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# Reason in Kant and Hegel

*Das ist nun das dritte Werk der Alten, das  
ich sehe, und immer derselbe große Sinn. Eine  
zweite Natur, die zu bürgerlichen Zwecken  
handelt, das ist ihre Baukunst...*  
J. W. Goethe, *Italienische Reise*

**Abstract:** In this paper I want to compare and contrast Kant and Hegel on reason. While both emphasize the close connection between reason and its ends, motivations and needs, and denounce a futile understanding of reason as a formal, instrumental, or simply logical reasoning, they diverge on how to interpret reason's restlessness, teleology and life. After a section illustrating some uncritical assumptions widespread among readings of Kant, I move to a treatment of their respective views on reason's self-realization (the relation between thought and the I, concepts and intuitions, faith and history), and conclude by showing the main differences in their respective understandings of method, dialectic, limit and ideas.

## 1 Thought without realization. Introduction

I have recently written two books, one on Kant and one on Hegel.<sup>1</sup> As I was completing them, I realized something I had not clearly or explicitly thought out at first. As I wrote my Kant book, I realized that I was often trying to respond to Hegel's critique of Kant. The sketch of Kant's idea of reason that surfaced with greater and greater necessity to my mind was indebted to what I interpreted as Kant's possible reply to what I began to identify as Hegel's onesided reading, if not misunderstanding, of Kant.

As I wrote my Hegel book, while deploring that Hegel never took seriously the Doctrine of Method of the first Critique or even the Dialectic which he was one of the few (and first) to praise, I realized that Hegel tried to solve, or give a very different version of, some problems which I had isolated as internal to the Doctrine of Method itself.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Powers of Pure Reason. Kant and the Cosmic Idea of Philosophy*, Chicago 2015; *Il pensare e l'io. Hegel e la critica di Kant*, Rome 2016.

Eventually realizing something we had not thought out at first is a case in point. Sometimes what drives our ideas are motivations we are not aware of, and the spontaneity of mental life is beyond the control of our will. The tension between natural and constructive metaphors for reason is one obvious example of a resilient, surd, possibly insoluble core that forms human reason's lot and therefore returns at decisive moments in the history of philosophy. In the Doctrine of Method, Kant often portrays reason according to two models which are far from overlapping: the model of the organism and the model of the architect. Reason is a seed (*Keim*) out of which an organism grows and develops internally as a system, and it is an architect who plans an edifice of laws, the system of reason's a priori cognitions. That reason should be an end to itself and that it should set itself ends involves two concepts of teleology as different as the finality of a human being qua natural and qua will transcending nature. In one respect reason is subject to a force it does not make (and possibly even know), and every member of a species naturally follows a predetermined course; in the other, reason is self-making and presupposes individuality as the distinction of oneself from the species as one introduces change by producing something new. Life is for every organism of a distinct species the same, but the architect's deliberate and intentional construction of an edifice is an individual project. This non-identity between organism and architect, between species and individual, between life and will, cannot be taken as a mere inconsistency on Kant's part. It is a decisive tension that keeps Kant's reason alive.

Part of this tension can be rephrased as follows: reason works through the transcendental apperception and the I-think, but is irreducible to individual self-consciousness and to the subject of thinking. Often, and starting with Fichte and Hegel, we tend to conflate the problems of a philosophy of reason with those of a philosophy of subjectivity, and the two again are by no means the same. In fact, I think that this non-identity between reason and subjectivity may well be the fundamental problem Kant bequeaths to post-Kantian philosophy.

Kant discovers that the alternative between analysis and a priori on the one hand, and synthesis and experience on the other, is a false one. Reason is an a priori synthesis. It is neither a formal and subjective arrangement of contents coming from without nor is it affected by experience, for it generates its own contents. As such, it does not inhabit a realm of forms alternative to reality, but has a force that allows it to extend itself to the world in the shape of a legislation over nature and freedom. It is because the question of reason's powers begins thus to be raised that Kant speaks of its instincts, interests, needs, destiny, ends; and Hegel, who pushes this new thought to its extreme consequences, speaks of reason's impulse to realize itself in the world. In both Kant and Hegel the separation between eros and logos cannot hold any more; in fact, what we find is an eroti-

cized logos, or, in early modern philosophy's terms, a recasting of the relation between *cogito* and *conatus*. Even before – specifically in the second Critique – reason is recognized as of itself practical, in both Kant and Hegel reason seems animated by a drive to be; and for it to be is for it to exercise itself.

