

Language and Time in Hegel's Ontology of Subjectivity

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Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the PhD degree in Philosophy

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Abstract

This thesis argues that Hegel's views on subjectivity are deeply rooted in, and defined by, both language and time. Specifically, we claim that Hegel's account of subjectivity is decisively characterized by fundamentally ontological conceptualizations of both language and time. What we conclude is that Hegel's philosophy and its conceptualization of subjectivity is a robust attempt to reconcile the changing, finite, temporal modes of being with the classical philosophical expectation that philosophy arrive at truth, which is non-finite and ahistorical. By defining time as becoming and language as the medium for the rational expression and comprehension of being that is meaningful for us, we claim that Hegel's approach to the being of subjectivity is developed through a thematic relation of language and time.

Overall this thesis aims to make an original contribution to Hegel studies and his views on subjectivity, time, and language by arguing that comprehending subjectivity means grasping how it becomes. This thesis begins, then, with the idea that both being and time are becoming, and that this is at once a finite and non-finite notion. From there, we emphasize that what Nature becomes is *us*, human subjectivity, and that we apprehend this being that is meaningful for us as time and through language. In history, subjectivity becomes as the written embodiment of a particular people, and, in philosophy, subjectivity becomes linguistically according to an ahistorical, non-finite notion of becoming as the subject's own self-determination; neither excludes the other because there is only the continual becoming of our making sense of the rational whole.

Acknowledgements

This research project was supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, as well as funding from the University of Ottawa. I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Department of Philosophy, which assisted with several conference travel grants that allowed me to present the content of my thesis while it was still a work in progress.

I would like to recognize and thank my supervisor, Jeffrey Reid, for his extremely thoughtful reflections, commitment to teaching, and scholarly mentorship. His guidance and encouragement throughout the research and writing process was essential to producing this thesis. I am also grateful for the questions and constructive feedback from my committee, Daniel Tanguay, Robert Sparling, and Isabelle-Thomas Fogiel, as well as this project's external examiner, John Burbidge. Their involvement has strengthened the final version of this thesis.

I want to thank the many professors I have had over the years who have contributed to my ongoing interest in trying to make sense of it all, especially Gregory Schulz, Peter Trnka, Antoine Côté, and Paul Rusnock. I want to thank my friends and colleagues at the University of Ottawa, both old and new, whose friendship and motivation was a vital force underlying my doctoral experience. I would like to also thank my parents, Carmelle and Andrejs, for imparting the value of learning and for always supporting my education and development. Lastly, I want to thank my fiancée, Kristina; her confidence in me has been a constant reinforcement.

Abbreviations

The following is a list of frequently used abbreviations in the footnotes. References to Hegel's works cite the page of the corresponding English translation, followed by the volume and pagination from Hegel's *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*. Some translations have been modified and any such modifications are indicated in the footnotes.

- DF *Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems der Philosophie*, translated as *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy* by H.S. Harris and Walter Cerf (Albany: SUNY Press, 2007).
- EL *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse I (1830): Die Wissenschaft der Logik*, translated as *The Encyclopedia Logic* by T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, and H.S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1991).
- HS *Hamanns Schriften*, translated as "The Writings of Hamann" in *Hegel and Hamann* by Lisa Marie Anderson (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2008).
- GC *Die Verfassung Deutschlands*, translated as "The German Constitution (1798-1802)" in *G.W.F. Hegel: Political Writings* by H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- LHP I *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie I*, translated as *Lectures on the History of Philosophy I: Greek Philosophy to Plato* by E.S. Haldane (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).
- LHP III *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie III*, translated as *Lectures on the History of Philosophy III: Medieval and Modern Philosophy* by E.S. Haldane (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).
- LPH *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*, translated as *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* by Ruben Alvarado (Aalten: Wordbridge, 2011).

- PM *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse III (1830): Die Philosophie des Geistes*, translated as *Philosophy of Mind* by W. Wallace and A.V. Miller and revised by Michael Inwood (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).
- PN *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse II (1830): Die Naturphilosophie*, translated as *Philosophy of Nature* by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).
- PP *Philosophische Enzyklopädie für die Oberklasse*, translated as “The Philosophical Encyclopaedia [For the Higher Class]” in *The Philosophical Propaedeutic* by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1986).
- PR *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, translated as *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* by H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- PS *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, translated as *Phenomenology of Spirit* by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).
- SL *Wissenschaft der Logik I & II*, translated as *The Science of Logic* by George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- W *Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, edited by Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970).

Introduction

This thesis argues that Hegel's views on subjectivity are deeply rooted in, and defined by, both language and time. Specifically, we claim that Hegel's account of subjectivity is decisively characterized by fundamentally ontological conceptualizations of both language and time. What we conclude is that Hegel's philosophy and its conceptualization of subjectivity is a robust attempt to reconcile the changing, finite, temporal modes of being with the classical philosophical expectation that philosophy arrive at truth, which is non-finite and ahistorical. By defining time as becoming and language as the medium for the rational expression and comprehension of being that is meaningful for us, we claim that Hegel's approach to the being of subjectivity is developed through a thematic relation of language and time.

In addition to exploring Hegel's views on language and time within the overarching thematic of his ontology of subjectivity, this thesis makes an original contribution to Hegel studies in two ways. First, by framing Hegel's philosophical project as ontological, we are distinct from a popular strain of Anglo-American Hegelian interpretation focusing on Hegel's relevance to pragmatism and the development of a non-metaphysical Hegelian naturalism, as exemplified in the writings of Robert Brandom and Terry Pinkard respectively. Second, our exploration of Hegel's philosophical conceptualization of subjectivity does not commit itself to subjectivism, which is the epistemological view that knowledge does not exceed or transcend consciousness. Hence, as we shall elaborate through his nuanced approaches to issues surrounding philosophies of time and language, Hegel's approach to subjectivity does not amount to a transcendental account of what it means to be a subject that is *in* time and merely capable of language. Rather, we will argue the thesis that subjectivity becomes as both language and time.

The philosophy of Hegel can be read and interpreted in many ways; this has been evident in past scholarship, and undoubtedly will reign true for future scholarship as well. What is necessary, however, is the specification of our own approach, of our own reading and interpretation, especially given our emphasis on a Hegelian *ontology* of subjectivity. Hence, we cannot begin otherwise than with the question: why should this account be ontological? To summarize why Hegel's account of subjectivity is ontological in some very general and global terms, since, for Hegel, all being is becoming, subjectivity is what *becomes*. This complex inference begins with Hegel's adherence to Heraclitus' thesis that being is becoming in Logic, then proceeds to develop how being becomes Nature, and then, finally, Spirit [*Geist*]. For example, *Geist* is what comes to be from systematically thinking about being and Nature, and truth is therefore the conceptualization of subjectivity as *Geist* that becomes.

Simply put, our usage of the term ontology is strictly lexical and by 'ontology' we mean the study of being or the concept of being, which is to say the same thing. However, we by no means ascribe this usage of 'ontology' to Hegel himself, who rarely took up the term beyond using it to refer to the pre-Kantian metaphysics of Leibniz and Wolff.¹ While at first glance this might appear as grounds for problematizing our approach to Hegel's philosophy, the fact that ontology is fundamentally the same philosophical project as metaphysics should address any apprehensions on behalf of the reader regarding reading Hegel ontologically. Both ontology and metaphysics are after the 'as such' of things, of reality however broadly conceived. Hence, and as we will show, when we take Hegel's invitation to think about thought thinking about being, a great many inferences develop and determine the process of truth's becoming for us.

Furthermore, we define our approach to interpreting Hegel and his project as ontological because our primary textual source and emphasis is his three-part *Encyclopedia of Philosophical*

¹ An examination of Hegel's use of *die Ontologie* exists in Olivier Tinland's *L'idéalisme hégélien* (2013).

Sciences in Outline (1830). The tripartite structure of this work affords our only existent picture of the complete system of philosophy that Hegel himself wrote, edited, and published within his lifetime. Moreover, the work begins with an attempt to think about being and dialectically develops and determines being as it becomes Nature, then *Geist*, i.e., all that is the human spiritual community, and, ultimately, philosophy.

From the standpoint of reading Hegel ontologically, it is quickly manifest that certain claims about the nature of time and the significance of language arise. If the aim is to think through all of being, or what there *is*, then is Hegel's philosophy episodic or does it rise to the challenge of uniting time as historical contingency with the eternity of a non-finite comprehension of what there truly is? And, if language is the medium, vessel, and means for the rational articulation of our thoughts about being, then is there a tension between the historical variance of language use and its ability to fully grasp truth in a classical and necessary sense?

First, those who have focused on Hegel's philosophical system as a whole have tended to emphasize the so-called annulment of time or 'end of history' thesis and such an approach is present in ontological interpretation. For example, Klaus Hedwig claims the *Encyclopedia* constitutes a Hegelian ontology that concludes with a return to Aristotle's metaphysics, since it concludes with a quote from Aristotle himself. Hedwig explains:

Ontology, in its classical sense, is in principle the way from time into timelessness, because it mediates the unity of manifold and separate beings. Timelessness, however, as a negative notion, implies the positive content of eternity only if, in the ascending movement whereby spirit leaves time behind, it is met by a descending transhistorical reality: Being. For the philosophical tradition, which in this case finds its most pregnant formulation in the medievals, the experience of absolute Being is described as a receiving, a perfecting and a transforming because the finite and temporal is so received and transformed.²

² Klaus Hedwig, "Hegel: Time and Eternity", *Dialogue* 9, no.2 (1970), 141.

In other words, comprehending the totality of being in its truth is akin to the medieval philosophical approach of perfection as completeness, wherein God is the epitome of the infinitely perfect and eternal being. While we share the view of Hegel's affinity to Aristotle regarding the *Encyclopedia* as an ontological work, we reject the idea that Hegel's philosophy represents a complete transcendence of history by developing Hegel's notion of time as becoming, since this notion provides a firm foundation upon which to elaborate the connection between not only subjectivity and time, but language and subjectivity in terms of time as well.

Second, the ability for any philosophy to approach and to comprehend the truth implies a reliance on language. This does not mean that all philosophical problems are problems of language, but rather that a philosophy must be attentive to the fact that languages have changed, and continue to do so, with the course of human history. The upshot of Hegel's philosophy is that beginning with the notion of time as becoming, the apprehension of truth need not be a fixed end-point, but rather something that is continually articulated and expressed in the dynamic becoming of the systematic comprehension of being as that which becomes. Hence, truth is not an absolutely fixed being that transcends history, but the rational articulation of that unfolding itself. Therefore, we contend that our investigation contributes to Hegel studies by exploring both Hegel's notion of time beyond the confines of a history that has an end and a notion of truth as that which becomes and implies an open future to what rational speculation is capable of. To that end, we have defined our thematic framework as Hegel's ontology of subjectivity, and so it remains to specify what this line of inquiry ultimately means *for us*.

One question to which Hegel's philosophy provides a series of complex, but interwoven, answers is: what is the concept of subjectivity? Hegel's attention to this particular question is historically rooted in, and emergent from, the problems posed by the subjective idealisms of

Kant and Fichte. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant famously argued that both space and time are the principal form of all experience of appearance, and that the reality of time is strictly subjective, belonging to the general unifying cognitive activity of what Kant calls transcendental apperception. The problem is that the Kantian subject remains caught in a dualistic universe, where freedom and necessity, for example, cannot be theoretically reconciled. In response, Fichte developed a system of philosophy whose aim was the reconciliation of the theoretical through the identity principle of the self-positing 'I'. Against both these views, Hegel establishes himself as the proponent of a non-transcendental notion of subjectivity that is equally irreducible to an absolute identity. So, what does it mean to be a subject or for subjectivity to be? In our view, a key part of Hegel's profound originality is his repeated answers to this question through appeals to both language and time. In order to properly substantiate the deep and manifold relation of time and language with respect to the being of subjectivity in Hegel's philosophy, we will examine four different areas in which we uncover Hegel to be conceptualizing subjectivity as both language and time.

Our first chapter is dedicated to expounding the sense in which Hegel's concept of time is ontologically conceived as becoming in his *Naturphilosophie*. We begin with the ontological ground of Hegelian Logic, explain how this is not departed from in the transition to Nature, and claim that Nature is that which being becomes. As we show, one of the rudimentary conceptualizations of Nature is the idea of becoming as time, which is a systematically fruitful conception, since it is neither one-sidedly temporal nor eternal, but both together. We therefore commit to showing how Hegel conceives of time as becoming and how this conception differs from finite temporality or independent eternity because if time is becoming, then time has no proper end or beginning. In that way, then, we do not advocate for the 'end of time' thesis, which

is often assigned to Hegel. Furthermore, it is within the context of thematizing time as becoming that Hegel makes a strong connection between subjectivity and time, which requires moving from the *Naturphilosophie* to the *Geistesphilosophie*.

Our second chapter takes up Hegel's conceptualization of subjectivity as human cognition in the *Geistesphilosophie* with respect to the claim in the *Naturphilosophie* that time is 'intuited becoming' by specifying both what Hegel's own notion of intuition is and how it is different from Kant's. For Hegel, as we argue, being is time, so our intuitions of being are not strictly and formally subjective. Furthermore, we rely upon the post-Kantian criticisms of Solomon Maimon to further emphasize Hegel's systematic insistence upon the being of the empirical, rather than the transcendental. What is also important about Hegel's account of intuition in the *Geistesphilosophie* is how intuitions are precisely how language begins to take shape for the developing subject and how, ultimately, there cannot be thought without language. Although there is an emphasis in Hegel interpretation that tends toward the priority of the articulation of language as sound and speech, we contend that Hegel does not restrictively limit his account to the priority of speech, but in fact makes writing equally essential, particularly, as we show, for his notion of history.

For Hegel, history is both what has happened and what has been written about it. Hence, as a way of thinking about being as becoming in line with a sensitivity to human finitude, history is deeply linked with the activity of writing. To that end, our third chapter is dedicated to expounding the becoming of subjectivity in history through the written political constitutions of nations. We start by explaining Hegel's concept of history from the *Encyclopedia* and distinguish the supposed notion of history from the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as insufficiently representative of a fully developed Hegelian notion of history. We then define the central notion of subjectivity

for history as the *Volksgeist* or ‘Spirit of a People’ and explore how Hegel argues for its actualization in the particular written constitution of a particular people in history. To exemplify and illustrate Hegel’s general thesis, we take up the U.S. Constitution, which, despite his own marginalization of the Americas, is a good representative for the view we attribute to him and his views on history and subjectivity. The chapter concludes by reflecting on the apparent tension between the development of human subjectivity in history and the traditional philosophical project of grasping necessary, unchanging truth, which is reconciled through our final chapter.

In the fourth and final chapter, we aim to reconcile the ideas of historical, finite becoming with the non-finite, ahistorical notion of truth as the whole that is grasped in Hegel’s philosophical standpoint, and specifically Hegel’s ontology of subjectivity in the *Science of Logic*. We accomplish this by arguing against Gadamer’s criticism of Hegel that Hegelian Logic presupposes the historicity of language through Hegel’s adherence to the post-Kantian philosophy of language of J.G. Hamann, who rejects the division between ahistorical thought or reason and historical language. Furthermore, in the *Science of Logic*, Hegel articulates a theory of subjectivity in the Doctrine of the Concept, or Subjective Logic. Hegel’s account of subjectivity in that work focuses on forms of thinking like concepts as such, judgments, and syllogistic inferences, which are all fundamentally linguistic in nature. In addition to universality, particularity, singularity, subject, and predicate, what is essential to illuminating an ahistorical conception of time in this treatment of subjectivity is the copula (rather than *solely* the grammatical, predicative subject of ‘S is P’). As the site of *being*, the copula is where the subject that is both grammatical and psychical becomes the predicate and the predicate becomes the subject in judgments. Following Jeffrey Reid’s reading of Friedrich Hölderlin’s critique of Fichte from the *Judgment and Being* fragment, the identity of the self-positing subject posits a

distinction, rather than an identity, a self-distinguishing that we develop in this chapter from Hegel's account of the speculative proposition in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Lastly, this notion of the non-finite, ahistorical becoming of the subject in and as language is something for which Hegel is deeply indebted to Fichte, Schelling, and Hölderlin, as it is a theme belonging to German idealism. We show this debt by treating Hölderlin as a mediary figure for interpreting Hegel's appropriation of Fichte's insights and with that our inference that Hegel's ontological approach to subjectivity demonstrates how it becomes as both language and time is completed.

Overall this thesis aims to make an original contribution to Hegel studies and his views on subjectivity, time, and language by arguing that comprehending subjectivity means grasping how it becomes. This thesis begins, then, with the idea that both being and time are becoming, and that this is at once a finite and non-finite notion. From there, we emphasize that what Nature becomes is *us*, human subjectivity, and that we apprehend this being that is meaningful for us as time and through language. In history, subjectivity becomes as the written embodiment of a particular people, and, in philosophy, subjectivity becomes linguistically according to an ahistorical, non-finite notion of becoming as the subject's own self-determination; neither excludes the other because there is only the continual becoming of our making sense of the rational whole.

Chapter 1: Hegel's Ontology of Time from the 1830 *Naturphilosophie*

The purpose of this chapter is threefold: (i) to read the *Naturphilosophie* as continuing the ontological project of Hegel's Logic so as to show how Hegel conceives of time in the *Naturphilosophie* in terms of becoming; (ii) to establish the ontological significance of conceiving time according to becoming with respect to other potential conceptualizations of time, namely temporality and eternity; and (iii) to interpret the fundamental relation between time and subjectivity that is put forward in the *Naturphilosophie* in order to be able to justify that the connection between the two has a larger, systematic significance. What this chapter will achieve is strong evidence that time, for Hegel, is much more than merely a concept employed for the measure of motion or the denotation of intervals of alteration. When we pursue time in an ontological way, as we do by employing Hegel's Logic, then time is recognizable as a concept of primal systematic significance. Through Hegel's conceptualization of time in terms of becoming, and his connection of it with subjectivity, this significance begins to manifest itself.

We will begin with the transition from Logic to Nature and provide a survey of the opening of the *Naturphilosophie* wherein Hegel's most explicit account of time in his originally published *oeuvre* largely occurs. We will then pursue the candidacy of time as temporality and eternity because Hegel considers them in the Introduction to the *Naturphilosophie* and also because it helps define the novelty of Hegel's philosophical approach to time. This chapter concludes by arguing that comprehending time as becoming is the superior conceptualization to either eternity or temporality because it is only time as becoming that makes the subjectivity and time relation, as specifically articulated in the *Naturphilosophie*, comprehensible. What is ultimately at stake is the larger systematic importance of the connection of subjectivity and time *qua* becoming.

1.1. From Logic to Nature

The Introduction to *Die Naturphilosophie*, the second volume of Hegel's *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830), orients the reader toward an understanding about what Nature generally is and how it is to be scientifically, i.e., *philosophically*, comprehended.³ The contents of the Introduction do not in themselves provide a preliminary set of premises or presuppositions that are dogmatically carried forward and over into the investigation of Nature from the beginning.⁴ Rather, the Introduction is an architectonic presentation of the subject matter—the *concept of Nature*.

