species and the sumnum genus, these being represented in Kant as the empirical intuition and the ens realissimum, respectively (we are of course not meant to be able to represent the latter, or to try to, and we cannot fully satisfy the demand of complete determination in the former context either).

In Hegel we found a possible solution for a problem that seems to arise in Kant's philosophy as a result of his recommended solution for mediation between these two poles of thought: the completely determined (not merely determinate; we here speak of a “task”) and its purported ground. This mediation is in Kant provided in practical reason in the forms of examples of symbolic representations. I recommended an extension of this at least implicit thesis in Kant to the theoretical, epistemic, empirical dimension of natural scientific inquiry, as in the case of modelling one's behaviour on “better” examples in the moral dimension, where doing better at understanding the world involves one being able to assimilate one's
knowledge into a coherent structure at least in the sense of being able to connect together and integrate one's experience such that one may be able to get about, as it were.

Hegel's position on this general question of the extent of the integration of reason into the deep structure of one's thought, especially in the form of language employed in communicating with others and having disputes with them, finds him giving complex and subtle explanations, in the “Psychology” section of the *Encyclopedia Philosophy of Mind*, as to how similar structures known in Kant as “symbols” would connect with both rational and sensuous dimensions of one's knowledge. I took this to be the germ of Hegel's (latent) basic correction of Kant for the absence of such a theory in the theoretical context, and then followed up on some of its consequences in some detail in the context of “knowledge of God” in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* in contraposition to Kant's *Religion Within the Boundaries of Reason Alone*.

The transition to Chapter Three involved the issue of conceptual determination, the idea of “completeness”, being claimed as the central issue in the talk about the idea of “God”. It was argued that this idea was put into action with the help of certain functions of judgment and inference, especially infinite and disjunctive judgment. The story came to a close with a brief explanation of how apperception in both Kant and Hegel is a ground of this activity of “judging under the idea of a whole” which is represented by infinite and disjunctive judgments.
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