Both denounce defective understandings of reason. Kant speaks of *vernünfteln*, Hegel of *räsonnieren* to denote an insubstantial and futile use of reason which, more absorbed by its own distinctions than by the necessity to follow the thing at hand over which it ineffectually “hovers”, adopts a formal, technical or instrumental argumentation. What is thereby lost in Kant is reason's relation to its ends, in Hegel reason's relation to reality. In both, the defective use of reason construes it as one of its several functions as it reduces reason to the understanding, so that what is thereby lost is the inner articulation of reason in its different modes of activity.

What I realized as I wrote the Hegel book is that the tension internal to ideas, which in the Architectonic of the *Critique of pure Reason* are both a seed and a design, is mirrored in Hegel's logic. Hegel inherits Kant's tension in the duplicity of thought qua spontaneous force that at first moves unconsciously and qua absolute self-consciousness. Thought is for Hegel reason's force and life, a logical instinct driven by the desire to be-at-home in the world, and at once the knowledge of its self-realization in the world. Naturally Hegel's solution to the problem of the relation between thought and I, between reason and subjectivity, differs from Kant's, and Hegelians may well point out the advantage of making thematic life and with it the relation between internal and external teleology as integral to the Idea's immanent development. However that may be and if in the end it is more important to show the differences between Kant and Hegel than their points of contact, however, I think it is crucial to see how their divergences are best understood as the result of what is initially the common ground they share. In order to see that, calling into question some assumptions of Hegel's critique of Kant is indispensable.

This is the backdrop of my discussion of the meaning of reason in Kant and in Hegel.

## 2 The standard reading of Kant

Let me begin with a few points about the Doctrine of Method. Key to Kant's new conception of reason is its teleology. Philosophy consists more in the promotion of reason's ends than in logical self-consistency or in the instrument of mankind's progress. Reason is a legislative, end-setting, self-organizing, architectonic, unifying and autonomous power. The problem that moves Kant in his concep-

tion of reason is a metaphysical one, and critical inquiries serve the ultimate metaphysical need of reason. This is why I think we must challenge the widespread tendency to ascribe mentalistic premises to Kant and to treat the problem of skepticism (the response to Hume) as the issue that animates critical arguments. In my book I have tried to show the limits of what I have called the standard reading of Kant. This widespread form of interpretation has failed to do justice to Kant's philosophy primarily because it is infected with several uncritical and unjustified reductionist assumptions. Two are particularly egregious: a compartmentalization of the first Critique, and an isolation of each Critique from the others.

Five reasons why the standard reading falls short, all of which result from these assumptions, are the following. First, it misunderstands pure reason's finitude by construing it as the situatedness of human nature. Second, it assumes an implicit positivism, which in turn legitimates its dismissal of ideas and noumena through the reduction of the Transcendental Dialectic to the thesis that we cannot know things in themselves. Third, it ascribes to reason the presence of inert and given forms, akin to natural or innate faculties we are endowed with, and cannot grasp that reason is activity and a priori synthesis. Fourth, it operates with an impoverished notion of philosophy as conceptual analysis that prudently stays away from all concerns with ends and worth and cannot recognize the pervasive importance of cosmic philosophy or the subordination of scientific cognitions to it. Fifth, it conflates concepts and ideas. The formation, function, identity and goals of concepts and ideas differ sharply. The standard reading does not respect this crucial difference. Nor does it recognize the even more fundamental fact that the different functions are adopted by pure reason according to its different needs and ends because it portrays reason all too often in the terms of the understanding: adopting a method from without, functioning as a tool for ends it has not determined, being subjected to criteria of truth and effectiveness it finds as ready-made.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that the standard reading is substantially justified on textual grounds. Scholars can always appeal to statements made by Kant himself supporting their simplifications. For, unfortunately, it is Kant himself who all too often frames questions concerning reason in terms of understanding, especially after 1781. It is Kant who proves indecisive and ambivalent on the role of ideas and the status of cognition. When he retrospectively summarizes what he has accomplished in a certain text, Kant can be incredibly misleading. Furthermore, Kant's fine distinctions hide numerous ambiguities, oscillations, and occasional contradictions.