Whereas the first part of the *Encyclopedia*, *Die Wissenschaft der Logik*, is about the concept of being (or thought thinking being), the *Naturphilosophie* has the concept of Nature as the subject matter of its investigation.⁵ Nature is the result of thought having thought about being, and it follows from the highest notion grasped therein—the absolute Idea. The absolute Idea is “the *pure form* of the Concept [*die reine Form des Begriffs*]” whose content is everything rational, i.e., syllogistic.⁶ So the culmination of the *Encyclopedia Logic* with the absolute Idea is the Idea in its universality. From there, the investigation proceeds to consider the particularity of the Idea; this is how we can conceive the transition from Logic to Nature.⁷

The absolute Idea is both an end and a beginning insofar as it is the result of Hegel's Logic. In an addition to the concluding paragraph of the *Encyclopedia Logic* (§244), Hegel

³ *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* will hereafter be abbreviated as *Encyclopedia*.

⁴ To do such a thing would violate one of the key methodological aspects of the project of the *Encyclopedia* (See EL §17, 41; W8, 62-63).

⁵ Hegel's larger logical treatise and its smaller encyclopedic version share the same name and subject matter. We will hereafter distinguish between the two by referring to them as the *Encyclopedia Logic* and the *Science of Logic*, the substantive *Wissenschaft der Logik*.

⁶ EL §237, 303; W8, 388.

⁷ According to M.J. Petry, “The *main* importance of the transition from ‘Logic’ to ‘Nature’ is however, the major qualitative difference it initiates. According to Hegel, the distinguishing feature of the sphere concluded by means of the Idea is its *universality*, the categories being involved in but not confined to nature and spiritual phenomena, whereas the distinguishing feature of the sphere initiated by space is its *particularity*, the levels of nature consisting as they do of more or less tangible objects.” M.J. Petry, Introduction to *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature, Vol. 1* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1970), 46.

describes it as a speculative homecoming: “We have now returned to the Concept of the Idea [*Begriff der Idee*] with which we began. At the same time this return to the beginning is an advance. What we began with was being, abstract being, while now we have the *Idea* as *being*; and this Idea that *is*, is *Nature* [*diese seiende Idee aber ist die Natur*].”⁸ The *Encyclopedia Logic* began with an abstractly indeterminate conception of being (or pure nothing) and allowed what follows from this attempt to immanently develop itself to the point where thought returns to being, not as such, but rather being as determined as the concept of Nature via the absolute Idea. What exactly the concept of Nature will entail will follow from thought allowing the determination of the concept of Nature to freely develop.⁹

While the content of the *Naturphilosophie* begins with space, from the standpoint of reflecting on the systematic transition from Logic to Nature, the Introduction to the *Naturphilosophie* addresses the *externality* of Nature insofar as it is the result of the *Logic*. Something is said to be self-external if its internality, i.e., essence, is correlative or co-presented with its externality, or appearance. Self-externality involves a distinction between internality and externality that does not amount to an ontologically significant distinction at all insofar as the object is concerned. To understand self-externality generally requires understanding the relationship between essence and appearance from the Doctrine of Essence.¹⁰ But it is not necessary to refer in depth to Hegel’s account of Essence, as expound in the *Logic*, since, in introducing how externality [*Äußerlichkeit*] is the abstract mode of the existence of Nature, Hegel refers us to the particularity of the Idea:

⁸ EL §244A, 307; W8, 393.

⁹ Hegel articulates this methodology explicitly in PN §246 (W9, 15).

¹⁰ The appearance-essence relationship also explains what Hegel means when he describes Nature as “the *unresolved contradiction*” in the Introduction to the *Philosophy of Nature*. Nature is an unresolved contradiction because of the immediate lack of correspondence between Nature’s reality of appearance and its ideality of essence, i.e., its underlying conceptual determinations. See PN §248R (W9, 28).

Nature has presented itself as the Idea in the form of *otherness*. Since therefore the Idea is the negative of itself, or is *external to itself* [*sich äßerlich*], Nature is not merely external in relation to this Idea (and to its subjective existence Spirit); the truth is rather that *externality* [*Äußerlichkeit*] constitutes the specific character in which Nature, as Nature, exists.¹¹

Externality follows with respect to the particularity of the Idea, which is precisely what the *Naturphilosophie* is investigating. Hence, it is worth noting that, by referring to the self-externality of Nature in the Introduction, Hegel is not instilling the subject matter with anything foreign that would act as an uncritical presupposition. In fact, the account of Nature as the particularity of the Idea is a middle moment in a tripartite syllogism of universal-particular-singular; and this triune structure is reproduced at the level of the system itself as Logic-Nature-Spirit. Moreover, according to Hegelian Logic, Logic itself has a tripartite structure of being-essence-concept, immediacy-mediation-reconciliation (U-P-S). Consequently, it is not surprising that Nature is the realm of the self-external from a systematic perspective, that is, provided one has such an approach in view. It would be a completely narrow-minded and superficial reading of the Introduction of the *Naturphilosophie*, however, to assume that Hegel unjustly presupposes something about Nature. That Nature is the realm of the self-external is systematically justified, and it is now necessary to begin with the most immediate way of thinking about Nature—*space*.

1.2. Mechanics (A): From Space to Motion

The Mechanics begins with the most abstract way of thinking about Nature insofar as Nature is the realm of the self-external. Hence, just as Logic begins with the abstract notion of being, the Mechanics begins with abstract space:

The first or immediate determination of Nature is *Space* [*der Raum*]: the abstract *universality of Nature's self-externality* [*Außersichseins*], self-externality's mediationless indifference. It is wholly ideal *side-by-sideness* because it is self-externality; and it is absolutely *continuous*, because this asunderness is still quite

¹¹ PN §247, 13-14; W9, 24.

abstract, and contains no specific difference [*keinen bestimmten Unterschied*] within itself.¹²

Simply put, space is the most abstract determination of the self-externality of Nature. As such, space is indifferent continuity, the positive mode of the self-external, and it is the most abstract, immediate, and indeterminately universal way of thinking about Nature. In other words, space is an indeterminately unlimited container, or formless background, wherein everything exists continuously and side-by-side.¹³ “However remotely I place a star,” Hegel illustrates in §254A, “I can go beyond it, for the universe is nowhere nailed up with boards. This is the complete externality of space.”¹⁴ This way of conceptualizing space is so indeterminate, in fact, that it would be a mistake to assume that dimensions or points inhered as the positive contents of the conception of abstract space.

The next step in the argument determines the abstract conception of space by developing its immanent qualitative differences. These differences are expounded in §256:

(α), first, the *negation* of space itself, because this is immediate *differenceless* self-externality, is the *point*. (β) But the negation is the negation of *space*, i.e. it is itself spatial. The point, as essentially this relation, i.e. as sublating itself, is the *line*, the first other-being, i.e. spatial being, of the point. (γ) The truth of other-being is, however, negation of the negation. The line consequently passes over into the plane, which, on the one hand, is a determinateness opposed to line and point, and so surface, simply as such, but on the other hand, is the sublated negation of space. It is thus the restoration of the spatial totality which now contains the negative moment within itself, an *enclosing surface* which separates off a *single* whole space.¹⁵

The first of the qualitative differences that follow from an abstractly expansive conception of space is the spatial point. The point is a spatial negation of abstract space because the point is

¹² PN §254, 28; W9, 41.

¹³ Unlike Newton, however, Hegel is not a proponent of the existence of absolute space. While Hegel acknowledges that the existence of space in itself has been posed as a traditional metaphysical question, he is quick to deny that such a space can be demonstrated. See PN §254A, 30; W9, 43.

¹⁴ PN §254A, 29; W9, 43.

¹⁵ PN §256, 31; W9, 44-45.

itself spatial in kind. The argument, here, is that the positing of a point is the negation of space as what Hegel calls a ‘spatial negation’. A series of such points could be posited one after the other, but this would result in only a series of spatial negations, each point replacing the other. What is needed is to account for the being of the point universally, which is why the dialectic of the point gives rise to the conception of the *line* as what accounts for the ‘spatial being’ of the point. But, although the line is the spatial being of the point, the line is itself another kind of spatial negation, which only gets its spatial being through the plane. Therefore, the plane is representative of a totality, since it is an enclosed surface, and it contains the spatial negatives of the point and line within it. In sum, what follows from the conception of abstract space are some rudimentary geometrical inferences.

Aside from being a novel exercise in thought determining the idea of abstractly expansive space, the micro-transition from point to plane establishes the macro-transition from space to time. But it does so in a challenging way. The transition to time occurs in §257:

Negativity, as point, relates itself to space, in which it develops its determinations as line and plane; but in the sphere of self-externality, negativity is equally *for itself* and so are its determinations; but, at the same time, these are posited in the sphere of self-externality, and negativity, in so doing, appears as indifferent to the inert side-by-sideness of space. Negativity, thus posited for itself, is Time [*die Zeit*].¹⁶

While it may appear at first glance that the emergent category here is ‘negativity’, this would be a mistaken reading. Negativity is not its own category, but an immanent aspect of speculative dialectic, and it is here correlative with the contradiction in the concept of space from which the concept of time follows. Furthermore, because the focal point of this transition is the fact that the idea of an indeterminately expansive space is contradictory, what was first posited as indifference shows itself to contain difference in the determinations, i.e., *negations*, of point,

¹⁶ PN §257, 33-34; W9, 47-48.

line, and plane. Therefore, what emergences from the indifference of space is difference posited as *time*.

Like space, time is a conceptual category of Nature as abstract externality; it is “the negative unity of self-externality,” and “that being which, inasmuch as it *is*, is *not*, and inasmuch as it is *not*, *is*: it is Becoming directly *intuited* [das *angeschaute* Werden].”¹⁷ In other words, time as becoming is the negativity that emerges from the concept of space in terms of the coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be [*Entstehen* and *Vergehen*] of the external; it is in this way that time is becoming, and the negative posited for itself.¹⁸

Again, like space, time has emergent distinctions and these are the tenses or dimensions of time: “The dimensions of time, *present*, *future*, and *past*, and the *becoming* of externality as such, and the resolution of it into the differences of being as passing over into nothing, and of nothing as passing over into being.”¹⁹ The dimensions of time derive from the nature of time as becoming, which follows from the definition of time as being what it is *not* and not being what it is. Furthermore, to cease-to-be or to come-to-be imply a future which becomes past through the present, and this present is the ‘*now*’. The ‘*now*’ is a universal indexical that contains the differences of the dimensions within it, but sublated. Thus, with the derivation of the ‘*now*’, a transition begins from the concept of time to the idea of place, and then motion.²⁰

¹⁷ PN §258, 34; W9, 49.

¹⁸ The account of time from the 1830 *Encyclopedia* echoes an earlier version of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia*, the 1808 *Philosophische Encyclopaedia für die Oberklasse*, which describes time as “the existent thought of negative unity or of pure Becoming [die *Zeit* der *daseiende* *Gedanke* der *negativen* *Einheit* oder des *reinen* *Werdens*].” One significant difference, however, is that the account of space and time from 1808 does not provide sufficient evidence as to whether or not Hegel had already begun to reject the Kantian view of space and time as only pure forms of intuition, as he does in his mature work. We interpret the discrepancy between 1808 and 1830 to be evidence for the fact that Hegel refined his systematic conceptualization of time over the course of his academic career, which is why the mature *Encyclopedia* is definitive for Hegel’s views on time, as well as other matters. PP, 143; W4, 35.

¹⁹ PN §259, 37; W9, 51-52.

²⁰ “The dimensions of time complete the determinate content of intuition in that they posit for intuition the Notion of time, which is *becoming*, in its totality or reality.” PN §259A, 39; W9, 54.

Space and time implicate one another. Conceptually, this implies that Nature is spatiotemporal, rather than having the property of space and *also* the property of time, as if space and time could exist in separation from one another. The investigation of the concept of space demonstrated that an attempt to think of this concept exclusively engenders a contradiction that necessitates a transition in our reflection to the concept of time, as the emergent negativity from spatial indifference. However, the initial difference that the idea of time introduces disappears in the ‘now’, which is equally a singular moment and any other moment of time indifferently.²¹ Hence, the ‘now’ reestablishes the original continuity that was first posited in the concept of space, and this continuity contradicts the negativity of time. Thus both the concepts of space and time are in a dialectic of reciprocal implication and interconnection. And when we comprehend the relation of space and time, and attempt to determine it, we arrive at the idea of place, which is “the unity of Here and Now.”²²

The significance of how a concept of place establishes a transition to thinking about motion is not something unique to Hegel. Both Aristotle and Newton provide accounts of place prior to that of motion because when we are thinking about the place of something we are really interested in the idea of the change of place, or *motion*. However, Hegel is unique with respect to both Aristotle and Newton because his account of place is not merely spatial, i.e., Hegel considers the role of time in place to be essential to the concept of place, just as much as spatiality. Aristotle and Newton, on the other hand, provide only spatial accounts of place.

²¹ “The immediate vanishing of these differences into *singularity* is the present as *Now* which, as singularity, is *exclusive* of the other moments, and at the same time completely *continuous* in them, and is only this vanishing of its being into nothing and of nothing into its being.” PN §259, 37; W9, 52.

²² PN §260A, 40; W9, 56.

Aristotle defines place as “a surface-continent that embraces its content after the fashion of a vessel.”²³ This largely spatial account of place leaves room for an account of change of place through the idea that change in the dimensions of the content of a place coincide with the surfaces of the object generally. While Aristotle is interested in the concept of place, since we acknowledge that movement exists and there is an apparent phenomenon of change of place, he considers time subsequently, and with respect to motion.

Similarly, in the Scholium to the Definitions from Book 1 of *Principia Mathematica*, Newton explains, “Place is a part of space which a body takes up, and is according to the space, either absolute or relative. I say, a part of space; not the situation, nor the external surface of the body.”²⁴ Newton, too, thinks of motion generally as corresponding to change of place, and underlying this concept of place is his adherence to the existence of absolute space, which is the container that all things are *in*.²⁵ Consequently, as much as Hegel follows in the tradition of these thinkers by considering the concept of place, he diverges through the emphasis on time, an emphasis that we think is indicative of the overall systematic importance of time for Hegel’s philosophy. Additionally, Hegel’s whole philosophical science is sharply critical of mechanical views of the universe and Newton is a key representative of such an approach. Hence, even when considering aspects of Nature under the heading of Mechanics, Hegel is directly reproaching the absolutism of mechanistic theories of the universe.

Hegel’s account of place is brief, but it is the time-determination of place that establishes the transition from space and time to motion. In other words, if the concept of place were, strictly

²³ Aristotle, *Physics, Books 1-4*, trans. F.M. Cornford and P.H. Wicksteed (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1933), 315.

²⁴ Isaac Newton, *The Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, trans. Andrew Motte (New York: Daniel Adee, 1846), 78. Hereafter cited as *Principia*.

²⁵ “Absolute space, in its own nature, without regard to anything external, remains always similar and immovable. Relative space is some movable dimension or measure of the absolute spaces; which our senses determine by its position to bodies.” *Principia*, 77.

speaking, solely spatial, then it does not seem possible to account of the transition to the concept of motion, which both Newton and Aristotle view as central to understanding the change of place.

Firstly, place is taken to be the unity of space and time as a concrete ‘point’ that is both here and now; this is the “*posited* identity of space and time.”²⁶ Since the positive of time is space and the negative of space is time, these concepts come together in a universal here and now; this is what place is. However, the concepts of both space and time have proven themselves to be contradictory already in themselves. The positing of space in time, a ‘here’ that is ‘now’, and the positing of time in space, a ‘now’ that is ‘here’, repeats the earlier dialectical movement from space to time and from time to space *qua* place. “This *vanishing* and *self-regeneration* [*dies Vergehen und Sichwiedererzeugen*] of space in time and of time in space, a process in which time posits itself spatially as *place*, but in which place, too, as indifferent spatiality, is immediately posited as *temporal* [*zeitlich*]: this is *Motion* [*Bewegung*].”²⁷ Motion, then, is the comprehended contradiction that arises from the concept of place. According to Hegel’s argument, then, this process of positing both time spatially and space temporally engenders a new concept: motion.

In a concluding Addition to §261, the paragraph completing Mechanics (A) on space and time, Hegel defines the transition to motion as follows: “It is Time which has a real existence through Space, or Space which is first truly differentiated by Time... It is in Motion that Space and Time first acquire actuality [*Wirklichkeit*].”²⁸ More generally, this process of the actualization of space and time in motion is an instance of the transition from ideality to reality. What Hegel is arguing is that, *qua* Nature, space and time only have reality—which is here to be

²⁶ PN §261, 41; W9, 56.

²⁷ PN §261, 41; W9, 56.

²⁸ PN §261A, 43; W9, 58-59.

understood as *Wirklichkeit*—through motion, that the ideality and abstractness of space and time are *actual* in the process of motion.²⁹ This implies that neither space nor time are absolute posits that in themselves fundamentally characterize Nature as such. Hence, with the Mechanics culminating in motion, the role of time is simply that of conceptualizing the quantification of change that occurs when matter is in motion. This is because although we have been considering space and time, it is really not until arriving at the concept of motion, and ultimately *matter* [*Materie*], that we have gone beyond space and time in their *merely* abstract ideality and arrived at the reality of motion and matter as determinations of Nature insofar as we are doing natural/empirical science instead of ontology. However, the relationship between the approaches to Nature of empirical science and speculative philosophy are not unrelated.³⁰

On the one hand, Hegel is not arguing that space and time are primary features of Nature that make matter and motion possible as transcendental conditions; rather, he is arguing the opposite: both space and time were considered first because they are abstract and have a broad and general application.³¹ So from a quantitative perspective, it is only in motion and matter that spatio-temporality is anything more than a mere abstract ideality *qua* Nature: “Motion is the process, the transition of Time into Space and of Space into Time: Matter, on the other hand, is the

²⁹ What needs to be added to this account is the role of matter as the final result of this argument beginning with space and time: “This is how we conceive the matter: since there is motion, something moves; but this something which persists is matter. Space and Time are filled with Matter. Space does not conform to its Notion; it is therefore the Notion of Space itself which gives itself existence in Matter. Matter has often been made the starting-point, and Space and Time have then been regarded as forms of it. What is right in this standpoint is that Matter is what is real in Space and Time. But these, being abstract, must present themselves here as the First, and then it must appear that Matter is their truth. Just as there is no Motion without Matter, so too, there is no Matter without Motion.” PN §261A, 44; W9, 60.

³⁰ See Cinzia Ferrini, “Being and Truth in Hegel’s Philosophy of Nature,” *Hegel-Studien* 37 (2002), 69-90.

³¹ The *Naturphilosophie* is concerned with describing Nature, and motion is significant as a mathematically quantifiable change. From a more general standpoint, time as becoming has a greater significance than simply intervals of change. Thus we do not think Hegel’s account of motion in anyway contradicts the overall argument about the significance of the concept of time in Hegel’s philosophy because, for Hegel, becoming [*Werden*] is not synonymous with change [*Bewegung*]. This will be made clear in the ensuing analysis.

relation of Space and Time as a peaceful identity.”³² The conclusion follows, then, that both space and time are inseparable, and, the reality of space-time for the natural scientist is owed to the primacy of a process called motion and an identity called matter. However, that said, there are explicitly ontological grounds for thinking that time is not simply a concept for the quantification of change of place, and by exploring how time is conceived as becoming, we can arrive at the qualitative and ontological significance of time.

1.3. Conceptualizing Time

Having explicated the argument of Mechanics (A), we shall now turn to a focused look at the ontological account of time provided therein, since we only passed over it in brief above. While the preceding discussion of time concentrated primarily on the argument from the content paragraphs of the *Encyclopedia*; the ensuing discussion will explore the wealth of the Remarks and Additions to those paragraphs, since they both support and test us in our attempt to conceptualize time for Hegel.

We will consider three candidates for definitions of time that seriously present themselves in Hegel’s exposition of the concept of Nature. First, we will explore Hegel’s refutation of absolute time, which evidences the connection between time and becoming. Following this, we propose that the concept of time from Hegel’s account from space to motion is becoming. Second, we will investigate the dual characterization of time as eternity and temporality, since Hegel includes definitions of these in the Introduction to the *Naturphilosophie*, and, more importantly, because the scope and relevance of these terms takes us far beyond the mere context of the concept of Nature. Unfortunately, however, eternity and temporality do not provide the grounds for posing the question of the relation of subjectivity and time as becoming

³² PN §261A, 44; W9, 60.

ultimately does. After establishing becoming as the best way of conceiving time for Hegel, we will propose how to explain the relationship between subjectivity and time insofar as it emerges from Mechanics (A).

1.3.1. Absolute Time

Having refuted the demonstrability of Newtonian absolute space in the addition to §254, it is not altogether surprising that we would encounter Hegel discussing Newtonian absolute time as well. Newton's definition of time from the Scholium is as follows: "Absolute, true, and mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature flows equally without regard to anything external, and by another name is called duration."³³ The general idea underlying absolute time is that time is a container (or river, for example) in which things happen to be. Generally, this theory is connected to a common view of the absoluteness of clock time that all beings and objects find themselves in, bound by, and subject to. Unfortunately for Newton, contemporary work in physics has refuted the absolute conception of time. Hegel, luckily, does not subscribe to an absolute conception of time. Far from arguing that Hegel somehow had the foresight to be amenable to the framework established according to a relativist physics, we contend that Hegel's dismissal of absolute time is closely connected to his views on time more broadly as becoming. We will better understand Hegel's own views on time by comprehending how he is not an absolutist about time.³⁴

³³ *Principia*, 77.

³⁴ While Charles Taylor (1975) rightly recognizes that Hegel refuses the container theory of time, he unfortunately claims that Hegel *deduces* Nature and views Hegel's account of time in the *Naturphilosophie* transcendently, which obfuscates the difference between Hegel and Kant. Contrary to Taylor, Bernard Bourgeois (2001) emphasizes how Hegel's views on the reality of time, as articulated in the *Encyclopedia*, directly challenge those of both Newton and Kant. The fact that Hegel's views on time oppose these two thinkers in particular is very significant for a number of reasons. First, contra-Kant, Hegel does not treat the reality of time in merely subjective terms. However, he does adopt a view of spatio-temporal intuition, which will be addressed later with respect to Kant's view of time as a subjective form of experience. For Hegel, the reality of time is both subjective and objective, as Bourgeois notes with respect to the more inclusive speculative aspect of Hegelianism: the identity of identity and

Hegel reflects on absolute time in §258R, where he defines time as intuited becoming and ‘that being which, inasmuch as it *is*, is *not*, and inasmuch as it is *not*, *is*’:

Everything, it is said, *comes to be* [*entsteht*] and *passes away* [*vergeht*] in time. If abstraction is made from *everything*, namely from what fills time [*der Erfüllung der Zeit*], and also from what fills space, then what we have left over is empty time and empty space: in other words, these abstractions of externality are posited and represented as if they were for themselves.³⁵

Here Hegel is considering absolute time as that which somehow abstractly exists independently from all the things one might consider to ‘fill’ time. So the question under review is whether or not time is a container? Hegel’s answer to this question is a decisive no: “Time is not, as it were, a receptacle [*Behälter*] in which everything is placed as in a flowing stream, which sweeps it away and engulfs it.”³⁶

Consequently, if time is not the container that a theory of absolute time takes it to be, how is that we are to interpret Hegel’s claim that ‘everything comes to be and passes away *in* time’? Is it not the river of time—time as continuum—that Hegel appears to be advocating? No. Hegel’s answer is that “it is not *in* time that everything comes to be and passes away, rather time itself is the *becoming* [*Werden*], this coming-to-be and passing away, the *actually existent abstraction* [*das seiende Abstrahieren*], *Chronos*, from whom everything is born and by whom its offspring is destroyed.”³⁷ We argue this passage can be largely generalized as claiming that time must be comprehended as becoming, but this claim requires unpacking.³⁸ So, if we want to

difference. Second, the Newtonian conception of absolute time is purely abstract, as if when one exorcises all contents from Nature some pure form of time remains. Unfortunately this conceptualization makes of time a thing-in-itself, and hence, as such, time becomes unknowable; we argue this latter point on the grounds of the opening of Hegel’s *Logic*.

³⁵ PN §258R, 35; W9, 49.

³⁶ PN §258A, 35; W9, 50.

³⁷ PN §258R, 35; W9, 49.

³⁸ Our attempt to comprehend time in Hegel’s philosophy as becoming does not contend that time and becoming are strictly identical. To claim they are identical is untenable, since it corrupts the triadic relation of Hegel’s system. As Bernard Mabile (2013) explains, while becoming helps us understand Hegel’s account of time, the category of

understand how the *Naturphilosophie* articulates time as becoming, it is necessary turn to the first appearance of the concept of becoming in the system—the *Science of Logic*. After explaining how becoming is the unity and result of attempting to think pure being or pure nothing, we will be able to substantiate the grounds for Hegel dismissing Newtonian absolute time as ‘the abstraction from everything that fills it’.

The *Science of Logic* famously begins fragmentarily: “*Being, Pure Being* – without further determination [*Sein, reines Sein,—ohne alle weitere Bestimmung*].”³⁹ The beginning of Logic, which is equally the beginning of thought as such, is the thought of being in general, the indeterminate and most abstract immediacy. However, this thought of pure being is the thought of a complete lack of determination or determinate content, so pure being turns out to be pure nothingness [*das reine Nichts*].⁴⁰ In other words, the thought of the complete lack of determination is the thought of indeterminate nothing: “complete emptiness, complete absence of determination and content; lack of all distinction.”⁴¹ The matter is further complicated because the thought of pure nothing is equally the thought of the complete lack of determination of pure being. Therefore, according to the opening of the *Science of Logic*, the attempts to think of pure being or pure nothing are the same. What this means is that the truth (or result) is neither

becoming in the *Logic* is not to be strictly and completely identified with time in the *Naturphilosophie*. This point will be made explicit in what follows.

³⁹ SL, 59; W5, 82.

⁴⁰ Numerous attempts at justifying this aspect of the presuppositionless opening of the *Logic* have been made in Hegel scholarship. Recently, Stanley Rosen (2014) has claimed that it is only because Hegel *tells us* that thinking being is thinking nothing that there is ‘transition’ from being to nothing at all. This interpretation is contentious because we do not believe there is a ‘transition’ between being and nothing at all, and hence we are closer to the reading of Richard Dien Winfield (2012), who rightly justifies the argument on the strictly logical grounds of the contents without intimating that Hegel is coaxing us in one direction or another: “So we are left with being—with just pure indeterminacy, emptiness. There is nothing to be intuited or thought. If thinking is at all present, it is only a pure thinking that has yet to think anything determinate. Just as there is nothing to be thought, there is only an empty thinking. Being, indeterminacy, is in fact neither more nor less than nothing. Being is nothing.” Richard Dien Winfield, *Hegel’s Science of Logic: A Critical Rethinking in Thirty Lectures* (Plymouth, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2012), 50.

⁴¹ SL, 59; W5, 83.

exclusively pure being nor exclusively pure nothing, but the first concrete thought of Logic—the thought of the two together as *becoming* [*Werden*].

The concept of becoming is first expounded in terms of the unity of being and nothing, which, far from being a static unity, is a dynamic unity characterized by movement [*Bewegung*]:

Pure being and pure nothing are therefore the same. The truth is neither being nor nothing, but rather that being has passed over into nothing and nothing into being – ‘has passed over,’ not passes over. But the truth is just as much that they are not without distinction; it is rather that *they are not the same*, that they are absolutely distinct yet equally unseparated and inseparable, and that *each* immediately *vanishes in its opposite*. Their truth is therefore this *movement* [*Bewegung*] of the immediate vanishing of the one into the other: *becoming* [*das Werden*], a movement in which the two are distinguished, but by a distinction which has just as immediately dissolved itself.⁴²

Becoming is a dynamic idea, rather than a static one, because it is the unity of being-nothing, a unity that results from the attempt to think pure being or pure nothing.⁴³ The chief characteristic of becoming, as explicated here, is movement, which appears again in the system as motion in the *Naturphilosophie*. Just as motion conceptually includes abstract space and abstract time, each representing identity and difference to a certain extent, becoming includes being-nothing. It is in this way, then, that we are to comprehend becoming *initially*.

It is important to note that in connecting elements of the Hegel’s *Logic* with the *Naturphilosophie*, we are not arguing that the former presupposes the latter *a priori*.⁴⁴ Rather, we

⁴² SL, 59-60; W5, 83.

⁴³ It is not correct to interpret the transition from being-nothing to becoming as an *Aufhebung*, since to do so would claim that nothing is the *negation* of being, and this is nowhere affirmed in this part of Hegel’s argument. Hence, while becoming is the unity of the difference between being and nothing, it is not correct to say it is the identity of identity and difference of them because becoming is, at first, pure becoming, which is indeterminate. Stanley Rosen explains the transition from being-nothing to becoming as follows: “It cannot be the case that the shift from being-nothing to becoming is an instance of *Aufhebung* or dialectical sublation. What happens instead is that to think of being and nothing as independent formal elements is virtually impossible; that is, it is unstable and turns directly into the thinking of becoming, which Hegel defines as the immediate disappearance of the one into the other.” Stanley Rosen, *The Idea of Hegel’s Science of Logic* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014), 110. Hereafter cited as Rosen.

⁴⁴ Charles Taylor (1975) claims that Hegel deduces Nature. Alison Stone, in *Petrified Intelligence: Nature in Hegel’s Philosophy* (2005), also claims that Hegel’s *Naturphilosophie* is constructed on the basis of *a priori* reasoning. Others, like Alexandre Koyré (1934), William Maker (1998), Terry Pinkard (2002), and Sebastian Rand

uphold the interpretive view that the knowable, i.e., conceptual, content of the *Naturphilosophie* presupposes the universal categorical determinations of Logic, but without the *Naturphilosophie* either deducing or constructing Nature.⁴⁵ Because Hegel is clearly engaged in the investigation of Logical categories in their presuppositionlessness at the outset of Logic, we ought not import determinations like time or any idea of any determinate *anything* into the argument because this would take us far afield. Hence, keeping in mind Stephen Houlgate's claim that "we cannot extrapolate from what Hegel says about becoming [in the Logics] to what he might say about nature," we think it is perfectly appropriate to work *backward* in search of a logical *raison d'être* for a latter systematic moment without committing to *apriorism*.⁴⁶

To return to what we take to be the logical *raison d'être* for Hegel's refutation of absolute time, the same logical fundament for why being is nothing makes absolute time absolutely nothing, namely something that can only be comprehended in thought through a different conceptual apparatus, e.g., as is accomplished in becoming. However, one might object and say that Hegel's view of time is much more closely aligned with nothing, rather than becoming, as

(2007), have argued that Hegel's account of Nature is non-deductive. The issue of Hegel's treatment of Nature and the question of apriorism requires a substantial investigation of the method Hegel outlines to his system of philosophy, the transition from Logic to Nature, and a complete analysis of the introduction to the *Naturphilosophie*. To give this material its due requires the space of a complete paper or more, so it will not be pursued further here. That said, we have provided an interpretation of both the relation of Logic and Nature and the transition from one to the other that sufficiently grounds the primary claim about the nature of time as becoming. That said, while we are not sympathetic to the *a priori* reading of Hegel's account of Nature, this is not the place to fully enter into that debate.

⁴⁵ In §24A2 of the *Vorbegriff* to the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel claims *Naturphilosophie*, like the *Philosophie des Geistes*, is an applied Logic [*eine angewandte Logik*]. Since Logic is the science of every sense in which something can be, or be thought, applied Logic will seek out the universal categorical determinations in the realms of Nature and *Geist*, and mainly because part of the task of thinking is to unify unconnected singulars under universals. Hegel summarizes this in §21A: "Nature offers us an infinite mass of singular shapes and appearances. We feel the need to bring unity to this manifold; therefore, we compare them and seek to cognize what is universal in each of them. Individuals are born and pass away; in them their kind is what abides, what recurs in all of them; and it is only present for us when we think about them." EL §21A, 53 (translation modified); W8, 77.

⁴⁶ Stephen Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel's Logic* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2006), 286. Hereafter cited as Houlgate (2006).

space seems to connect with the kind of immediate identity expressed as being.⁴⁷ Furthermore, while in the *Naturphilosophie*, the concept of motion makes space and time actual externality, in the *Logic*, the concept of becoming gives truth to purely abstract being-nothing.⁴⁸ Concerning this latter point, motion and becoming are simply not conceptually identical. In fact, becoming [*Werden*] includes the idea of motion [*Bewegung*] within it because becoming *is* a dynamic category that aims to comprehend movement [*Bewegung*] as process. Moreover, motion in the *Naturphilosophie* is quantifiable change, whereas in the *Logic*, becoming is qualitative *movement* [*Bewegung*]. Therefore, because in Nature we are in the externality of becoming, the conceptual correlation between becoming and motion appears to be far from strict.

The question of the relation between becoming and motion also raises the question of how strictly should we entertain the parallel between the opening of the *Logic* and the beginning of the *Naturphilosophie*? Edward C. Halper has argued that the beginning of the *Naturphilosophie* does parallel the beginning of the *Logic*. In “The Logic of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*: Nature, Space, and Time” (1998), he interprets Hegel’s views on space and time in terms of the logical category of *Dasein*.⁴⁹ And in “The Idealism of Hegel’s System” (2002),

⁴⁷ For example, Robert E. Wood suggests that the opening structure of the *Logic* is being-nothing-becoming and claims that this structure is paralleled at the level of space-time-motion. Setting aside the fact that being and nothing are not different, which means that the two cannot constitute a triad along with becoming, the opening of the *Naturphilosophie* is quadratic: space, time, place, and motion. Therefore a strict parallelism is contentious. However, Wood should not be overly faulted, as his claim of a repeating triadic structure is made in an essay meant to introduce Hegel to non-specialists in his recent translation of parts of the *Encyclopedia*. However, the same point is made by T.M. Knox in the Translators Notes provided to his translation of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*, first published in 1952. See Robert E. Wood, *Hegel’s Introduction to the System: Encyclopedia Phenomenology and Psychology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), and, T.M. Knox, *Hegel’s Philosophy of Right* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).

⁴⁸ PN §261A, 43; W9, 59.

⁴⁹ In the *Science of Logic*, Hegel supplies grounds for the relevance of the category of *Dasein* to the conceptualization of Nature by discussing the otherness of Nature within the context of something and other: “The *other*, taken solely as such, is not the other of something, but is the other within, that is, the other of itself. – Such an other, which is the other by its own determination, is *physical nature*; nature is the *other of spirit*; this, its determination is at first a merely relativity expressing not a quality of nature itself but only a reference external to it. But since spirit is the true something, and hence nature is what it is within only in contrast to spirit, taken for itself the quality of nature is just this, to be the other within, that *which-exists-outside-itself* [*Außer-sich-Seiende*] (in determinations of space, time, matter).” SL, 91-92; W5, 127.

Halper claims the various categories of Quality from the Doctrine of Being have applicability to the entirety of the Mechanics.⁵⁰ Halper's explanation for the relevance of the category of *Dasein* is rooted in his reading of the transition from the *Logic* to the *Naturphilosophie*: that space is "the absolute idea determined as a determinate being."⁵¹ Yet, while this justification does account for the transitional move from Logic to Nature, it does not explain the fact that Hegel directly employs the language of becoming to conceptualize time. Therefore, perhaps the question is not whether or not there is a strict parallel between the *Logic* and the *Naturphilosophie*. On this issue, we must concede to the point that since we do not have a complete version of the *Naturphilosophie*, as we do of the *Science of Logic*, we are left to interpret the often-terse encyclopedic version.⁵²

The question remains, however, as to whether or not 'nothing' correlates with time in any meaningful way. While this interpretation does require some degree of entertaining the strict parallelism addressed above, the contention that time is conceptually nothing ought to be taken seriously because Hegel dialectically characterizes time as negativity in §257 and §258.⁵³

Against the view that time corresponds with nothing, we argue that it ignores precisely how

⁵⁰ Halper's article provides an illustrative chart indicating where the *Logic* and the *Naturphilosophie* correspond. But of course the issue is complicated, as different categories have multiple non-sequential applicability. Halper should be commended for recognizing this and for his analysis from the standpoint of the whole *Naturphilosophie*. See Edward C. Halper, "The Idealism of Hegel's System", *The Owl of Minerva* 34 (2002): 19-58.

⁵¹ Edward Halper, "The Logic of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*: Nature, Space, and Time", in *Hegel and The Philosophy of Nature*, ed. by Stephen Houlgate, 29-50 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 41.

⁵² While the parallelism concern appears to raise more problems than it solves, we think Halper's suggestion of the relevance of the category of *Dasein* leads us to inquire into the relationship between *Bewegung* and *Veränderung* because there is a connection in the *Logic* between movement and becoming, and, change and *Dasein*. Understanding the Logical relation of these terms will lead to our comprehension of their significance for interpreting Hegel's account of time in the *Naturphilosophie*. We will investigate this relationship in the ensuing analyses.

⁵³ John Burbidge analyzes the dialectical characterization of time from §258 in terms of two mutually implicated types of movement, which are basically both of the sides of the category of becoming: "Time has a dialectical character, that is, it becomes the opposite of what it was. The past, which was, is no longer; and the future, which will be, is not yet. Only the present is; but it immediately ceases to be; and what now is not, comes into being. If we were to use the traditional language of philosophy to apply to this, we would say that in time 'being' becomes 'non-being', while 'non-being' becomes 'being'. The first movement we call the movement from present to past; the second is the movement from future to present." John Burbidge, "Concept and Time in Hegel," *Dialogue* 12 (1973), 406.

Hegel defines time in terms of the refutation of the absoluteness of time: Hegel quite clearly argues in §258R, already cited above, that ‘time itself is the *becoming*, this coming-to-be and passing away’. In making this affirmation he is already speaking of the determinateness of becoming into the unified process of two moments that penultimately conclude the opening argument of the *Science of Logic*. The two moments that are unified in becoming are *Entstehen* and *Vergehen*, coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be or passing away.⁵⁴ These are precisely the terms Hegel employs in the *Naturphilosophie* to qualify the sense in which time is becoming in §258R.⁵⁵ Time, then, cannot be explained by nothing because Hegel conceptualizes time according to the two moments of becoming, and moreover, nothing is so indeterminate that neither it nor being count as the first concretely true thoughts of Logic. If we unthinkingly adopt a view of the absoluteness of time, then, *and only then*, could we affirm time to be like what the attempt to conceive pure nothing is meant to capture, and the consequence of this is that time becomes just as unthinkable as pure nothing, pure being. Therefore, for time to be knowable, it must be comprehended as becoming.

Although the insight of time as becoming is above derived from some challenging texts, and Hegel’s *Science of Logic* is perhaps among the most difficult philosophical works of the Western tradition, there is something immediately comprehensible about it. When we reflect on the question ‘what is time’, there are good reasons to accept Hegel’s account. An excellently

⁵⁴ “Becoming is in this way doubly determined. In one determination, nothing is the immediate, that is, the determination begins with nothing and this refers to being; that is to say, it passes over into it. In the other determination, being is the immediate, that is, the determination begins with being and this passes over into nothing – *coming-to-be* and *ceasing-to-be*.” SL, 80; W5, 112.