It would therefore be quite unfair to blame Hegel for misconstruing Kant's philosophy, when all Hegel does is carry some statements made by Kant to

their ultimate conclusions. It must be acknowledged and affirmed with the utmost forcefulness that Kant is the first who progressively reduces the complexity of the 1781 *Critique of pure Reason* to the impoverished version we all are familiar with, until in the Introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, in one of the most incredible retrospective judgments on his trajectory, he makes the design and the accomplishments of the first version of the *Critique of pure Reason* unrecognizable.

To be sure, then, Hegel does simplify Kant's thought. But one point must be presupposed. However many serious reservations we may harbor on Kant's philosophy, in both the *Logic* and the *Encyclopaedia* Hegel writes that there cannot be any hesitations that it is on its ground that we build the new philosophy (*WL* 1:59 / *SL* 62, *EA* §12 / *ENZ* §20).

Hegel appropriates the transformation of metaphysics into logic that Kant has inaugurated with the Transcendental Analytic (*WL* 1:45 / *SL* 51), and recognizes the great novelty of Kant's reason. In particular, he concedes that Kant is the first to distinguish thematically between an infinite thought and a finite cognition, between abstract understanding and reason as unity of opposites (cf. *ENZ* §45 and *Z*, §467 *Z*). The problem, he thinks, is that Kant conceives of understanding and reason as of two independent faculties (*WL* 2:262 / *SL* 590, *ENZ* §60 A). By distinguishing a Transcendental Analytic regarding concepts from a Transcendental Dialectic regarding ideas, Kant separates two aspects of the same rational activity and assigns them different functions and criteria. Kant separates reason and understanding because he separates the constitutive work of pure concepts in experience from the regulative function of reason that opens up the problem of the unconditional and of totality, and he treats reason as the source of error.

True, contradiction had been too long ascribed to the realm of illusion, while Kant has gone beyond the notion that it is simply inconsistency and the appearance of arbitrariness, admits Hegel: now dialectic is no longer the logic of error and eristics separated from the analytic, the logic of truth; now contradiction is internal to reason. Dialectic is a necessary activity of reason ("*ein notwendiges Tun der Vernunft*", *WL* 1:52 / *SL* 56). Analytic and dialectic are equally indispensable for the system of pure reason. Unfortunately, though, for Hegel Kant remains disappointing because he hastens to solve the contradiction by distinguishing respects and points of view and basically denying we are talking about an actual internal contradiction.

Even more disappointing is Kant's conflation of original synthetic unity of apperception and the I of representation, by which Hegel means the subject of a finite consciousness as opposed to objects. In this manner critical reason takes its bearings by a preliminary separation of form and content and seems

to limit itself to respecting the untouchable core of experience. This is why Hegel speaks of timidity: reason sacrifices its highest ambitions because it wants to rely on the perspective of sensible experience, a finitude it leaves unaltered. According to Hegel, we face the paradox that reason, exalted as an absolute tribunal, is then voided and made powerless.

After this premise, I would like now to pass on to what I understand to be the novelty of Hegel's reason in comparison to Kant's.

### 3 Hegel's move beyond Kant

In §214 of Hegel's *Encyclopaedia* we read that reason is properly speaking idea, i. e., the unity of finite and infinite, concept and reality. Here is already a first difference from Kant: in Hegel reason is not a faculty in any sense of the word. Even when it may appear to be a faculty, e. g., as observing reason or examiner of laws in the *Phenomenology*, reason is the certainty of consciousness to be in actuality, and therefore it is the instinct (*Trieb*) of thinking that looks for itself in the world. Reason wants to find and possess itself; it wants to rule the world, be at home in it (*Beisichselbstsein*). This is the most basic trait of Hegel's reason.

If reason is properly idea, and idea is the unity of concept and actuality, this unity appears realized in different degrees. Were it not so, that is, if everything actual were identical to its concept, it would be impossible to speak of finitude or of anything defective in actuality; and it would be impossible to speak of the normative function of the concept which we always and unwittingly recur to when we judge a friend or a work of art as a true friend and a true work of art, that is, when we measure the work or the friend against their standard, model or *Sollen* (*ENZ* §24 Z 2). This is the speculative understanding of truth, the agreement of a content with itself. "Actual" is therefore not everything that happens to be; but nor is it a Platonic world at rest and closed in upon itself, forever engrossed in its unmoved perfection. On the contrary, "actual" is the *movement of adequation* between concept and finite existence. In this sense we must acknowledge that key for every philosophical examination is the relation between concept and actuality, and that speaking of reason implies asking the question of its relation to actuality.