⁵⁵ Stanley Rosen suggests that *Entstehen* and *Vergehen* be translated as emergence and departure, rather than coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be. This translation is problematic because the choice of English nouns to represent German verbs completely obfuscates the *activity* and *process* at stake in becoming. While a better choice would be emerging and departing, even then these words say much more than coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be. Furthermore, Rosen’s suggested translation conflicts with the current French translation of the *Logic* by Gwendoline Jarczyk and Pierre-Jean Labarrière, which translates *Entstehen* and *Vergehen* as *surgir* and *disparaître*. Lastly, in suggesting that “becoming evolves as emergence and departure”, Rosen’s analysis of becoming, which is incredibly brief, already goes beyond itself to *Dasein*, the subsequent moment. See Rosen, 126.

accessible example to illustrate this is found in Book XI of Augustine's *Confessions*, where we encounter him wrestling with defining time:

What, then, is time? If no one asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to someone who asks me, I do not know. I can state with confidence, however, that this much I do know: if nothing passed away there would be no past time; if there was nothing still on its way there would be no future time; and if nothing existed, there would be no present time.⁵⁶

What is remarkable about Augustine's reflection is that time is the concept we derive from the coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be of things. In terms of Hegel's system, this is significant because all being is becoming. And since if there is one side of becoming, there must be the other, then underlying our basic grasp of the concept of time is an implicit adherence to the categorical structure of becoming as Hegel develops it.⁵⁷

Furthermore, the significance of the present tense of time seems to be derivative because, as Augustine also notes, if the only time-tense was that of the present, time would be the eternal. This poses an interesting philosophical challenge: the past is that which is no longer and the future is that which is not yet, so it would seem that only the present *is*. Consequently, if, as we have argued, time is becoming, then how might we understand eternity, or its counterpart temporality? Eternity is a classical philosophical notion and the philosophical relevance of temporality is fully realized in existential philosophies of finitude after Hegel. In the following section we will review what Hegel says in the Introduction to the *Naturphilosophie* about both eternity and temporality in order to situate their conceptions with respect to the view of time as becoming. This addresses the apparent philosophical challenge raised by Augustine's reflection because for Hegel, as we have shown, being is becoming, which means that the being of the present does not undermine time as becoming—even the present must be a dynamic process.

⁵⁶ Augustine, *The Confessions*, trans. Maria Boulding (New York: Vintage Books, 1997), 256.

⁵⁷ It should be noted that Hegel only marginally refers to Augustine in a few passages of his *Lectures on Medieval and Modern Philosophy*.

1.3.2. Eternity and Temporality

The terms eternity and temporality immediately juxtapose classical Western metaphysics and contemporary anthropologically oriented philosophies of finitude. Both of these traditions come together in Hegel's whole system of philosophy in more ways than can be explored here. What concerns us is how eternity and temporality function as possible interpretations of the account of time from the 1830 *Naturphilosophie*, and whether or not time could be conceived as eternity, temporality, or both. One thing that is immediately certain, however, is that Hegel by no means opposes eternity and temporality on the metaphysical grounds of something being dependently in time or independent of time, since this would make him some variation of a Platonist and also an affirmer of a dualism of worlds.

For common understanding, what is temporal is subject to change and what is eternal does not change. Classically conceived, both God and truth are linked with the eternal, and the expectation that they be universally unchanging. For example, Spinoza's monistic system of *The Ethics* defines eternity as such:

Existence itself insofar as it is conceived as necessarily following solely from the definition of an eternal thing... For such existence is conceived as an eternal truth, just as is the essence of the thing, and therefore cannot be explicated through duration or time, even if duration be conceived as without beginning and end.⁵⁸

In other words, God has an eternal existence as eternal truth, which means that God, God's existence, and truth are neither inside nor subject to the temporal realm of change. In a preliminary sense, despite Spinoza's monism, this approach affords a kind of dualism between

⁵⁸ Baruch Spinoza, *The Ethics*, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1992), 31-32.

the existence of eternal things and the finitude of temporal things, or, at the very least a comparison between the two, as, for example, we see in Boethius' reflections on eternity.⁵⁹

A similarly Spinozistic claim about eternity, existence or being, and time is advanced by Hegel's contemporary F.W.J. Schelling in the 1801 *Presentation of My System of Philosophy*.⁶⁰ Schelling begins this work advocating for the law of identity, $A=A$, as the unconditioned and indifferent ground of being: "*for all being [Seyn] (because it is comprehended within reason) is the law of identity [das Gesetz der Identität].*"⁶¹ According to Schelling, $A=A$ is an eternal truth, a truth irrespective of time (here understood as the domain of the finite and changeable). He explains, "The being [Seyn] of absolute identity is an eternal truth, since the truth of its being is equivalent to the truth of the proposition $A=A$."⁶² Thus, just as Spinoza connects the being or existence of an eternal truth with the separation from the time proper to the being of the unchanging, so too does Schelling in his Identity Philosophy.

Contrary to the examples of Spinoza and Schelling, Hegel uniquely rules out the idea that eternity is somehow an outside of time. "The notion of eternity [*Ewigkeit*]," he writes, "must not be grasped negatively as abstraction from time, as existing, as it were, outside of time; nor in a sense which makes eternity come *after* time, for this would turn eternity into futurity, one of the

⁵⁹ "Eternity is possession of life, a possession simultaneously entire and perfect, which has no end. This becomes clear in a more transparent way from a comparison with temporal things. For whatever exists in time proceeds as a present thing from the things that have happened into the things that are going to happen, and there is nothing that has been established in time that is able to embrace the entire space of its own life at one and the same time." Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. Joel C. Relihan (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2001), 144-145.

⁶⁰ Schelling's identity philosophy is particularly interesting for understanding Hegel's original philosophical position as initially developed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and it is largely this period of Schelling's thought that we contend Hegel's own system is in explicit opposition against. Concerning the relation between Hegel and Schelling, see Franck Fishbach (1999). Moreover, the choice of comparing Hegel's views to Schelling's identity philosophy is far from arbitrary. For example, in defending against the charge that Hegel's philosophy is metaphysically idealist, and thereby a form of identity philosophy, William Maker (1998) confirms our contention that Hegel's *Naturphilosophie* opposes the Schellingian species of identity philosophy.

⁶¹ F.W.J. Schelling, "Presentation of My System of Philosophy," trans. Michael G. Vater, *The Philosophical Forum* 32, no. 4 (Winter 2001), 350. Hereafter cited as Schelling (1801).

⁶² Schelling (1801), 352.

moments of time.”⁶³ In other words, eternity is neither a moment of time nor outside of time. But what, then, is eternity, for Hegel?

A clear and distinct definition of eternity is advanced in the additions to the Introduction of the *Naturphilosophie*. Commenting on the metaphysical question of the eternity of the world, Hegel relates time and eternity. He says, “eternity is not before or after time, nor before the creation of the world, nor when it perishes; rather is eternity the absolute present [*absolute Gegenwart*], the Now [*das Jetzt*], without before and after.”⁶⁴ This passage contains at least three claims about the nature of eternity: (i) as already noted, eternity is not a dimensional moment of time; (ii) eternity is not transcendent because it is neither something existing before there was the time of the temporal world of change nor something eschatological; and (iii) eternity is the absolute present ‘now’. Hegel articulates this last point clearly in §259A: “In the positive meaning of time, it can be said that only the Present *is*, that Before and After are not. But the concrete Present is the result of the Past and is pregnant with the Future. The true Present, therefore, is eternity.”⁶⁵ Not only does this correlate time as eternity with a totality of the present, but it also illustrates two different senses of Hegel’s use of the ‘now’. There is the ‘now’ that is a point in time with a before and an after, and such a ‘now’ is *finite* because it is limited by its before and after. This is, in part, one of Hegel’s conceptualizations of the temporal; it is the ‘now’ that serially becomes the ‘not-now’ in a sequence of instances. And, on the other hand, there is the ‘now’ of the ‘true present’, which Hegel also sees in terms of the activity of the eternally creating absolute Idea.⁶⁶

⁶³ PN §258R, 35; W9, 50.

⁶⁴ PN §247A, 15; W9, 26.

⁶⁵ PN §259A, 39; W9, 55.

⁶⁶ PN §247A, 15; W9, 26.

Karl Löwith interprets Hegel's connection of eternity with the truly present 'now' as advocating that eternity is immanent to time.⁶⁷ Given that Hegel rules out any possibility for a transcendent eternity, this appears to be an accurate reading. Eternity, however, cannot be the final word on what the nature of time is for Hegel *tout court* because time is an ontological concept insofar as it concerns what *is*, and all being is becoming, which means that everything that *is* is involved in process. So the idea of time as strictly the unchanging is problematic, since it fails to account for the time of the temporally changing. Hence, if eternity has independence from the temporal, then what conception of time do we need to account for temporal change, i.e., the fact of alteration in finite things? In other words, if eternity is immanent to time, then not only is eternity a part of a more overarching concept of time, but the question remains: what other concept than eternity do we need to exhaustively comprehend time? The complimentary concept to eternity is temporality, which is already indicated in Hegel's view of the true present with respect to the finite present.

For Hegel, finitude and temporality are intimately connected. While the true present is the eternal 'now' that includes the past and future within it, the finite present is the 'now' that is defined by a past and future that are *not*.⁶⁸ So, when we are thinking of a time with a before and an after, then we are thinking of the temporal [*Zeitlich*] and the finite. The relevance of the temporal to Nature is due to the applicability that categories of the finite have to Nature, especially *Dasein*. A survey of Hegel's analysis of something and other, both of which are

⁶⁷ "The individual, finite now is nevertheless only a point in time which 'stands opposed' to the infinite whole of time, which is an eternal circle. In the dialectical movement of time, in which the future becomes the past, while the present, always passing, presses onward to the future, the different aspects of time are reduced to a perpetual present, which comprehends within itself both past and future. The true present is the eternity which is immanent in time." Karl Löwith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, trans. David E. Green (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), 207.

⁶⁸ "The *finite* present is the *Now* fixed as *being* and distinguished as the concrete unity, and hence as the affirmative, from what is *negative*, from the abstract moments of past and future." PN §259R, 37; W9, 52.

Logical moments of the category of *Dasein*, from the *Encyclopedia Logic* will highlight this point on a conceptual level, and provide a useful heuristic for his conception of finitude.⁶⁹

In terms of the place of *Dasein* in the unfolding of Logic, *Dasein* follows becoming because it is implicit in the thought of becoming that there is something that becomes.⁷⁰ *Dasein* is, then, what has become [*geworden zu sein*]. As being that is *there*, *Dasein* is something [*Etwas*], and as the result of becoming, *Dasein* includes both the form of being and its opposite—the *not*. Hence, *Dasein* is defined both in terms of what it *is* and what it *is not*; Hegel labels each of these qualitative aspects as reality and negation.⁷¹ The idea, here, is that if the something is both what it is and what it is not, then the something requires otherness [*Andersein*] to be determinate. In other words, what the something is in itself remains indeterminate without its being-for-another, just as pure being in itself was shown to be an utter indeterminacy. Here, it is essential that this otherness not be external to the something.

The manifest necessity for being-for-another for determining the something gives rise to the idea of an inherent limit [*Grenze*] in *Dasein*. All determinate ‘things’ have qualitatively inhering limits that negatively constitute their being: “Something only is what it is *within* its limit and *by virtue* of its limit.”⁷² In attempting to determine what the something is, we discover that a positive thought of the being of something is only comprehensible by an appeal to the other of the something, and these are both inherently and indifferently constitutive of *Dasein*. However,

⁶⁹ A brief summary is acceptable because in §90, Hegel states, “The categories that develop in respect of being-there [*Dasein*] only need to be indicated in a summary way.” EL §90, 146; W8, 195.

⁷⁰ “Becoming is the vanishing of being into nothing, and of nothing into being, and the vanishing of being and nothing in general; but at the same time it rests on their being distinct. It therefore contradicts itself in itself, because what it unites within itself is self-opposed; but such a union destroys itself. This result is a vanishedness, but it is not *nothing*; as such, it would be only a relapse into one of the already sublated determinations and not the result of nothing *and of being*. It is the unity of being and nothing that has become quiescent simplicity. But this quiescent simplicity is *being*, yet no longer for itself but as determination of the whole. Becoming, as transition into the unity of being and nothing, a unity which is as existent or has the shape of the one-sided *immediate* unity of these moments, is *existence* [*Dasein*].” SL, 81; W5, 113.

⁷¹ EL §91, 147; W8, 196.

⁷² EL §92A, 148; W8, 197.

this is immediately problematic: when we think about what the something is, then we must make reference to the other, but this other is equally a something, so, as Hegel explains, “Something becomes an other, but the other is itself a something, so it likewise becomes an other, and so on *ad infinitum*.”⁷³ Hegel calls this process *ad infinitum* the bad [*schlecht*] infinite.

The idea of the bad infinite helps us to interpret the finite present in terms of temporality, especially as contrasted to eternity, and to grasp the relevance of finitude to Nature. In addition to repeatedly characterizing Nature as the realm of the finite in the Remarks to §258 and §259, Hegel claims that Nature is an “*unresolved contradiction*” in the Introduction.⁷⁴ This means that the finite ‘now’ belongs to Nature and, as such, the ‘now’ is both exclusive and continuous, which means the ‘now’ of the finite that Hegel states belongs to Nature is a bad infinite—an *unresolved* contradiction.⁷⁵ Nature is the realm of changing, finite things, and their being is a temporal process: “It is because things are finite that they are in time; it is not because they are in time that they perish; on the contrary, things themselves are the temporal, and to be so is their objective determination.”⁷⁶ Thus, thinking of time as the temporal *qua* Nature leads us to an ontological conclusion about the being of natural things, which are finite, since they do not remain what they are: “All finite things are temporal, because sooner or later they are subject to change [*Veränderung*].”⁷⁷ However, insofar as we are now arriving at an ontological claim concerning time, a speculative solution to the relevance of eternity and temporality of time awaits.

⁷³ EL §93, 149; W8, 198.

⁷⁴ PN §248R, 17; W9, 28.

⁷⁵ In the *Science of Logic*, an example Hegel employs to illustrate the bad infinite is the straight line, which is composed of points and extends in either direction *ad infinitum*. What is interesting about this example is that it is spatial. SL, 119; W5, 164.

⁷⁶ PN §258A, 36; W9, 50.

⁷⁷ PN §258A, 36; W9, 50.

If we remain committed to only thinking of time in terms of either eternity or temporality, rather than according to a conceptual category that is inclusive of both, then we are committed to a contradiction and subject to Hegel's ceaseless critique of the Understanding [*Verstand*], which holds fast to oppositional dualisms. The temporal has its place, especially in terms of Nature, and so too does the ahistorically non-finite, since not all things are subject to natural change, like the truth of the Idea, for example: "Only the natural," Hegel comments, "is subject to time in so far as it is finite; the True, on the other hand, the Idea, Spirit, is *eternal*."⁷⁸ But, in order to correctly ontologize time, we need to set aside the respective one-sidedness afforded by the conceptions of temporality and eternity and pursue a more systematically reconciling notion. Therefore, while it is perfectly correct to say that the conceptualizations of time advanced in the Introduction to the *Naturphilosophie* have their respective place in Hegel's system of philosophy, they do not help us comprehend time as such in a systematically and ontologically significant way, especially in terms of the account of time from the contents of the *Naturphilosophie*. Regardless of the fact that it is clear that Nature is the realm of the finite as the Idea as *Dasein*—and determinate things understood according to the category of Quality are finite—when Hegel conceptualizes time as becoming in §258 we must respect the fact that becoming is *not* exclusively finite, just as it is neither exclusively either coming-to-be or passing-away. Therefore, by pursuing time *qua* becoming, we overcome the dualism of time as either the temporal or the eternal and can approach what time is *as such* for the system at large.

1.3.3. Time as Becoming

According to the *Science of Logic*, the conceptual comprehension of becoming achieves the thought of movement in *attempting* to think being/nothing. The movement underlying the

⁷⁸ PN §258R, 35; W9, 49-50.

concept of becoming is the result of ‘being passing over into nothing’ and ‘nothing passing over into being’, and this movement is only actualized in becoming as the unity of the difference of coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be, *Entstehen* and *Vergehen*, of becoming as such. Therefore, despite the need to begin Logic with something indeterminate and presuppositionless, the truly concrete conceptual beginning of Logic is the concept of becoming, which, when thought-over further, engenders the idea of something which becomes, namely a determinate something—*Dasein*.

Furthermore, it is really only once thought arrives at becoming that movement is introduced into the development of Logic. There is no ground to suspect that Hegel presupposes movement as a transcendental condition for his Logical enterprise. And, moreover, there is no evidence that indeterminate being or indeterminate nothing individually make movement possible for thought such that Logic can have transitions at all.

Lastly, Hegel’s debt to Heraclitus on the significance of the concept of becoming is noteworthy because, in his Lectures on Heraclitus, Hegel states, “there is no proposition of Heraclitus which I have not adopted in my Logic.”⁷⁹ Hegel attributes the significance of becoming as the first concrete thought to Heraclitus, and he repeats the same argument that appears at the opening of the *Logic* in qualifying the speculative importance of the philosophy of Heraclitus.⁸⁰ All of this contributes to the significance for the concept of becoming for Hegel’s philosophy at large, since it founds the first concretely true thought for Logic and appears again in the determination of the concept of Nature.

⁷⁹ LHP I, 279; W18, 320.

⁸⁰ “This philosophy is thus not one past and gone; its principle is essential, and is to be found in the beginning of my Logic, immediately after Being and Nothing. The recognition of the fact that Being and non-being are abstractions devoid of truth, that the first truth is to be found in Becoming, forms a great advance.” LHP I, 283; W18, 325.

When we investigate into the concept of Nature and attempt to concretely determine it, we quickly discover that there is a dynamic aspect to Nature itself, just as there is with the rational agency of thought *pace* Logic. In Logic, the fact of a dynamic and real character of movement—and eventually transition, change, alteration, and so on—is founded upon how thought concretely begins in and with becoming. The arrival at a foundational conceptual structure for accounting for the dynamism of Nature exists in Hegel’s *Naturphilosophie* in his conceptualization of time, which is, arguably, presented in both qualitative and quantitative modes. Qualitatively, time is conceptualized as becoming, and in this way it is fully appropriate to speak of the ontology of time. Quantitatively, on the other hand, time is a concept employed to account for the quantification of change, wherein time plays a more conceptually derivative role to matter and motion. To generalize, the ontology of time is concerned with movement, *Bewegung*, and the quantification of movement is interested in change or alteration, *Veränderung*. Therefore, when attempting to conceive Hegel’s conception of time as becoming in the *Naturphilosophie*, we must recognize that the flow of time, e.g., its *movement*, is not the same as the quantification of intervallic changes; this follows from the difference between *Bewegung* and *Veränderung*.⁸¹

Additionally, the difference between *Werden* and *Veränderung* is that alteration implies that something becomes something else and that the determinative difference between these two somethings constitutes their finitude. Conceptually, there is no limitation in becoming, i.e., it is

⁸¹ *Bewegung* is its own conceptual category in the *Naturphilosophie* as motion. In the *Logic*, *Bewegung* is a feature of the category of becoming. In Nature there is not motion without its counterpart, matter, wherein we account for change. Change is a feature of (temporal) processes that demonstrably exhibit alterations in periods or intervals. Such changes are largely witnessed as changes in property determinations or relationships. For example, individuals model intervallic change between childhood and adulthood, generally conceived, since the child-become-adult is qualitatively more intellectually developed and quantitatively different in physical size. These types of common, observable changes lead us to inquire into the nature of time, which is *presupposed* by the fact of change. Because the *Naturphilosophie* is neither about eternity nor temporality, but *change*, the characterization of time that it advances is significant for how we conceive of both change and time, broadly construed. However, this does not limit the broader application of an ontology of time as becoming.

presumptuous to say that all becoming is finite or temporal, and any reading of the opening content of the Doctrine of Being from the *Science of Logic* should make this abundantly clear. Therefore, since not all becoming is finite, this mode of becoming has no primacy in accurately describing the concept of becoming as a complex unity. There must, then, be a form of becoming that is *non*-finite and adequate to ahistorical truth. However, an account of this latter becoming cannot be derived only from Nature, which is the realm of the external, continuous, discrete, and, as a ceaseless contradiction, the bad infinite. That said, an ontological approach to the conceptualization of time in the *Naturphilosophie* does indicate the conceptual necessity of a rich view of becoming that is not restrictively finite, i.e., an infinite becoming.

Lastly, the problems with the dyadic relation between temporality and eternity are overcome in the idea of becoming because temporality is necessarily encapsulated in the idea of finite process as temporal becoming, and, the eternity of the unchanging belongs to a non-finite becoming. But in order to give this latter notion its due, it must be situated within the domain of Hegel's views on subjectivity, wherein which the concept of becoming and time play a mutually ontologically significant role.⁸² Unfortunately, the *Naturphilosophie* is not the systematic place to accomplish this task. Fortunately, though, Hegel does articulate a very specific connection between time and subjectivity in §258R of the *Naturphilosophie*. Developing that connection will complete the ontological investigation of time in the second volume of the *Encyclopedia* and push us beyond to *Geist*, the third volume and third moment of the system at large.

1.4. Subjectivity and Time

In §258, Hegel makes the claim that time is *das angeschaute Werden*, which he explains as 'that being which, inasmuch as it *is*, is *not*, and inasmuch as it is *not*, *is*'. We know from

⁸² In other words, we must first provide an account of subjectivity as developed in the Subjective Logic, and then situate the role of becoming therein. A later chapter will rise to this challenge.

Hegel's *Logic* both that being is becoming, since this is first true thought marking the work's beginning, and that becoming is that unity of the 'is' and 'is-not' as the unity of coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be, for which Hegel is largely in debt to Heraclitus.

In the ensuing Remark to §258, oddly enough, we do not get an explanation for the qualifier of becoming as 'intuited', and Hegel passes over the famous Kantian notion of time as a pure form of intuition extremely briefly.⁸³ This should not surprise us, since the conceptualization of intuition belongs to a later systematic moment. Yet, what is surprising is how, in §258R, Hegel suggests a relation between subjectivity and time: "Time is the same principle as the I=I of pure self-consciousness, but this principle, or the simple Notion, still in its uttermost externality and abstraction—as intuited mere *Becoming*, pure being-within-self [*Insichsein*] as sheer coming-out-of-self [*Außersichkommen*]."⁸⁴ Since the context of this passage is the determination of the concept of Nature, there is a sense in which such a suggestion *appears* out of place. However, we interpret both the purpose and significance of Hegel's comments on the subjectivity and time relation to be advocating that the conceptualization of time takes us beyond the merely quantifiable realm of natural externality. This follows from his employment of the concept of becoming for comprehending the domain of Nature and his placing subjectivity, here as the pure I=I, in the field of Nature, which is the realm of estranged *Geist*.

We propose that the subjectivity and time connection can be explained by identifying the 'principle' that time and pure self-consciousness are claimed to share. There are three approaches to explaining the shared principle: (i) remarks made by Hegel in his lectures on Heraclitus; (ii) the highly original Hegelian conception of the true infinite; and (iii) the Logical category of

⁸³ This marks another correspondence with Hegel and Heraclitus insofar as Hegel adopts the idea of time as becoming that is *there*, sensuously. We will address the sensuous and intuitive aspect in the following chapter. See, LHP I, 286-287; W18, 329-330.

⁸⁴ PN §258R, 35; W9, 49.

Fürsichsein, being-for-itself. In the following, we will show how they help us grasp the subjectivity and time relation by arriving at the same conclusion: the principle that subjectivity and time share is negativity, a conception at the core of Hegel's dialectical and speculative philosophy.⁸⁵

In tracing the philosophical lineage of the concept of becoming for Hegel, one must go back to Heraclitus. In terms of an advance in Greek philosophy, Hegel speaks highly of Heraclitus and credits him with developing a speculative philosophy that moves beyond the realm of abstract understanding, which maintains opposites as independent. Rather than thinking of time or becoming in terms of an either/or, it ought to be conceived in terms of a both/and, as Hegel explains, "It is not that time *is* or *is not*, for time *is* non-being immediately in Being and Being immediately in non-being: it is the transition out of Being into non-being, the abstract Notion, but in an objective form, i.e., in so far as a it is for us."⁸⁶ In other words, time as becoming overcomes the insufficiency of thinking of time merely as either what *is* or *is not*. The idea is that becoming is a concept that includes two dynamic terms, mainly *for us* who think the concept over.

To summarize, as becoming, time is a concept whose self-relation includes a difference—*it is what it is not, and is not what it is*—and this is the fundamental idea underlying *Encyclopedia* §258: there is an inherent negativity to becoming, to time, and to the pure self as I=I. When lecturing on Heraclitus, Hegel describes becoming as a "universal principle" that best captures the idea of the unity of being and non-being, and he suggests that the significance of this principle is its inherent negativity.⁸⁷ Although Hegel does describe becoming as a principle, this

⁸⁵ In later chapters, we will prioritize and prefer the more robust notion of self-differentiation, which is fully consistent with our account here.

⁸⁶ LHP I, 287; W18, 329.

⁸⁷ LHP I, 283-284; W18, 325.

alone cannot be the idea linking time and the I=I without developing how an immanent and inhering negativity is proper to becoming as such.

The idea of the self-relational difference of the concept of becoming develops the element of inhering negativity that is proper to it, and, in part, constitutes the fact that becoming, like time, is a dynamic process. When we extend this analysis to time in the *Naturphilosophie*, there is a tendency to want to characterize time as an instance of the bad infinite, i.e., of time as a restlessly continuing series of ‘nows’. However, if time was merely the bad infinite, then there could be no postulated relation between subjectivity and time at all because the ‘I’ is universal, uniting numerous singulars and individuals, whereas the bad infinite is simply the endless repetition of disjunctive singularities. Rather than this conception of the bad infinite, what is needed is a more speculative way of conceiving the infinite, which Hegel accomplishes in his characteristic conception of the true infinite.

The endless sequence of the bad infinite is rooted in a common approach to the infinite that treats it as the opposite of the finite. The problematic consequence of this view, however, is that the infinite is determinately defined in opposition to the finite, so the finite is essentially the restriction of the infinite, which contradicts what is expected from the infinitude of the infinite, namely that it not be limited by anything *other than itself*.⁸⁸ What is needed to comprehend the infinite truly, then, is a way to conceive the finite and infinite together such that the oppositional relation entertained among them is overcome; rising to this task is precisely one of the characterizations Hegel gives of the task of philosophy.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ “The falsification that the understanding perpetrates with respect to the finite and the infinite, of holding their reciprocal reference fixed as qualitative differentiation, of maintaining that their determination is separate, indeed, absolutely separate, comes from forgetting what for the understanding itself is the concept of these moments.” SL, 116; W5, 160.

⁸⁹ EL §94A, 150; W8, 200.

Hegel's idea of the true infinite is the process of becoming of the infinite and finite. Like the category of becoming itself, the true infinite is a concept meant to capture the dynamism of process, rather than a static unity:

This determination of the true infinite cannot be captured in the already criticized formula of a unity of the finite and the infinite; unity is abstract, motionless self-sameness, and the moments are likewise unmoved beings. But, like both its moments, the infinite is rather essentially only as becoming, though a becoming now further determined in its moments. Becoming has for its determinations, first, abstract being and nothing; as alteration [*Veränderung*], it has existence, something and other; now as infinite, it has finite and infinite, these two themselves as in becoming.⁹⁰

Thus, rather than thinking of the infinite as one side of a coin, where the finite is on the other, the true infinite expresses a dynamic self-relational concept with an inhering negativity, since the finite is a moment of the true infinite. In other words, it is being that determines itself negatively with respect to itself according to its two moments; the same can be said both of the true infinite and becoming.

Now the question is how this conception of the infinite informs the subjectivity-time relation. According to Hegel's *Logic*, the idea of the true infinite establishes the new qualitative conception of being-for-itself [*Fürsichsein*]. This is particularly significant because the 'I' is an example of *Fürsichsein*. Hegel explains:

The most familiar example of being-for-itself is the 'I'... When we say 'I', that is the expression of the infinite self-relation that is at the same time negative. It may be said that man distinguishes himself from the animals, and so from nature generally, because knows himself as 'I'; what this says, at the same time, is that natural things never attain to free being-for-oneself, but, being restricted to being-there, are always just being-for-another [*Sein-für-Anderes*].⁹¹

First, while it is true that Hegel does not refer to *Fürsichsein* when relating the pure-self and time in §258, but rather to *Insichsein*, in §257 time is described as the negative that is *for itself*.

⁹⁰ SL, 118; W5, 163-164.

⁹¹ EL §96A, 153; W8, 203-204.

Second, the interpretative relevance of *Fürsichsein* follows from the evolution of the insights of the true infinite to conceiving becoming and time.⁹² Third, the application of the category of *Fürsichsein* does expose the relational principle at stake: both time and the pure self, the self-relating 'I', are characterized in terms of dynamic self-relational difference, not static self-sameness. Consequently, if time and subjectivity share a relation, and it is evident that they *do* share a very significant one, then there must be something non-natural about time, since there is something non-natural about the 'I'. From the level of Hegel's system itself, this is a suggestion of the spiritual significance of time, so we should expect confirmation in his philosophy of *Geist*.

1.5. From Nature to *Geist*

Subjectivity and time, when ontologically comprehended as the fundamental processes of becoming that they are, are similar in being neither exclusively finite and temporal, just as not all becoming is finite. Granted that all being is becoming, if subjectivity *is*, then subjectivity can only be in *becoming* objective, i.e., in determining itself. Unlike other philosophers and philosophies before Hegel, his system aims at the speculative reconciliation of terms like subjectivity and objectivity, rather than asserting their respective independence. To comprehend how they can be conceived together requires showing how they are not separated by an unbreakable divide, but that they can become the other of themselves and return to themselves in a speculative act of homecoming.

For Hegel to describe time in terms of becoming, we believe, indicates the significance of a concept of time for Hegel in such a way that takes us beyond the realm of Nature, i.e., beyond the realm of indifferent quantitative continuity to the philosophical sphere of meaningful

⁹² It should also be noted that the interpretative relevance of *Fürsichsein* is very briefly proposed by Halper. See Edward C. Halper, "Hegel's Criticism of Newton," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel and Nineteenth-Century Philosophy*, 311-327, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 326-327.

concepts and, ultimately, *Geist*. That time in the *Naturphilosophie* is largely concerned with a quantitative conception is fair, and it is even echoed in the *Science of Logic*'s account of the category of Quantity. But we want to show how time is a concept of primal systematic importance by demonstrating how the content of the material on time from the *Naturphilosophie* provides us with preliminary grounds for going beyond strictly quantitative and finite determinations on to the qualitative realm of the ontological and speculative. Hegel's employment of the language of *Werden* to conceptualize time is one such departure; another is his qualification of time as *intuited* becoming, the explanation of which takes us beyond Nature to *Geist*; and yet another is how time is not restrictively representative of the bad infinite. So, how are we to interpret Hegel's claim that time is intuited becoming [*das angeschaute Werden*]? Answering this question requires that we understand what Hegel understands by intuition [*Anschauung*], which is treated in the third installment of the mature *Encyclopedia*. It is to this concluding volume of the *Encyclopedia* that we shall turn in the following chapter.

Chapter 2: Intuition, Time, and Language in the 1830 *Geistesphilosophie*

In the previous chapter, we demonstrated that Hegel ontologically conceives of time as becoming. We further established that time is connected to how he conceives subjectivity, and indicated that an account of intuition is needed to understand how it is that time can be intuited becoming. Developing upon those theses, the following chapter has two primary goals. The first is to explain what it means when Hegel states that time is intuited becoming, as he does in the *Naturphilosophie*, by exploring Hegel's account of intuition from the third installment of the *Encyclopedia*. This goal is accomplished by an exposition of Hegel's own theory of intuition, and by also showing how it differs from Kant's, which Hegel accuses of constituting a subjective idealism.

Moreover, as we will argue, Hegel's views on time and intuition are grounded within the structure of a certain approach to theorizing about subjectivity, which, in the third installment of the *Encyclopedia* is conceptualized as *Geist*. While this will complete the investigation began in the previous chapter, it will raise new questions concerning the significance of language because intuition has a pivotal place in Hegel's reflections on language and subjectivity, which follow directly from the content of the argument on the nature of intuition. Hence, the second goal of this chapter is to argue for the importance of language with respect to time *qua* subjectivity in terms of the relationship between intuition and language as both speech and writing. While, for Hegel, speech is the mode of language in which subjectivity determines itself objectively through an intuitive spoken form, writing is essential to the objectivity of history through the practice of historiography, and cultivates the ground for a non-finite approach to the concept of time as becoming. Overall, this chapter aims to develop the thread in Hegel's *Encyclopedia* from time to language via Hegel's view of intuition. We conclude this chapter with the claim that a rich

account of determining the being of the subjective leads us to raise the question of the significance of the Hegelian conception of history.

2.1. *Geist*

The transition from the second to the third volume of Hegel's *Encyclopedia* articulates the systematic movement from Nature to *Geist*.⁹³ This third installment, *Die Philosophie des Geistes*, completes Hegel's triadic system.⁹⁴ Because it deals with the manifold of the meaningful human world in multiple ways, its content is incredibly diversified, unfolding in three primary sections, treating Subjective, Objective, and Absolute *Geist* respectively. Objective *Geist* largely covers the same ground as Hegel's independent *Philosophy of Right*, and Absolute *Geist* includes the topics of religion, art, and philosophy, which have received further, substantial treatment in Hegel's many lectures. Since it is only Subjective *Geist* that concerns us here, a brief reflection on how we arrive at the *Geistesphilosophie* and its project will help with situating our own specific investigations.

The *Geistesphilosophie* is about the concept of *Geist*, which Hegel characterizes as being *prior* to Nature. In §381, Hegel states, "*For us [für uns] Geist has nature as its presupposition [Voraussetzung], though Geist is the truth of nature, and is thus absolutely first with respect to*

⁹³ Mind is the common English translation of *Geist* for *Die Philosophie des Geistes*, but *Geist* can also be translated as Spirit, e.g., Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. While we generally respect this approach, translating *Geist* as either Mind or Spirit is not always helpful, especially since in the Subjective *Geist* sections we encounter *Geist* as soul, consciousness, and intelligence. Rather than using a substantive, Terry Pinkard suggests translating *Geist* as 'mindedness', but because this term is in line with a deflationary, non-metaphysical reading of Hegel's philosophy, we do not think it is the appropriate translation. Therefore, insofar as we refer to the *Geist* of the third volume of the *Encyclopedia*, we will retain the German word, *including* when quoting from the Inwood translation, which renders *Geist* as a 'mind'. All citations from Michael Inwood's revised translation of Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind* (2007) will be modified to employ *Geist*. Ultimately, in employing the term *Geist* we intend for the reader to recognize that it includes both the English terms 'mind' and 'Spirit'. Lastly, there will be moments where we refer to 'mind' in the common, Cartesian sense, but this will be apparent to the reader.

⁹⁴ In keeping with our way of referring to Hegel's *Encyclopedia* established in the first chapter, we will refer to Hegel's *Philosophie des Geistes* as his *Geistesphilosophie*.

it.”⁹⁵ While this assertion appears in the 1830 edition of the *Encyclopedia*, it is a view Hegel held at least as early as the 1808 *Philosophische Encyclopaedia für die Oberklasse*.⁹⁶ Hence, the meaning of the significance of *Geist* as both the presupposition and the truth of Nature plays an important role in comprehending the relationship between *Geist* and Nature in Hegel’s philosophy generally.

To summarize the presupposition that Hegel is articulating: the concept of Nature makes sense to us *only* because there is a meaningful, human sphere, as defined by everything included in the concept of *Geist*, which the *Geistesphilosophie* developmentally explores. Hence, Hegel’s claim about the priority of *Geist* depends on a distinction between the philosopher-subject engaging with the text and the object of the content of the work’s argument, which expresses an aspect of Hegel’s distinctive approach to philosophizing about subjectivity.

In emphasizing how Nature presupposes *Geist für uns*, Gilles Marmasse claims that Hegel is drawing upon a distinction between what is ‘for us’ and what is ‘in and for itself’, a distinction that should be familiar to any reader of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.⁹⁷ However, Michael Inwood comments that it is not clear whether or not the *für uns* refers to us as philosophers or human beings in general.⁹⁸ Because the *Encyclopedia* is a manual of philosophical science, it is, in our view, addressed to philosophers, so Marmasse has the preferable interpretation in viewing the *für uns* as a reference to philosopher-subjects.

A third possible interpretation of the role of Hegel’s introductory comments is proposed by Angelica Nuzzo who argues that the Introduction to the *Geistesphilosophie* is already

⁹⁵ PM §381, 9; W10, 17.

⁹⁶ PP, 150; W4, 43.

⁹⁷ Gilles Marmasse, *Penser le réel: Hegel, la nature et l’esprit* (Paris: Éditions Kimé, 2008), 384. Hereafter cited as Marmasse (2008).

⁹⁸ Michael Inwood, *A Commentary on Hegel’s Philosophy of Mind* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), 291. Hereafter cited as Inwood.

engaged in the argumentation of the work proper.⁹⁹ Nuzzo's claim implies that the *für uns* does not refer to anyone other than the student of Hegel's *Encyclopedia* itself, since the Introduction would be engaged in argumentation, rather than introducing.¹⁰⁰ The troublesome issue with this reading is that the priority of *Geist* to Nature remains to be proven and justified by the contents following the Introduction. Thus, Nuzzo's reading problematizes the purposes of the Introduction with the content of the argumentation of the work itself, which means assuming what needs to be proven by the substance of the *Geistesphilosophie* itself. Both Marmasse and Inwood agree that the main underlying issue of §381 is that the priority of *Geist* to Nature must be philosophically justified, and that this justification does not fully unfold in the Introduction. Thus, following Marmasse and Inwood, far from making an argument in the Introduction for the priority of *Geist* to Nature, Hegel is simply asserting *für uns* what the result, or *truth*, of the *Encyclopedia's* consideration of *Geist* will be.