When reason appears in the form of consciousness, that is, as a finite I opposed to the world, an opposition takes place between consciousness, now understood as the source of concepts, and actuality, taken as the given. Here reason appears as a degree (*ENZ* §467 A), i. e., one activity of consciousness among others. Here the content remains indifferent to its form. In turn, once reason realizes that it is not a finite consciousness opposed to a no less finite world but is spirit,

*Geist*, the formative principle of the world in which it is beginning to feel at home (once, that is, the opposition is sublated), reason is “the truth of the opposition” (ibidem). “Truth” means that we finally get the authentic relation: no longer the external one between a given content and a form imposed on it from without, but the universal that particularizes itself and produces its own content. This is why actuality appears to reason as its own, as posited, as something reason has freely produced. For Hegel the defect of Kant is that he instead opposes the mere form of thinking to matter, and thereby to truth. Thinking in Kant receives the material and limits itself to shaping it, and thus cannot go beyond itself (*WL* 1:37 / *SL* 44–5).

Let me dwell on this point for a moment. Kant would have found many of these criticisms one-sided. What Hegel does not see is that appearances and nature in general are already translated into their laws by pure reason. Form is not opposed to content, in fact, transcendental logic is nothing but their identity, in the concept of an object in general. An appearance is nothing but the relations that unite it, says Kant in the Amphiboly. His principle *forma dat esse rei* can hardly be reduced to an empty form, an inert vessel to be filled by the given sensible content. Differently stated, Kant does not think of the objective content as pre-existing, given before and independently of the conceptual form.

When Hegel claims that his logic is the “system of pure reason” (*WL* 1:44 / *SL* 50) and writes that as the law of appearances form is content (*ENZ* §133), he believes he is criticizing Kant, not making claims analogous to Kant’s. In Hegel the law as a constant image of fleeting appearance, its calm copy (*PhS* 90–1 / *W* 3:120, *WL* 2:153–54 / *SL* 503–504), and the inversion of the world that appears (*WL* 2:161 / *SL* 509), is the law that reflection *discovers* in nature. He believes that this holds for all modern philosophies of reflection, including Kant, who might want to retort that law is actually the product of a law-giving reason which generates contents by operating on its own forms. This is what it means for it to posit laws of nature, which are not the inverted world, but its inner form.

At other times Hegel finds in themes and points that Kant brings back to life against modern philosophies of reflection a defective expression. Hegel uses it to return to its genuinely speculative formulation, which he finds in Aristotle. Let the example of finality work as a case in point: for Hegel Kant overcomes the antinomy of necessity and external teleology but does not arrive at the Aristotelian conception of an immanent finality in nature. Having myself written a book on Hegel and Aristotle, I can hardly criticize Hegel for it, and yet I would like to point out that Kant has not discussed finality only in the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. In the Architectonic, as I mentioned, it is Kant who speaks of reason as an organism, of its system as an edifice to build and at once as a living being that develops out of itself, with regard to the concept of a teleology of reason,

*teleologia humanae rationis*. And when in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel writes that reason is an activity according to ends,<sup>2</sup> it is in order to praise Aristotle against Kant and the moderns: in Aristotle we find a Subject as pure negativity, the unmoved that is itself mover (ibidem).

Likewise, when Hegel contrasts the system of sciences to their aggregate and calls philosophy a science of freedom because it does not rely on given contents but organizes them freely by giving necessary shape to their configuration (*EA* §5 A, *ENZ* §12 A), he does not realize he is echoing the Doctrine of Method. If a system is the true scientific form and the comprehensive totality of all rational cognitions, for both Kant and Hegel properly speaking only philosophy can be science.

For both, reason is restlessness, need and search for logos. And yet, for Kant restlessness is the symptom of reason's need for order; reason's interest can be either practical or speculative; and its hope is the highest good that is not of this world but presupposes faith in ideas – or postulates for practical reason – that cannot be brought back to any form of knowledge. By contrast, for Hegel the need is philosophy's need, and that is the production of a unification, a *reconciliation*, and thereby a return to itself from a separation. Such interest is both practical and speculative, or, better said, it is the unification of theory and practice; lastly, beyond this world there is no other life, so that the concept of hope has a completely different weight and role to play than in Kant.