Marmasse's reading of §381 is further significant for a number of reasons: he highlights the 'for us' and 'in and for itself' distinction (*i*) to emphasize the difficulty of the beginning of the *Geistesphilosophie*, (*ii*) to explain the transition to Nature in general, and (*iii*) to challenge the view that the *Geistesphilosophie* unfolds as a series of successive moments that are fixed in

⁹⁹ Nuzzo's reading draws upon a comparison of Erdmann's text of Hegel's 1827-28 lectures on *Geist* wherein the contents of the Introduction favor the content of the Anthropology. This is not entirely surprising as Hegel lectured more and more on Anthropology in the later years of his career and the recent completion of his *Gesammelte Werke* was finalized with an edition of lectures on Anthropology. That said, Nuzzo's reading is generally directed toward demonstrating the importance of the soul-body relation for interpreting the relation of Nature and *Geist*, so her argument ought to be viewed within that framework: "One can conclude that in the Erdmann *Nachschrift* Hegel uses the anthropological presentation of *Geist* to frame the general problem of spirit as such—*pars pro toto* as we have seen. The 'Anthropology' (and the soul/body problem with which this discipline begins) is not simply the first sphere of a philosophy of subjective spirit but serves Hegel to channel in, by way of introduction, the broader problem of spirit's relation to nature." Angelica Nuzzo, "Anthropology, *Geist*, and the Soul-Body Relation: The Systematic Beginning of Hegel's *Philosophy of Spirit*", in *Essays on Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, ed. David S. Stern, 1-17 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 5.

¹⁰⁰ We do not mean to say that Hegel's Introductions have no argumentative structure. Rather, claims that are asserted in Introductions are proposed in advance of the justifications that follows in the content of the text itself. The priority of *Geist* to Nature is one instance of this. Hence, it is frequently the case that understanding Hegel's introductions is heavily dependent on the content of the texts that they introduce.

their order of unfolding.¹⁰¹ While we acknowledge the difficulty of transitions and beginnings in Hegel's philosophy in general, we hold that the challenge to the view of a successive series of moments of *Geist* in the *Encyclopedia* is very important, both with respect to our own conclusions about time and Hegel's critique of a psychology of faculties.

The Introduction of the *Geistesphilosophie* begins by critically opposing rational and empirical psychology (§378-§380), a critique that makes reference to §34 of the *Encyclopedia*, where the view of any mind as a processless entity or abstract thing [*Ding*] is challenged.¹⁰² While rational psychology "deals only with abstractly universal determinations, with the essence supposedly beneath appearances, the in-itself of *Geist*," empirical psychology dissects the mind into discrete faculties.¹⁰³

Hegel outright refutes the view that *Geist* is an amalgam of separable faculties in §379: "The self-feeling [*Selbstgefühl*] of the *Geist*'s living unity spontaneously resists the fragmentation of the mind into difference *faculties, forces*, or, what comes to the same thing, *activities*, represented as independent of each other."¹⁰⁴ By referring to *Geist*'s *Selbstgefühl*, Hegel is alluding to a later moment of the Anthropology (§407).¹⁰⁵ However, at this point in the Introduction we can only take Hegel at his word because the role and significance of *Selbstgefühl* cannot be comprehended without traversing the contents of the Anthropology. The main point

¹⁰¹ Marmasse addresses whether or not the moments of the *Geistesphilosophie* appear according to a temporality akin to that described in the final paragraph of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Marmasse refers to this temporality as "la temporalité d'une remémoration." While Marmasse also rightly acknowledges that *Geist*'s modes of articulation can be temporal (i.e., historical, finite, limited becoming), as in the *Phenomenology*, his claim is that the moments of *Subjective Geist* are *not* defined by a historical becoming, but happen all at once. Marmasse (2008), 389.

¹⁰² EL §34, 71-72; W8, 100-101.

¹⁰³ PM §378A, 5; W10, 11-12.

¹⁰⁴ PM §379, 6; W10, 13.

¹⁰⁵ Jeffrey Reid argues that Hegel's engagement with empirical psychology goes back to a course taught by J. F. Flatt while Hegel was a student at Tübingen. The persistence of certain themes from that period into Hegel's later writings evidences, according to Reid, Hegel's continuation of Flatt's Enlightenment project. Jeffrey Reid, "How the Dreaming Soul Became the Feeling Soul, between the 1827 and 1830 Editions of Hegel's *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*: Empirical Psychology and the Late Enlightenment," In *Essays on Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, ed. David S. Stern, 37-54 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013), 43-44. Hereafter cited as *How the Dreaming Soul Became the Feeling Soul*.

we wish to accent here, then, is how the challenge to a faculty-theory of mind, or more comprehensively as *Geist*, is connected to how Hegel intends the development of the aspects of *Geist* itself, especially in the Psychology, where a cursory, uncritical reading could mistakenly assume Hegel to be advocating for a theory of psychological faculties that are *temporally* emergent and sequentially discrete. The issue is, then, the sense in which *Geist becomes* the truth that it is, as claimed in the Introduction to the *Geistesphilosophie*.¹⁰⁶

Hegel indirectly refines his critique of isolable faculties of *Geist* when he develops the distinction between stages [*Stufen*] of Nature and of *Geist* in §380.¹⁰⁷ While the lower stages of Nature are involved in the higher stages, the lower stages themselves can be thought as though they would exist in isolation: “The *concrete* nature of *Geist* involves for the observer the peculiar difficulty that the particular states [*Stufen*] and determinations of the development of its concept do not also remain behind as particular existences in contrast to its deeper formations. It is otherwise in external nature.”¹⁰⁸ Hegel provides an example, citing matter and movement as existing both on their own and in the solar system, a higher stage of Nature. Nature is, therefore, distinct from *Geist* as concerns the discreteness of its stages. Hegel continues: “The determinations and stages of *Geist*, by contrast, are essentially only moments, states [*Zustände*], determinations in the highest stages of development [*den hören Entwicklungsstufen*]. As a consequence of this, a lower and more abstract determination of the *Geist* reveals the presence in it, even empirically, of a higher phase.”¹⁰⁹ Part of this issue concerns a methodological reflection that Hegel is offering *für uns*.¹¹⁰ A higher stage of *Geist* is irreducible to a lower stage, but a

¹⁰⁶ We take this to follow from the fact of time as becoming, as justified through the *Naturphilosophie*.

¹⁰⁷ Hegel earlier describes Nature in terms of a system of stages [*System von Stufen*] in the Introduction to the *Naturphilosophie*. PN §249, 20; W9, 31.

¹⁰⁸ PM §380, 8; W10, 16.

¹⁰⁹ PM §380, 8; W10, 16-17.

¹¹⁰ In the Introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel explains the being of the macro-transitions from stage to stage of *Spirit* as existing *für uns* as a *Bewegung* and *Werden*. This correlation between the comments about what

lower stage might require looking ahead to a higher stage of development.¹¹¹ Generally, this difference between stages indicates different levels of complexity.

The other part of what Hegel is explaining in §380 is that something like either sensation [*Empfindung*], feeling [*Gefühl*], or intuition [*Anschauung*], for example, does *not* have a particular existence in abstention of the more developed concept of *Geist* of which it is a non-isolable, integrated feature; nor are these moments of a progressive process of natural development.¹¹² Consequently, if the stages of *Geist* have no particular existence except through *Geist*'s full actualization—and we have seen how *Geist* and Nature differ in this way—then the unfolding of the stages of *Geist* and its development constitutes a becoming that is *not* isolable and finite.¹¹³ However, as we will come to see in the analyses of intuition and language, finite becoming is equally, synthetically implicated.¹¹⁴ And, returning to the critique of certain approaches to psychology, the significance of this line of interpretation of the becoming of *Geist* is linked to Hegel's dismissal of empirical psychology:

is *für uns* in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* with those from the *Geistesphilosophie* leads to our interpretation of *Geist* as a movement and process of becoming. See PS, 56; W3, 80.

¹¹¹ “In sensation [*Empfindung*], for example, we can find all the higher phases of *Geist* as its content or determinacy. And so sensation, which is just an abstract form, may to the superficial glance seem to be the essential seat and even the root of that higher content, the religious, the ethical, and so on; and it may seem necessary to consider the determinations of this content as particular species of sensation. But all the same, when lower stages are under consideration, it becomes necessary, in order to draw attention to them in their empirical existence, to refer to higher stages in which they are present only as forms. In this way we need at times to introduce, by anticipation, a content which presents itself only later in the development.” PM §380, 9; W10, 17.

¹¹² Concerning Hegel's Psychology, M.J. Petry notes that its structure is *not* one of “natural development”, as if, for example, one intuitively before one thinks in the same manner in which one is a child before one is an adult. See M.J. Petry, Introduction to *Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit, vol. 1* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1978), lxxxviii-lxxxix. Hereafter cited as Petry (1978).

¹¹³ It is likely that Hegel is, at the very least, *partially* indebted to Fichte for the view that an account of the mind as *Geist* does not have a beginning in time. For example, in *Ueber den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre oder der sogenannten Philosophie* (1794), Fichte writes: “The highest act of the intellect, for example, is the act of self-positing, but it is by no means necessary that this be (temporally) the first act of the mind of which we are clearly conscious.” However, for Hegel, it does not follow that the lack of a temporal beginning implies the absence of time or a complete abstract from it; as argued in the previous chapter, there is no inside or outside of time—time *is*, as becoming. See, J.G. Fichte, “Concerning the Concept of the *Wissenschaftslehre*,” in *Early Philosophical Writings*, trans. Daniel Breazeale, 94-135 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 126.

¹¹⁴ Hegel is clear that Nature has no history; *Geist*, on the other hand, does have a history, as recounted in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* or in the philosophical account of history from *Geistesphilosophie*. The possibility for history and comprehended history belongs to *Geist*, not Nature.

The entire development of *Geist* is nothing but its self-elevation to its truth, and the so-called soul-forces have no other meaning than to be stages of this elevation. By this self-differentiation, by this self-transformation, and by the restoration of its differences to the unity of its concept, *Geist*, as it is something true, is also something living, organic, systematic; and only by knowing this its nature is the science of *Geist* likewise true, living, organic, systematic,—predicates that cannot be awarded either to rational or to empirical psychology, for the former makes mind into a dead essence divorced from its actualization, while the latter kills the living mind by tearing it asunder into a manifold of independent forces which is neither produced by the concept nor held together by it.¹¹⁵

In order to justify this account of the development of *Geist* and to explore how Hegel conceives of intuition, we will have to turn to Hegel's Psychology.

Before advancing to the third subdivision of *Subjective Geist*, itself the first of three primary divisions of the *Geistesphilosophie*, we must qualify what Hegel intends by 'subjective', since the versatility of this term in his philosophy is particularly noteworthy, and because he employs the term 'subjective' in more than one way. One of the usages, which still appears in common language today, refers to that which is one-sided, non-communal, selfish, singular, as opposed to universal, and self-complacent. Anything that is taken as one-sided in this way, e.g., as a part isolated from a whole, cannot constitute real and true knowledge, for Hegel, nor even a true idealism.¹¹⁶ Generally, this pejorative intention stands against what is rational through universal philosophical justification. The other variance of 'subjective' refers to what is driven to becoming objective by determining itself and recovering itself in otherness. In other words, the subjective is what becomes objective because the essence of subjectivity is freedom, i.e., self-determination, as Hegel announces in §382 of the Introduction to the *Geistesphilosophie*.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ PM §379, 7-8; W10, 15.

¹¹⁶ Hegel reflects on the problem of cognizing limited isolated parts early on in the 1801 *Difference* essay: "Isolated in its limitation the part is defective; meaning and significance it has solely through the coherence with the whole." This remark is particularly fruitful for the current discussion because the larger issue Hegel is addressing there in the *Difference* essay is overcoming the dichotomy of subjective and objective, which highlights how early on in his academic career he esteemed the speculative resolution of that particular dichotomy through an idealistic philosophical project. DF, 98; W2, 30.

¹¹⁷ PM §382, 15; W10, 25-26.

Furthermore, it is this second definition that accurately characterizes the finitude underlying the project of Subjective *Geist*, which *Geist*'s becoming drives to overcome in its final, absolute mode.¹¹⁸

2.2. Intuition and Time

Subjective Geist first considers *Geist* in its immediate determination as natural corporeality; this is the work of the Anthropology. Then, in the Phenomenology of consciousness, *Geist* is considered as the subject that stands oppositely related to an object that is *other* than itself. Thirdly, the Psychology outlines a theory of mental activity and provides a coherent account of how embodied *Geist* cognitively encounters the everyday world beginning with a description of how the empirical grounds the activities of cognition. The Psychology is largely an account of the psychogenesis of thought [*Denken*], since it gives a thoroughgoing account of the foundations of fully developed rational thinking.

In the Psychology's first subsection of *Der theoretische Geist*, *Geist* is intelligence [*die Intelligenz*].¹¹⁹ Intelligence is not consciousness and this is partly because the Psychology is preceded by a phenomenology of consciousness. However, the difference between the two is more significant than that. Consciousness is knowledge [*Wissen*], but an oppositional object conditions this knowledge. Hegel addresses this issue in the opening paragraph of the Psychology, which completes the transition from the Phenomenology to the Psychology:

Geist has determined itself into the truth of soul and of consciousness, of that simple immediate totality and of this knowledge [*dieses Wissens*], which is now an infinite form and thus not restricted by the content derived from the soul, does not stand in relationship to it as object, but is knowledge [*Wissen*] of the

¹¹⁸ "The entire activity of subjective *Geist* is directed to grasping itself as itself, to proving itself to be the ideality of its immediate reality. When it has attained to being-for-itself, then it is no longer merely subjective, but *objective Geist*." PM §385A, 21; W10, 33.

¹¹⁹ English readers of Hegel must be careful not to confuse the intelligence with the intellect, which is sometimes employed as a translation of *Verstand* instead of the understanding.

substantial totality that is neither subjective nor objective. *Geist*, therefore, sets out only from its own being and is in relationship only with its own determinations.¹²⁰

The object of knowledge is *Geist*. That the knowledge of *Geist* cannot be either one-sidedly subjective or objective follows from the fact that the accounts of *Geist* from the Anthropology and Phenomenology do not in themselves give us an account of the knowledge of the full living reality that *Geist* is.¹²¹ The Psychology will incorporate what was conceived under Anthropology and Phenomenology, but the knowledge of *Geist* it will afford will be different and more substantial than what either the forms of soul or consciousness could engender on their own. And the significance of this knowledge is encapsulated in the determination of *Geist* as intelligence in the Psychology's first subsection.

Grasping the importance of *Geist* as intelligence requires some attention to the terminology Hegel employs because it helps qualify what it means 'to know'. While Hegel uses both *Erkennen* and *Wissen* to describe knowing, *Erkennen* is generally translated as 'cognition', which is a species of the more comprehensive knowledge that is *Wissen*. This is significant because, for Hegel, there is also an important difference between immediate and mediated knowledge. In §445A, we read:

Cognition [*Erkennen*] must surely be distinguished from mere knowledge [*Bloßen Wissen*]. For even consciousness is knowledge. But free *Geist* does not content itself with simple knowledge; it wants to cognize, i.e., it wants not only to know that an object is, and what it is both overall and in its contingent, external determinations; it wants to know what the object's determinate, substantial nature consists in."¹²²

¹²⁰ PM §440, 165; W10, 229.

¹²¹ PM §446A, 177; W10, 246-247.

¹²² PM §445A, 175; W10, 244.

W.A. Suchting asserts that *Erkennen* is mediated *Wissen* and cites the above passage from §445A wherein Hegel contrasts cognition to mere, immediate knowledge.¹²³ This reading is significant because it helps clarify a puzzling statement from the opening of the *Geistesphilosophie*, where Hegel qualifies the task of the work as the self-knowledge of *Geist* by using *Erkennen*, rather than the more comprehensive *Wissen*.

The *Geistesphilosophie* begins: “The knowledge [*Die Erkenntnis*] of *Geist* is the most concrete knowledge, and thus the highest and most difficult. *Know thyself* [*Erkenne dich selbst*].”¹²⁴ If cognition is mediated knowledge, then it is a knowledge that results from a process of investigating *Geist*, which comes to know itself as its own object of self-knowledge through a process of self-determination. Therefore, in using *Erkennen*, Hegel is hinting that *Geist* is the truth of Nature as a truth and knowledge that *becomes* through a comprehensive process of mediation—this is the *Geistesphilosophie* as such.¹²⁵ The intelligence is also a part of what Hegel is considering under Subjective *Geist*, so we can rightly take him to be theorizing about subjectivity, but *not* insofar as subjectivity is oppositely related to objectivity. Rather, for Hegel, the subjective is what *becomes* objective, or that which self-determines itself as such, and comprehending how this is so, as we have already noted, is also part of the task of the development of *Geist*.

The account of the intelligence from the standpoint of Theoretical Psychology unfolds in three parts: (α) intuition [*Anschauung*], (β) representation [*Die Vorstellung*], and (γ) thinking

¹²³ W.A. Suchting, “Translating Hegel’s *Logic*: Some Minority Comments on Terminology,” In *The Encyclopaedia Logic*, xxxii-xlvi (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1991).

¹²⁴ PM §377, 3; W10, 9.

¹²⁵ Another relevant interpretation for why the term *Erkennen* is particularly significant derives from Hegel’s account of cognition from the Doctrine of the Concept. In §225, Hegel describes cognition as the process whereby the oneness of subjectivity and the oneness of objectivity are overcome into a single unified process. EL §225, 295; W8, 378.

[*Das Denken*].¹²⁶ These are all forms of mental activity, and, more generally, the Psychology treats various forms of mental activity as such. None of these forms are isolatable as discrete faculties—they are *not* states—since, as already highlighted, Hegel is decisively critical of such an anatomical dissection of any mind.¹²⁷ So insofar as we consider intuition as a moment of mental life, this is as reflective thinkers who have the power to critically *think things over*. Given that, Hegel stands in stark contrast to the contemporary materialist who claims that mental states can be physiologically isolated, defined, and, quite *literally*, pointed to. In what follows, Hegel's account of the intelligence will be explored as a theory of subjectivity for which spatio-temporal intuition is very important. This discussion will set up the transition to a brief look at the importance of language in the final divisions of this chapter.

2.2.1. Feeling, Attention, Intuition

Far from being simply a faculty, intuition is, for Hegel, a complex conceptualization of mental activity, which provides the preliminary part of an account of how it is that we *know*.

Although intuition is preliminary because immediate knowledge ought to become the mediated

¹²⁶ Hegel first announces this division of the Theoretical Psychology in §2 of the Introduction to the entire *Encyclopedia* (§1-§18), by claiming that they are each forms of human consciousness that differ in *form* from thinking as such. It is odd, however, that he distinguishes feeling [*Gefühl*] along with intuition and representation, whereas in the Psychology feeling is the immediate moment of intuition. The oddity of this exception afforded to feeling disappears when we recognize that Hegel is commenting on the significance of thinking for humans, as opposed to animals, and more specifically the type of thinking proper to philosophy. Both animals and humans share sensation [*Empfindung*], but feeling is a form proper to human beings. Much could be said about the distinction between feeling and sensation, i.e., between *Gefühl* and *Empfindung*; we will restrict ourselves to highlighting two noteworthy interpretations. In *How the Dreaming Soul Became the Feeling Soul*, Reid demonstrates that between the 1827 and 1830 version of the *Encyclopedia* Hegel revised sections of the Anthropology to substitute *Gefühl* for *Empfindung* in order to challenge the religion of feeling espoused by Schleiermacher. Furthermore, Reid points out that while the 1827 *Encyclopedia* makes no distinction between *Gefühl* and *Empfindung*, the 1830 edition does so explicitly. According to Reid's analysis, the intention behind Hegel's increased emphasis on feeling between the 1827 and 1830 editions of the Anthropology is to show the pathological nature of Schleiermacher's religion of feeling. Another possibility concerning the difference between feeling and sensation is that *Gefühl* is a spiritualized form of *Empfindung* involving some conception of the self, which is what Willem deVries argues in *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity* (1988). Thus, because humans have a more developed form of self than animals, according to Hegel, that is perhaps why he singles out feeling in §2. EL §2, 24-25; W8, 41-43.

¹²⁷ Further confirmation of this can be located in the preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, where Hegel writes that philosophical Science ought not to dissect parts of the whole and treat them as inanimately isolated, as is done in the particular science of anatomy. PS, 1; W3, 11.

knowledge of rational thinking, Hegel's account of intuition is fundamental to his own philosophy because it grounds knowledge in the knowable reality, or being, of the empirical. The ability to make things conceptually meaningful belongs exclusively to *Geist*, but if the concepts we develop do not follow directly from empirical reality, or are at odds with it, then Hegel's epistemology becomes a transcendental idealism, or, perhaps more problematically, a *subjective idealism*. Consequently, the type of empirical realism that Hegel espouses here is very important in that regard.

Hegel's account of intuition is divided into three parts: (α) feeling [*Gefühl*], (β) attention [*Aufmerksamkeit*], and (γ) intuition proper. As the synthesis of the content of the Anthropology and Phenomenology, the first moment of feeling has the form of being a determinate affection [*eine bestimmte Affektion*], and the content of this affection is both subjective and objective.¹²⁸ The absence of one-sidedness in the content is precisely why feeling in the Psychology is not the same feeling described in the Anthropology *qua* immediate embodiment.¹²⁹ Furthermore, that the object of feeling is not merely a form of subjective experience because the preceding arguments of the *Geistesphilosophie* have shown the dualism between mind-world or mind-body to be naught:

For what the intelligence seems to receive from outside is, in truth, none other than the *rational* and is consequently *identical* with *Geist* and *immanent* in it. The activity of *Geist* has, therefore, no on other aim than, by sublation of the ostensible *being-external-to-its-own-self* of the implicitly rational object, to refute even the semblance of the object's externality to *Geist*.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Bernard Mabile explains the immediacy with which the Psychology opens as the already mediated result of the Phenomenology and Psychology. For that reason, the content of feeling presupposes the subject-object unity of what is rational, and, more significantly for our purposes here, Mabile claims the immediacy of the given in intuition is an immediacy that *has become* via the preceding stages of Subjective *Geist*. In other words, it is a *spiritualized* immediacy. Bernard Mabile, *Hegel: L'épreuve de la contingence* (Paris: Hermann, 2013), 103.

¹²⁹ "In the mind the content of feeling is liberated from the two-fold one-sidedness which it had, on the one hand, at the standpoint of soul and, on the other hand, at the standpoint of consciousness. For this content now has the determination of being in itself both *subjective* and *objective*; and *Geist*'s activity now aims only at positing the content as a unity of the subjective and objectivity." PM §446A, 177; W10, 246-247.

¹³⁰ PM §447A, 178; W10, 248.

The empirical has the intrinsic form of rationality in exactly the same manner as *Geist* as intelligence does, but just not *immediately*—the implicit rationality of the content requires development, and this characterizes the type of account the Psychology provides. Hence, when object of feeling affects the intelligence, it does so because the form of feeling itself is passive, i.e., the empirical content of sensation impacts the intelligence in the most immediate way through the senses.¹³¹ Hegel emphasizes this point by referring to the sensory content of feeling as something *found*.¹³² This is crucial because if the content is *found*, as opposed to created or constructed, then the idea of the *Geistesphilosophie* as an account of freedom, i.e., finding oneself in otherness, is possible. However, it is far from sufficient that we should be merely impacted by empirical objects, since *qua* feeling no distinction is developed such that the rationality of the content can be posited for the intelligence. What is needed is a distinguishing activity whereby the immediate, affective content of feeling is apprehended.

Due to the implicit rationality of the content of feeling, this content cannot simply affect the intelligence—it must become *for it*; and this is accomplished in attention: “Without attention, therefore, no apprehension of the object [*Objektes*] is possible; only by attention does *Geist*

¹³¹ That Hegel takes the sensible quite seriously in his *Geistesphilosophie* is very important to his project therein, and, as John Burbidge has argued, to the relation of Logic and *Geist* (See John Burbidge, “Cognition and Finite Spirit”, in *Hegel’s Theory of the Subject*, ed. David Gray Carlson, 175-186 [New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005]). Concerning our approach to the Psychology in particular, the claim that Hegel believes that knowledge begins other than with sensation is untenable, e.g., in §11 of the Introduction to the *Encyclopedia* Hegel clearly states the content of feeling is the sensible [*Sinnliches*]. Although the empirical senses make the beginning, it does not end there. Also, his frequent criticisms of Jacobi and Schleiermacher have contributed to the view that Hegel devalues the cognitive importance and foundation of sensation. Concerning Hegel’s account of sensation [*Empfindung*], we refer the reader to §400-§402 of the Anthropology, but wish to highlight that Hegel considers the various sense faculties of human beings to be unconscious processes; for example, while we are non-conscious of the various neural impulses that are involved in sensory input, our mental activity fashions objects of sense into rational objects that we are conscious of and that are *for us*. A *Geistesphilosophie* will provide an account of concepts that are meaningful for us; and a particular domain of the hard sciences will provide an account of how the senses physically operate. In this way Hegel is not opposed to modern developments in knowledge about the body and its functions. However, it is simply not the task of a speculative philosophy to deliver an account of such specific phenomenon anymore that it is the task of a speculative *Naturphilosophie* to provide a categorical sequence of species-to-species evolution (PN §249A).

¹³² PM §446 & §448.

become present in the subject-matter [*der Sache*] and obtain *cognizance* of it, though not as yet *cognition* of the subject-matter, for this requires a further development of *Geist*.¹³³ What attention accomplishes is the breaking up of the immediate relation to the object in feeling so that the content becomes present to the intelligence, and this establishes a ground for the actual appropriation of the object, which is later accomplished in recollection [*Erinnerung*].

Hegel conceives attention as a twofold activity; it is both a separating and uniting of what is subjective and objective, which means it is the preliminary determination of a difference that must become determinate. Because rationality is the fundamental principle underlying the cognitive process, as determined through the result of an account of consciousness in the *Encyclopedia Phenomenology*, the disjunction between subject and object is overcome and the subject-object unity is now posited as a justified assumption.¹³⁴ In terms of the separation and unity of subjective and objective in attention, in the Addition to §448, Hegel elucidates:

Attending must be conceived more exactly as a way of filling oneself with a content that has the determination of being both *objective* and *subjective*, or, in other words, of not only being *for me*, but also having *independent* being. Therefore, in attention there necessarily occurs a *separation* and a *unity* of the subjective and the objective, a *self-reflection-into-itself* of free *Geist* and at the same time an *identical direction* of *Geist* to the *object*.¹³⁵

The dual activity of attention is a dual determining of subjectivity and objectivity because there is something there *for the subject* and that something is objective because it has, what Hegel above calls, ‘independent being’. The immediacy of the objectivity of the content of feeling is

¹³³ It is worth noting here that Hegel does not employ the term *Gegenstand* for the object in question, since that term implies that there is a dichotomy between subject and object insofar as the object is something standing over against the subject. Moreover, *die Sache* connotes a more spiritual and substantial notion of ‘thing’, than would the matter (or content) of *der Stoff* or the inert thing of *das Ding*. Lastly, when using *Objekt*, we take Hegel to be referring to content. PM §448A, 179; W10, 249.

¹³⁴ Alternatively, Richard Dien Winfield explains, “Reason provides the underlying subject matter of intelligence insofar as reason operates with certainty that the contents of mind are objective.” Richard Dien Winfield, *Hegel and Mind: Rethinking Philosophical Psychology* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 82. Hereafter cited as Winfield (2010).

¹³⁵ PM §448A, 179; W10, 249.

developed into an object with being *for* the intelligence. However, this is not yet cognitively developed into something determinately distinct with respect to and by the intelligence. As Hegel will go on to comment in the same Addition quoted above, “Intelligence necessarily goes on to develop this difference, to distinguish the object from the subject in a *determinate* way,” and this is the accomplishment of intuition.¹³⁶

Generally put, the move from the immediacy of feeling to intuition marks a transformation of both form and content such that what was immediately sensed becomes an object that is present for the intelligence. The forms of feeling, attention, and intuition are not forms of different contents, but different forms of *one and the same* content, which changes with respect to the form with which it is apprehended.¹³⁷ In other words, both form and content are involved in a mutually implicating process of becoming; the more complex the subjective form of apprehension of an object, then the more complex the objectivity of the content. Hegel makes this point explicitly with respect to intuition in §448A:

The activity of intuition initially produces in general a shifting of sensation away from us, a transformation of what is sensed into an object present outside us. The *content* of sensation is not altered by this alteration; on the contrary, it is here still one and the same content in *Geist* and in the external object, so that *Geist* here still has no content peculiar to itself which it could compare with the content of intuition. Consequently, what comes about by intuition is merely the transformation of the form of *internality* into the form of *externality*.¹³⁸

Thus, the content loses nothing of its empirical basis in its apprehension by intuition; rather it is surpassed by a more complex cognitive mode. And because the new form of apprehension is *externality*, which is the form of Nature considered first in the transition from Logic to Nature, it

¹³⁶ PM §448A, 180; W10, 250.

¹³⁷ This is another claim we first encounter in the Introduction to the *Encyclopedia*: “Whatever kind it may be, the *content* that fills our consciousness is what makes up the *determinacy* of our feelings, intuitions, images, and representations, of our purposes, duties, etc., and of our thoughts and concepts. Hence feeling, intuition, image, etc., are *the forms* of this content, a content that remains *one and the same*, whether it be felt, intuited, represented, or willed, and whether it be *only* felt, or felt, intuited, etc., with an admixture of thought, or whether it is thought quite *without any admixture*.” EL §3, 26; W8, 44.

¹³⁸ PM §448A, 181; W10, 252.

follows that the immediate forms of the external as such, i.e., space and time, have applicability to the object *both* as it is for the intelligence *and* as such. Therefore, intuition is the activity of the positing and apprehension of a spatio-temporal object.¹³⁹

At first glance, in claiming that intuition determines the content according to the forms of space and time because they are the primary forms of intuition, it may appear as though Hegel is adopting the Kantian view of intuition; this would reduce the reality of the empirical to the experience of the subject. As noted above, it is important that Hegel give cognition an empirical basis, but not merely as the knowledge of appearances or our experiences of them such that the entire account of knowing itself would be reduced to the primacy of the subject, leaving us unable to say much about reality as it is. In other words, it is important that Hegel's idealism *not* be a *subjective*, transcendental idealism, so it is essential that he distinguish himself from Kant concerning this issue insofar as it arises with respect to spatio-temporal intuition (§448A). However, before engaging with Hegel's criticism of Kant's view, and how those criticisms inform our understanding of the relation between subjectivity and time in a manner that implicates the relevance of language to both, we need a clear idea of Kant's account of intuition in view.

¹³⁹ "Contrary to its own inwardness, the intelligence posits the determinacy of feeling as a *being*, but as a *negative*, as the abstract otherness of its own self. Intelligence hereby determines the content of sensation as a *being* that is *outside itself*, casts it out *into space and time*, which are the *forms* in which intelligence is intuitive" (PM §448, 178-179; W10, 448). We compare Hegel's statements from the 1830 *Encyclopedia* to the earlier 1808 version of it, where Hegel states, "Space and time are abstract intuitions or *Universal Forms of Intuition*." There is a significant difference in Hegel's treatment of intuition in 1808 versus its later place in the *Encyclopedia*: in 1808, intuition is considered a form of representation and is grouped under the heading of representation as first moment of recollection, but, in 1830 intuition is considered distinctly from representation as such, which indicates a mature review of his position on intuition, one that is likely intended to further distance his own account from Kant's. See, PP, 151; W4, 44.

2.2.2. Space, Time, and Intuition in Kant's first *Critique*

Kant's claim that space and time are pure forms of sensibility is historically situated as a resolution to a prior debate between the Newtonian view of the absoluteness of space and time as substantial entities in their own right, and, the Leibnizian view that space and time are abstract relational structures.¹⁴⁰ The forms of space and time are also foundational for Kant's epistemology and his transcendental project. For Hegel, they provide a point of contention because, as merely subjective forms of experience, space and time tell us nothing about being as such, i.e., they have no ontological significance; rather, for Kant, they are the conditions of the possibility of the experience of any object whatsoever and they are, thusly, *merely* subjective, i.e., one-sided, determinations. For that reason, it is commonplace to refer to Kant's idealism as *subjective*, which Hegel does. This is significant because time, whether in intuition or conceptually, is no mere subjective determination for Hegel; and yet, although it is not one-sided in this way, time does significantly inform the Hegelian approach to subjectivity.¹⁴¹ It is necessary, then, to develop Kant's account of intuition in order to show how Hegel incorporates it in such a way that does not undermine his account of subjectivity, of which time and language *via intuition* are constitutive.

Kant famously advances his epistemological view of space and time in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.¹⁴² The basics of his account are developed in the Transcendental Aesthetic, wherein he asserts the following theses about time: (1) time is a pure form of sensible intuition; and, (2) time is empirically real and transcendently ideal. Although much more could be said about time for Kant, these specific views will aid our capacity to frame Hegel's Kant,

¹⁴⁰ Concerning Newton, we refer the reader to the previous chapter. For a survey of Leibniz's view, see the *Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence*, edited by H.G. Alexander (1956).

¹⁴¹ This was largely the claim of the previous chapter. Hence, we take it as justified that Hegel endorses a strong and ontologically important connection between time and subjectivity.

¹⁴² Although the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* was first published in 1781, our emphasis is the 1787 revised B edition.

particularly concerning the matter of Hegel's account of intuition and the sense of time appropriate to it.¹⁴³

After introducing the project of the *Critique of Pure Reason* as an investigation into the possibility of synthetic *a priori* judgments, Kant provides the foundation for his account of cognition in the first part of the Transcendental Doctrine of Elements: The Transcendental Aesthetic. The manner in which objects are *first* given to cognition occurs in what Kant labels sensibility [*Sinnlichkeit*], which is a passive faculty for receptivity. It is only after being given to sensibility that an object becomes an intuition [*Anschauung*], and is later a thought in the Kantian sense of the division of these terms. Ultimately the importance of sensibility for Kant is profound, for without objects being given to sensibility, there would be no objects given to us at all.¹⁴⁴

Understanding the capacity of sensibility, as Kant develops it, depends on further terminological considerations, some of which corresponds to Hegel's language in the Psychology. According to Kant, when an object affects us, this is sensation [*Empfindung*], and intuitions about objects of sensation are called empirical Intuitions. Kant qualifies these intuitions as empirical in order to engender the distinction between empirical and pure intuitions, the latter providing the ordering *form* to sensation. The idea of a pure intuition is not an arbitrary assertion for Kant, but follows from his analysis of the sensible. He argues, "Since that within which the sensations can alone be ordered and placed in a certain form cannot itself be in turn sensation, the matter [*Materie*] of all appearance is only given to us *a posteriori*, but its form must all lie ready for it in the mind *a priori*, and can therefore be considered separately from all

¹⁴³ While our focus is the Transcendental Aesthetic, we acknowledge that a full exposition of Kant's account of time would also have to consider the Transcendental Analytic, the Transcendental Deduction, and the Schematism.

¹⁴⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 172. Hereafter cited as *Critique of Pure Reason*.

sensation.”¹⁴⁵ Because objects of sensation cannot be self-ordering and explaining, there must be some aspect of mind-cognitive that orders the sensorial given such that the objects of sensation can be cognizable at all; and if all sensation is first experienced as appearance *a posteriori*, then, the ordering form must be *a priori*. Kant famously refers to this *a priori* condition of sensibility in general as the pure forms of sensible intuition of space and time.

For Kant, space and time denote two forms of sense with respect to the subject of which sensibility is the faculty of receptivity:

By means of outer sense (a property of our mind) we represent to ourselves objects as outside us, and all as in space... Inner sense, by means of which the mind intuits itself, or its inner state, gives, to be sure, no intuition of the soul itself, as an object; yet it is still a determinable form, under which the intuition of its inner state is alone possible, so that everything that belongs to the inner determination is represented in relations of time. Time can no more be intuited externally than space can be intuited as something in us.¹⁴⁶

The inner/outer sense distinction is significant for Kant because it furnishes the ground for our experiences of objects as external to us, and those experiences—or rather the conditions for the possibility of those experiences—differ from those of inner sense, which Kant explains with the pure intuition of time as the sense of both the self and temporal sequences.

The Transcendental Aesthetic first considers space as the condition for the possibility of our experience of things as external to us. Space is not gained *a posteriori* from experience, but makes the experiences we have of outer appearances possible *a priori*. Hence, Kant concludes, “Space is a necessary representation, *a priori*, that is the ground of all outer intuitions,” and, he continues, “It is therefore to be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, not as a determination dependent on them, and is an *a priori* representation that necessarily grounds

¹⁴⁵ *Critique of Pure Reason*, 173.

¹⁴⁶ *Critique of Pure Reason*, 174.

outer appearances.”¹⁴⁷ Because space is a pure intuition, it is neither a substantial entity in its own right, a property of things, nor is it a concept. Ultimately, the insights Kant gleans into the intuition of space, as he does with time, tell us quite a bit about our “human standpoint”, but carry very little ontological import regarding being as such.¹⁴⁸

The exposition of time as a pure intuition follows closely from that of space, and the two together exhaust the ground for the possibility of appearance in general. As it is with space, Kant argues that we do not have an empirical experience of time, as if pure succession or simultaneity were given as *a posteriori* phenomena. However, the pure intuition of time has superiority to that of space in that Kant links it with the experience of the self; this is partially what Kant means when he refers to it as a form of inner sense.¹⁴⁹

One of the central conclusions of the Transcendental Aesthetic is that space and time are empirically real and transcendently ideal. For Kant the objectivity of time is dependent on the experience of appearances, so time is not objective with respect to things themselves. This is one way to frame the empirical reality and transcendental ideality of time. Concerning the former, time has empirical reality with respect to our experience of objects of sensation; this is the empirical reality of time. Kant claims that we cannot apply this empirical reality to a notion of absolute reality due to the transcendental ideality of time, i.e., that time is nothing outside of the subject.¹⁵⁰ In both considerations, the assertion that time has no status independently of a mind is

¹⁴⁷ *Critique of Pure Reason*, 175.

¹⁴⁸ “We can accordingly speak of space, extended beings, and so on, only from the human standpoint. If we depart from the subjective condition under which alone we can acquire outer intuition, namely that through which we may be affected by objects, then the representation of space signifies nothing at all.” *Critique of Pure Reason*, 177.

¹⁴⁹ *Critique of Pure Reason*, 180.

¹⁵⁰ *Critique of Pure Reason*, 181.

fundamental and this amounts to making objectivity both derivative to subjectivity and dependent upon it.¹⁵¹

Following Kant's account we are unable to make ontological conclusions about the relation of time to being, or the status of time *as* being *qua* becoming. However, following the approach to time in the *Naturphilosophie*, Hegel does allow for an ontology of the concept of time. Because we are now dealing with how Kant and Hegel present their accounts of time in intuition, the question must be posed: How Kantian is Hegel's account of intuition? Or, to put the question more precisely, is Hegel's account of intuition in the *Psychology* transcendental? If the answer to this question is affirmative, then this would suggest that Hegel contradicts his thesis from the *Naturphilosophie* of an essential ontological relationship between time and being *qua* becoming. Therefore, the critical position Hegel takes with respect to Kant concerning spatio-temporal intuition needs to be framed accordingly and made explicit.