For Kant, if reason's need is that of finding itself in its laws, its final motivation is quite clearly in the Doctrine of Method the desire for wisdom, so that the basic inspiration of the *Critique of pure Reason* is the Socratic self-knowledge of reason, which is knowledge of its limits: knowledge of non-knowledge as a science, as Kant puts it (*CPR* A 758/B 786). For Hegel instead every activity of reason is but its own manifestation in the world, and as a result it is to Aristotle (*his* Aristotle, of course) rather than to Socrates that he feels close: philosophy has left behind the name of desire for knowledge to become accomplished knowledge.

The destiny of Kant's reason is to explore new ways and venture across a vast ocean leaving behind what is familiar (*Refl.* 5073 AA 18:79–80). In Hegel reason discovers it is, or must become, at home everywhere; it is just a matter for it to realize that by transforming what is familiar into what is known (he has a famous pun on the relation between *bekannt* and *erkannt*). Hegel's reason therefore has a latitude and depth that Kant's reason neither can nor aspires to have. To begin with, for Hegel reason is the tendential unity of theory and prac-

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2 “*das zweckmässige Tun*”, W 3:26: “purposive activity” at *PhS* 12.

tice, and thereby of ideas and the passions that tend to realize it, whereas in Kant the gap between reason and passions is as unbridgeable as that between reason and history. Hegel's reason does not rule the world because it gives it a lawlike structure, but because it promotes and objectifies itself in the world: it makes the world its home. Its end is that of producing freedom in objective spirit, and with that historical progress.

Reason's relation to faith changes accordingly. Faith and reason are no longer alternative in any way. In German the term *Glaube*, as we know since Jacobi's reading of Hume on belief, encloses in itself both senses of faith, faith in transcendence and subjective faith or trust. In Hegel faith begins to take on the unitary sense of subjective certainty; and this is first of all the certainty that modern individual freedom is the founding principle of institutions and the mores of a people, including its religious community (*Gemeinde*). Therefore legislation is no longer the activity of a reason that is embodied but trans-individual; it is rather the result of the work of each and every one. On the one hand, this gives the individual's political responsibility a much greater weight; on the other, it is as objective, actual, shared and even reified that reason can be what Kant in the *Architectonic* called the form and end of the whole. As a consequence, the relation between individual and objectivity is no longer framed in Enlightenment Republican terms as in Kant (to get out of the state of minority we must adopt the maxim of *Selbstdenken*), but in the form of something substantial that must recognize itself as a subject. Hegelian individuals, that is, are pervaded by norms and reasons belonging to an objective tradition that they have not created but in which they were born, and that they must validate by participating in the activities of their community and State. The individual becomes co-creator of objective norms insofar as he or she uses them; and must make fluid and appropriate that which tradition has handed down to him or her as a reified whole.

For Hegel self-conscious reason realizes itself in the life of a people (*PhS* 211 ff. / *W* 3:264 ff.); in fact, reason is called the resolution to finitude (*Grundlinien* §13 / *W* 7:64), its self-realization in concrete forms. This does not mean that Hegel's reason realizes itself thoroughly in history, because it is only in absolute spirit, that is in an ahistorical dimension, that it considers itself retrospectively and *knows* itself as realized. But it does mean that its relation to history, including the relation between philosophy and its history, changes dramatically. In this respect Kant's sketch of a History of pure reason at the end of the *Doctrine of Method* is the ideal transition of three philosophical positions (dogmatism, scepticism, critique) that has nothing historical. One could say it is as little historical as the three positions of thought concerning objectivity in the Preliminary Concept of the *Encyclopaedia* Logic. There, Hegel has empiricism, with its sceptical results and up to Kant himself, supersede the dogmatic metaphysics of the un-

derstanding (Hegel then adds the further and final stage of immediate knowledge). In his history of philosophy Hegel uses several Kantian notions, from the concept of systematic and organic development guided by an idea to reason as autonomous self-determination and internal end which does not depend on sciences but gives them their form and end. But, given his very different relation between truth and history, it is not surprising that Hegel both stresses Kant's ignorance in the history of philosophy and founds an altogether new discipline of which Kant had no inkling.

## 4 Conclusion

In conclusion I would like to emphasize the most significant transformations of key aspects of reason from Kant to Hegel. In light of what precedes, we can better understand how certain fundamental concepts change. The concepts of reality and actuality, which for Kant were different categories of quality (*Realität*) and relation (*Wirklichkeit*) but in general denote givenness, become for Hegel reason's self-realization. In Kant the problem of the objective reality of our concepts is treated in the Transcendental Deduction and the Analytic of Principles through the difference between logical and real use of reason. Pure concepts obtain meaning and reference, and thus objective reality, through exhibition (*Darstellung*). This is the translation of a logical concept into a schematized concept, i. e., a concept that finds its reality and reference to possible experience in an intuition. In general, this is the way Kant gives an account of the mediation between abstract and intuitive planes, between rules and their application (to experience as well as to action). In Hegel the problem becomes that of the reality of the concept; it is the concept *in the singular* which realizes itself in different modes. The *Darstellung des Begriffs*, which in Kant is typical of the construction of mathematical concepts and of schematism, in Hegel means the self-objectivization of the concept which acquires a spatio-temporal reality. Curiously, Hegel takes up – unwittingly, as I suggest – certain themes from Kant's philosophy of mathematics. The *Selbstthätigkeit*, which in Kant designated the spontaneous activity of mathematical concepts as exhibition in intuition, in Hegel becomes the fundamental and immanent trait of organisms, their very manner of being: here internal finality, which is instinctual, takes the place of the constructive and deliberate activity. And the genetic definition, which in Kant concerned mathematical concepts alone in their difference from pure and empirical concepts because only mathematics gives rise to real objects it sees arise through its construction, is for Hegel the standard definition of each concept. For every determination is a

determinate negation, that is, the nothingness of that from which it results, and must be expounded in its genesis.

Everything changes, naturally. The subject of the process of the concept's self-realization is no longer reason qua I-think, a self-affection that makes pure concepts sensible and concrete. It is rather thought – qua objective thought, *das Logische*, the unconscious and natural thought deposited in tradition, language, history and objective spirit – that must be brought to self-consciousness. If a historical moment is a rational concretion, in reason we do not face a form and a concept as opposed to matter, but forces and movements animated by a logic we must understand. The relation between essence and manifestation changes: whereas for Hegel essence is taken as active and is its appearing, without which it is neither actual nor knowable, for Kant their difference can never be cancelled, and the relation concerns the facticity of our subjective faculties.

The Kantian problem of schematism is taken up at different levels by Hegel. He thinks reason must alternate and integrate concept and representation, familiar and known (*bekannt – erkannt*). Purifying concepts familiar from representation is philosophy's specific work; but giving a sensible content to concepts – in Kant's words, exhibiting them in *concreto* – is no less important. For the true must be expressed sensibly in order to be able to speak to everyone. This is why God has made Himself flesh, and the speculative has given itself a visible shape. A movement shuttles back and forth between two sides of meaning: philosophical, essential meaning, as opposed to the concrete exemplification and fulfillment of empty intentions with concrete associations. And this movement helps both.

And yet, it is not a complementary or symmetrical movement. Philosophy's work is an effort at purification, while the desire to clothe bare concepts is a concession to the subjective need to come down from the conceptual to the representational level of examples and illustration of concepts. If the movement were symmetrical, Hegel would not call representations the "metaphors of thoughts and concepts" (*ENZ* §3 A), whereby "metaphor" is not Ricœur's living metaphor but denotes a defect: the crystallization of thought into images and sensible figures from which we as philosophers must divest it to grasp it purely.

This two-way movement involves several cultural and symbolic aspects in a broad sense, and it is in the Lectures on Philosophy of religion, over and above the Introduction to the Berlin Encyclopaedia and in scattered writings from the Berlin years, that Hegel talks about this translation from one medium to another. This movement can be illustrated by the relation between absolute spirit and world; this relation is philosophically analyzed in the system, but it can also be translated for the sake of representation into the popular theme of the creation of the world, the descent to earth of the divine. What Kant treated under the

rubric of the symbol and of analogy in the Prolegomena and the third Critique, especially §59, becomes in Hegel the problem of the different modes of embodiment of the divine.

Finally, in Kant the problem of exhibition is used in the Critique of the Power of Judgment to introduce the concept of a technique of nature. Nature is seen as if it had been made by an intelligent creator in view of ends, i.e., as if it had to exhibit in its harmonious forms a rational design. In this way the relation of concepts, intuitions, time and imagination which structured the first Critique is now recast in the context of reflecting judgment as the cluster of problems including a bridge between particular and universal, the symbol, aesthetic ideas and conformity to ends. Hegel takes up this concept of exhibition in his reading of the intuitive understanding and in the extension of the concept of reason to include imagination, genius and aesthetic ideas (e.g., *GuW* W 2:322).

When in a construction you alter even only a small detail or element, says Kant, the whole acquires a totally different configuration. So, as the global frame of concepts defining reason changes between Kant and Hegel, so do, among others, the concepts of method, of dialectic, of limit and ideas. Let me turn now in conclusion to these concepts.

(1) *Method*. For Kant as for Hegel method is not a structure or procedure that is ready-made and imported into philosophy from without, as, e.g., mathematics in modern physics or in the very proof-structure of philosophies such as Spinoza's or Wolff's. For both Hegel and Kant method is the arrangement and form that reason gives its contents and cognitions; for both, that is, method and object do not fall asunder, unlike in all disciplines other than philosophy.

For Kant method is the design and plan of the whole, the scientific form that guides the organization of cognitions (*CPR* A 707/B 736, *V-Lo/Dohna* AA 24:780). This naturally means that you cannot treat determinate contents apart from their organization. Incidentally, this implies that Kant's critics from Schopenhauer to Adickes to Kemp Smith and Lehmann, who wish to liberate the living core of Kant's philosophy from the external and baroque fetters of the system or its ornaments (*Zierraten*), show a remarkably poor understanding of Kant's philosophy.

Likewise, Hegel writes that the method is the consciousness of the form of its inner movement (*WL* 1:49 / *SL* 53, *PhS* 28 / *W* 3:47). Possibly appealing to the etymology of method, Hegel writes in the *Logic* that the method is "the way" for the construction of concepts (*WL* 1:49 / *SL* 53).

Even here, unfortunately, Hegel never considers Kant an example or a precursor or a positive role model. He writes in the *Logic*: "[H]itherto, philosophy has not found its method" (*WL* 1:48 / *SL* 53). He thinks we must adopt a new concept of scientific treatment in which science does not borrow any direction from

without but lets the content move and progress without imposing upon it any external reflection (*WL* 1:16 / *SL* 28). About this first point I think we must conclude that the difference between Kant and Hegel is that for the former the method is architectonic, for the latter it is the immanent objective development animated by determinate negation.

(2) The transformation of the meaning of method grounds the shift in meaning of *dialectic*. In Hegel we no longer have, as in Kant, a dialectic. Hegel introduces the substantivization of an adjective and speaks of *das wahrhaft Dialektische* (*WL* 1:51 / *SL* 55) as one element or moment of every concept. In other words, the Dialectic is no longer one section opposed to the Analytic as the logic of illusion is opposed to the logic of truth. The dialectic is no longer simply the seat of antinomies and paralogisms and ideal, i. e., the inability on the part of reason proper to know its objects. For Hegel it constitutes the second moment of development of each concept, the negative side of determinacy. Hegel writes in the *Logic*: “[I]t is in this dialectic as it is here understood, that is, in the grasping of opposites in their unity or of the positive in the negative, that speculative thought consists” (*WL* 1:52 / *SL* 56). The consequence is that it is not only transcendental ideas that are dialectical, or reason insofar as it does not pay attention to the limits of its use: every concept has a negative-dialectical and determinate moment (*WL* 1:217–18 / *SL* 191, *ENZ* §81). About this second point I think we must conclude that the dialectical moment is the soul of the scientific progress. A necessary mutual relation links method and dialectic, while nothing of the sort holds for Kant.

(3) This transformation is tied in turn to that of *limit*. Both Kant and Hegel follow Aristotle’s notion of *peras*. A limit is the principle of determinacy of every thing, and at the same time that in which every thing knows its end and is no longer what it is – in Hegel because it has its immanent moment in its other and in negation (*ENZ* §92), in Kant because it sends us beyond itself.

For both the limit is the negation of the thing. But for Hegel *Grenze* and *Schranke* are equivalent,<sup>3</sup> while Kant separates them neatly: the limit (*Grenze*, *terminus*) is formal and constitutive, while the boundary (*Schranke*, *limes*) refers to an indeterminate magnitude that can change size over time. Unlike a boundary, which can be seen, as in scientific progress, as something that scientific research works to push back progressively so as to increase our cognitions, the limit does not change over time and is understood as essential to distinguish parts and whole. It is of decisive importance for the philosopher who must gain consciousness of reason in its internal division and articulation.

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<sup>3</sup> In the *Encyclopaedia* *Logic* but not as markedly in the *Science of Logic*.

In the *Prolegomena* the limit has a symbolic meaning in an etymological sense. In Greek *sumbolon* was the half of a severed whole which, if made to match its other half, allowed for the reconstitution of the whole. For this reason it helped recognize in the broken half its necessary complement (significantly, it is the word used by Aristophanes in the *Symposium* to talk about the circular beings that Zeus cut in halves). Put differently, for Kant the limit is constitutive of the two heterogeneous realms (the sensible and the supersensible) internal to reason, which is assumed as their unity (*Prolegomena* §57). The question of the limit is crucial to understand reason in its internal division, and fundamental for reason's self-knowledge, because only by focussing on the limit reason knows why it cannot know.

In Hegel, on the contrary, the limit is no longer the essence of reason in its inner division. It is rather the essence of all determinacy and of the finite in general. This is why he says that everything is contradictory, not only some ideas of reason as it is caught in its illegitimate and transcendent use.

(4) *Ideas*. Ideas, in turn, have no being in Kant. They are concepts of reason, which depend on its use and their referent. The idea of God can be used in an empty and deceitful rational theology or in an ethico-theology which is necessary to reason. In Hegel instead the idea is not the idea of something. In fact, it is the several ideas that are the determination of the one idea; and the idea is the substance and subject of its own realization. For Hegel's idea the problem is not the ambivalence between a legitimate regulative use as opposed to its lack of reality, as in Kant. The problem, if anything, is the necessity for it to objectivize itself in the finite and to be appropriated by subjective spirit until it knows itself in us.

## Abbreviations and Notes on Translation

- [AA] Kant, Immanuel (1910–): Akademie-Ausgabe (Kants gesammelte Schriften, ed. Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Berlin).
- [CPR] Kant, Immanuel: Critique of Pure Reason (A: 1781 / B: 1787).
- [EA] Hegel, G. W. F.: Enzyklopädie der Philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1817), followed by § (number of section), A (Remark, Anmerkung), Z (oral addition, Zusatz).
- [ENZ] Hegel, G. W. F.: Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften (= W 8–10).
- [Grundlinien] : Hegel, G. W. F.: Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts (= W 7).
- [GuW] Hegel, G. W. F.: Glauben und Wissen (= W 2).
- [KU] Kant, Immanuel: Kritik der Urteilskraft (= AA 5).
- [PhS] Hegel, G. W. F. (1977): Phänomenologie des Geistes; Phenomenology of Spirit, A. V. Miller (trans.), with analysis and Foreword by J. N. Findlay, Oxford (= W 3).
- [Prolegomena] Kant, Immanuel: Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik (= AA 4).

[*Refl.*] Kant, Immanuel: Reflexionen (= AA 14–19).

[*SL*] Hegel, G. W. F. (1969): *Hegel's Science of Logic*, A. V. Miller (trans.), with Foreword by J. N. Findlay, London and New York.

[*V-Lo/Dohna*] Kant, Immanuel: *Lectures on Logic*, notes by Dohna-Wundlacken (= AA 24:693–784).

[*W*] Hegel, G. W. F. (1969–71): *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, E. Moldenhauer and K. M. Michel (eds), Frankfurt a. M. (followed by the volume and page numbers).

[*WL*] Hegel, G. W. F.: *Wissenschaft der Logik* (= W 5–6).

I have used the following *Cambridge Edition* translations:

Kant, Immanuel (1998): *Critique of Pure Reason*, P. Guyer and A. W. Wood (eds), Cambridge.

Kant, Immanuel (2002): *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, P. Guyer and E. Matthews (eds), Cambridge.