2.2.3. Hegel's Critique of Kantian Spatio-Temporal Intuition

The sense in which Hegel adopts aspects of Kant's philosophy while remaining critical of it is a very complicated issue.¹⁵² Given that one of the primary elements of Kant's epistemology, as developed in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, is the account of the pure intuitions of space and time, it is noteworthy that Hegel makes no reference to Kant in the primary content paragraphs of his own account of intuition from the *Psychology*. As Scott Jenkins (2010) has remarked, it is a challenge to pinpoint a direct response to Kant's arguments about intuition in Hegel's works. In the *Naturphilosophie*, however, we locate an indirect reflection concerning intuition and Kant in

¹⁵¹ According to Robert Stern, the difference between Kant and Hegel can be framed as such: Hegel liberates the object from its dependence on the relational unity of the subject, which it has in Kant according to the unity of apperception and the relational unity achieved in objects of experience through the application of the categories. See, Robert Stern, *Hegel, Kant and the Structure of the Object* (London: Routledge, 1990).

¹⁵² A simple way of stating the problems of interpreting Hegel's critique or appropriation of the Kantian philosophy is: "Hegel's Kant... is painted with a broad brush." John McCumber, *Understanding Hegel's Mature Critique of Kant* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 44.

the highly important place wherein Hegel deals with time *qua* becoming (§258R). There, Hegel states:

Time, like space, is a *pure form of sense* [*Sinnlichkeit*] or *intuition* [*Anschauens*], the non-sensuous sensuous; but, as in the case of space, the distinction of objectivity and a subjective consciousness confronting it, does not apply to time. If these determinations were applied to space and time, the former would then be abstract objectivity, the latter abstract subjectivity.¹⁵³

In describing time as a form of intuition, Hegel is evoking a reference to Kant, albeit without explicitly referring to him by name. This passage is very helpful for framing how we approach the question of Hegel's adoption of Kantian intuition and the relevance of time because it makes an important claim with reference to the content of the *Geistesphilosophie*: time should *not* be approached *phenomenologically*, i.e., *dualistically*. Hegel articulates this point with reference to the subject-object distinction for consciousness, which is the essential distinction underlying the phenomenology of consciousness from the *Geistesphilosophie*. This particular issue is important because it raises the question of the difference between intuition in Psychology and sense-consciousness in Phenomenology, which are two different stages of the development of *Geist* differing in degrees of complexity.

The Phenomenology of the 1830 *Encyclopedia* is the mediating stage between the Anthropology and Psychology, which provides the necessary presupposition of the 'I' of universal reason that makes the account of Psychology possible as an ontology of the structure of human subjectivity. Setting aside the relationship between the Jena *Phenomenology* of 1807 and the later, mature Berlin version, the *Encyclopedia* Phenomenology has the tripartite division of consciousness as such, self-consciousness, and reason. It is under the first of these divisions that Hegel addresses sensory consciousness and makes reference to time such that we can make sense

¹⁵³ PN §258R, 34-35; W9, 48.

of why Hegel claims in the *Naturphilosophie* that time is not properly the object of phenomenology, or, more generally, of a dualistic philosophical approach.¹⁵⁴

In §418, consciousness as such is first the immediate relation between subject and object; this is sensory consciousness. In the ensuing Remark, Hegel states that the question as to whether or not the object of the immediate relation of sensory consciousness is spatio-temporal belongs to an account of intuition: “Spatial and temporal individuality, the *here* and the *now*, as I have determined the object of sensory consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, strictly belongs to intuition.”¹⁵⁵ The ability for consciousness to claim that it has an object that is *here* and *now*, which is the fundamental element of the argument against immediate knowledge in the 1807 *Phenomenology*, is here revoked. Instead, in asserting that the spatio-temporality of the object is accounted for by intuition, Hegel is referring ahead to the Psychology, wherein he continues to develop the Phenomenology-Psychology distinction, or, as we indicated in the previous chapter, between the oppositional nature of *Verstand* and the more comprehensive *Vernunft*.¹⁵⁶ Consequently, how we should approach time as intuited becoming is part of what Hegel is addressing in §258R of the *Naturphilosophie*, where he repudiates a phenomenology of time while simultaneously referring to Kantian intuition. Naturally, then, we would expect direct reference to Kant in the content paragraphs, or the Remarks to them, where Hegel treats intuition

¹⁵⁴ On this point, we follow the interpretation of M.J. Petry: “To confuse sensuous consciousness with intuition, to raise subject-object problems in respect of recollection, language, memory or thought, is to become involved in the subject-matter of consciousness already dealt with in the Phenomenology. Psychology is a distinct discipline in that it presupposes the sublation of such problems in the subject-matter it deals with.” Petry (1978), xci.

¹⁵⁵ PM §418R, 147; W10, 206.

¹⁵⁶ “With regard to the relationship of intuition to *consciousness*, the following remark must be made. In the broadest sense of the word, one could of course give the name of intuition to the immediate or *sensory consciousness* considered in §418. But if this name is to be taken in its *proper* significance, as rationally it must, then between this consciousness and intuition an essential distinction must be drawn: the former, in *unmediated, entirely abstract* certainty of itself, relates itself to the *immediate individuality* of the object, an individuality *disintegrating* into a multiplicity of aspects; whereas intuition is a consciousness *filled* by the certainty of *reason*, whose object has the determination of being something *rational*, consequently not an *individual* torn asunder into various aspects but a *totality, a cohesive fullness* of determinations.” PM §449A, 182; W10, 254.

in the Psychology, since this would complete the *allusion* made in §258R, but the discussion of Kant only appears in an addition.¹⁵⁷

One way to resolve the issue is to say that the philosophies of Kant and Hegel are more or less talking past each other because both standpoints respond to different questions. Hegel himself framed the issue that way while lecturing on Kant: “But what the nature of time and space is, it does not occur to the Kantian philosophy to inquire. To it what space and time are in themselves does not signify ‘what is their concept,’ but ‘Are they external things or something in the mind?’”¹⁵⁸ The difference Hegel is largely illustrating here is that between ontology and epistemology by suggesting that the Kantian focus on the knowledge of either mind dependent or independent entities does not respond to the question of the concept of something, as Hegel’s own philosophical standpoint does.

Setting aside this difference in standpoints, since this issue is far too broad to resolve here, the indebtedness, or lack thereof, of Hegel to Kant on intuition and time can be addressed in two ways. First, we take Hegel to be following in the post-Kantian critical tradition of Solomon Maimon by arguing that space and time are not pure, but *empirical* intuitions. As such, time acquires a conceptual basis that affords no special priority to the one-sided view of subjectivity. Second, Hegel frames the real-ideal distinction in terms of the unity of form and content, so it is inappropriate to conceive spatio-temporal intuition dichotomously as empirically real and transcendently ideal, as Kant does.

¹⁵⁷ Our approach to the Kant-Hegel contention attempts to deal with the issue by not relying upon Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as, for example, Scott Jenkins does in his article, “Hegel on Space: A Critique of Kant’s Transcendental Philosophy” (2010). A pitfall of that interpretive approach is that it implies that the account of subjectivity of the *Phenomenology* is the same as that of the *Geistesphilosophie*, and particularly where intuition is addressed. While we take the approaches toward subjectivity from the *Phenomenology* and *Geistesphilosophie* to be consistent with one another, concerning an argument about spatio-temporal intuition, the Psychology is the place to base the argument, not the earlier, introductory ladder to science, which the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is.

¹⁵⁸ LHP III, 436 (translation modified); W20, 342-343.

Hegel's most direct reflection in the Psychology on the Kantian account of intuition occurs in the Addition to §448, where, in the primary content paragraph, Hegel appears to be advocating some version of Kant's view, as we acknowledge above. Hegel, however, directly confronts the status of Kantian intuition in the Addition, where we read:

When we said that what is sensed receives from the *intuiting Geist* the form of the spatial and temporal, this statement must not be understood to mean that space and time are *only subjective forms*. This is what *Kant* wanted to make space and time. However, things [*die Dinge*] are in truth *themselves* spatial and temporal; this double form of extrinsicality [*Außereinander*] is not one-sidedly imposed on them by our intuition, it has already been originally imparted to them by the infinite *Geist* that is in itself, by the creative eternal Idea.¹⁵⁹

Although one might want to object and say that Hegel's appeal to the Idea here does not constitute an argument, it is in fact making an explicit reference to the transition from Logic to Nature, and as such amounts to a rigorous systematic argument. The move from Logic to Nature, which we treated in the previous chapter, determines Nature first as the external, and space and time are first forms of externality. Therefore, it is not because space and time are subjective forms that they have applicability to the empirical objects of intuitive experience, but, rather, space and time are determinations of Nature whose form of externality establishes the objectivity of time.¹⁶⁰ Consequently, the issue, and the essence of the upshot of Hegel's position here, is the challenge to the subjective exclusivity of the intuition of time, which we find in Kant.

¹⁵⁹ PM §448, 181 (translation modified); W10, 253.

¹⁶⁰ Our qualitative and ontological account of time in the *Naturphilosophie* carries over to the *Geistesphilosophie* insofar as the ontological concept of time tell us about the being of the objectivity of nature and the subjectivity of *Geist*. We therefore distinguish our reading, which associates the relevance of space and time here to the concept of Nature, rather than because those are quantifiably pragmatic terms, as is recently suggested by Willem deVries: "My guess is that space and time show up only here because Hegel thinks of them as precise and quantifiable, even metrical. Spatio-temporal determinations can be elaborated in endlessly precise ways and related to each other with mathematical precision. They are the rational elaboration of self-externality, so they make their appearance within subjective spirit only in its final, rational stage [Psychology], even if they appear as immediate determinacies." Willem deVries, "Subjective Spirit: Soul, Consciousness, Intelligence and Will", in *The Bloomsbury Companion to Hegel*, ed. Allegra de Laurentiis and Jeffrey Edwards, 133-155 (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 150.

Furthermore, Hegel is also challenging the status of time as an *a priori* intuition. According to Kant, empirical intuitions are those for which sensory objects are present.¹⁶¹ Following Hegel's account, sensation is everywhere directly involved in intuition due to the empirical foundation of the immediacy of feeling. So insofar as we speak of time as intuitive form, for Hegel, we must do so as an empirical intuition because time is both an objective determination of Nature and a subjective concept of the intelligence. Even those who would argue that Hegel's *Naturphilosophie* is *aprioristic*, can at the very least grant, as Willem deVries does, that Hegel's account of intuition "represents a healthy realism on his part."¹⁶²

Despite the fact that Hegel is not engaged in a transcendental account of cognition, Hegel's position on the matter is comparable to that of Maimon's critical stance toward Kant on space and time. Maimon largely advances the Kantian critical project, but criticizes the status of time and space as *pure* intuitions. Maimon claims space and time are empirical intuitions because they are predicates of intuitions, which give them a conceptual basis and elevates them from merely the level of intuition to the understanding.¹⁶³ This was Maimon's attempt to bridge the divide between sensible particulars and categorical thought, which, according to post-Kantian criticism, Kant's philosophy leaves disjunctively unexplained.¹⁶⁴

Evidence that Hegel also viewed time as an empirical intuition can be found as early as the 1801 *Differenz* essay, where, despite his obvious status as a supporter of Schelling's philosophy at that time, Hegel states the intuition of time is empirical.¹⁶⁵ However, Hegel's mature philosophy is not transcendental, and so Hegel differs in many respects from Maimon's

¹⁶¹ *Critique of Pure Reason*, 193.

¹⁶² Willem deVries, *Hegel's Theory of Mental Activity: An Introduction to Theoretical Spirit* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 115.

¹⁶³ Solomon Maimon, *Essay on Transcendental Philosophy*, trans. by Nick Midgley, Henry Somers-Hall, Alistair Welchman, and Merten Reglitz (London: Continuum, 2010), 18.

¹⁶⁴ A similar project toward determining the foundations of critical philosophy was also undertaken by K.L. Reinhold.

¹⁶⁵ DF, 111-112; W2, 44.

own attempt at a post-Kantian corrective transcendental philosophy, not to mention that Hegel neither continued to be a transcendental Schellingian after the 1807 *Phenomenology*. In sum, Hegel challenges the transcendental status of time advanced by Kant by providing a conceptual account of time in the *Naturphilosophie*, and in the *Geistesphilosophie* we see how that account fits with an approach to spatio-temporal intuition that is grounded in the being of sensation.

The rejection of transcendentalism completes what is at stake in determining Hegel's debt and appropriation of Kant's account of intuition. For Hegel, both the subjective aspect of the content as form and the objective determination of the object itself cannot be separated in intuition because there is no fundamental ontological distinction between form and content. Even if we conceive the real as the sensible material [*Stoff*] that has the form of space and time, there is no significant ontological distinction between the object of intelligence and intelligence itself *qua* reason. Insofar as space and time apply as forms of the content in general, this spatio-temporal form is equally subjective and objective. In other words, neither the form nor the objects are merely mental contents. Kant is a subjective idealist insofar as we are talking about intuition because the forms of subjective experience, which order the empirical sense data, determine the contents of intuition.¹⁶⁶ So both form and content dependently belong to the side of the subject, thus constituting Kant's subjective idealism. For Hegel, the subject is not the legislator of appearances, but precisely that which self-determines and *becomes* objective; one instance of this is the apprehension of time as a structural component inherent of being in *intuition*—this is time as *intuited becoming*.

¹⁶⁶ According to Gilles Deleuze (1963), Kant makes the subject-object relation one of the relations of differing subjective faculties, which have a distinctly active role with respect to passive sensibility. Hegel's views on space and time are rooted in an account of subjectivity that is very different from Kant's, one that does not treat the subjective as a mind divided into discrete faculties. Thus, Hegel's account is arguably more robust than Kant's formalistic spin on the Cartesian 'I think' for which Hegel claims Kant to be a subjective idealist. Thus, the difference between Hegel and Kant on the matter of spatio-temporal intuition can be conceived within the framework of alternate approaches to subjectivity. See, Jeffrey Reid, (2014), and, Sally Sedgwick (2012).

2.2.4. Time as Intuited Becoming

According Hegel's philosophy, time is *intuited becoming* because time has the form of becoming and becoming has empirical existence.¹⁶⁷ If the concepts of Hegel's *Logic* had little to no applicability or explanatory force, then the empirical existence and experience of those concepts could possibly be challenged. However, this is not the case for Hegel whose *Logic* develops *being as such qua thinking being*. And when speaking of an intuition of time or becoming we are developing an ontologically significant claim that cannot be restricted to the questions of epistemology, i.e., the limitations of knowledge with respect to mind dependent or independent entities. In what follows, we will begin to show how the view of time as intuited becoming implicates the subjective becoming objective as language such that, for Hegel, we cannot conceive of subjectivity ontologically without considering time, language, and their relation.

When Hegel states that time is intuited becoming in §258 of the *Naturphilosophie*, he is claiming that the intuition of time is of the primal structure of being as becoming, which is given in our sensory experiences and apprehensions of what there *is*.¹⁶⁸ While we can allow for felt experiences of the givenness of an infinite, totality of time—for example, Hegel argues in the fourth chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that the fear of death is the experience and feeling of the totality of one's life—concerning Hegel's reflections on time as intuition, he quite clearly has finite temporality in view.

In §448A, Hegel states that sensation *becomes* both spatial and temporal in intuition, and those forms can only *become* as such because the content itself has the form of externality, rather

¹⁶⁷ Alexandre Kojève's analysis of the necessity of the empirical existence of temporality from "Note sur l'éternité, le temps et le Concept" is implicated in our assertion here, but we will refrain from commenting on the relation of the concept and time, which is what concerns Kojève in that lecture, until the fourth chapter.

¹⁶⁸ PN §258, 34; W9, 48.

than the spatio-temporal being exclusively a subjective form of mental activity. Hence, in addressing time and intuition in the *Geistesphilosophie*, it is not surprising that Hegel makes reference to §258 of the *Naturphilosophie*. “The temporal,” we read, “presents itself as the form of *unrest*, of the *internally negative*, of *successiveness*, of *arising* [*Entstehens*] and *vanishing* [*Verschwindens*], so that the temporal *is*, in that it *is not*, and *is not*, in that it *is*.”¹⁶⁹ For Hegel, the concept of time is defined by an inherent negativity, which is ultimately rooted in becoming, since all being is process. Therefore, as intuited becoming, time is that cognitive experience of time in nature, and not merely as some abstract subjective way of conceiving duration. This is exactly why Hegel notes that it is not because we are temporal beings that the form of time is applied to things, but because things themselves are temporal that they themselves have the form of time. Furthermore, to apply this to the subjectivity-time relation, if sensory givens have the form of time, then they have an inherent negativity, and such a negativity is proper to the self.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Using *Verschwinden*, instead of *Vergehen*, is meant to highlight the fact that we are discussing the temporal, which is both finite and limited—the temporal is ultimately fleeting; it comes-to-be, then *disappears*. PM §448A, 181; W10, 252.

¹⁷⁰ Karin de Boer interprets the intuitive significance of time as follows: “By perceiving the world as temporal we become aware of the negativity inherent in all finite things. The form of time allows us not merely to measure the speed of moving objects, but also to comprehend the modes of self-determination exhibited by both inorganic and organic nature” [Karin de Boer, *On Hegel: The Sway of the Negative* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 124]. While we fully endorse the connection between the perception of changes, which are temporal, and Hegel’s conceptualization of time in the *Naturphilosophie*, de Boer goes on to associate time with the empirical instantiation of the so-called bad infinite, which is a restriction of Hegel’s conceptualization of time as such. This reading has its foundations in Martin Heidegger’s interpretation of Hegel’s concept of time. In *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger advances two interpretative claims about Hegel’s own philosophical treatment of time. One of these, that time is a conceptualization of negativity, is consistent with Hegel and we exposed this element of negativity in the previous chapter. However, if this negativity is considered as merely abstract and connected with the bad infinite, then the robust elements of Hegel’s concept of time become obfuscated. Not only is Heidegger’s interpretation of time as intuited becoming misleading, it has likely contributed to a disparaged view of Hegel’s philosophy of time. According to Heidegger, the idea that time is intuited becoming reduces the being of time as such to the ‘now’: “Time is ‘intuited’ becoming—that is to say, it is the transition which does not get thought but which simply tenders itself in the sequence of ‘nows’. If the essence of time is defined as ‘intuited becoming’, then it becomes manifest that time is primarily understood in terms of the ‘now’, and indeed in the very manner in which one comes across such a ‘now’ in pure intuition” [Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1962), 483]. If time is reduced to the ‘now’, then becoming is nothing more than the sequence of instances, which we considered and rebuked in the previous chapter with respect to the so-called bad infinite. Lastly, Heidegger seems to think that canonical philosophical approaches to time have done little to unconceal an everyday, existential, temporal meaning of time. To this, we gesture to the passage quoted in the first

Hence, insofar as the *Geistesphilosophie* is an argument about freedom as self-determination and finding oneself in otherness, it is because there is something essential to Nature that allows *Geist* to recognize itself therein—namely, *time*.

Having completed our survey of the meaning of intuition with respect to time as becoming, a serious question rises to the foreground of the investigation: if the objectivity given in sensation becomes subjective through intuition and the transformation of form and content that occurs therein, how do we account for the reciprocal moment wherein subjective becomes objective, and, further, what ontologically significant role does time have within such a process? The answer to this question is that subjectivity becomes objective in *language*, and language employs intuitions, which have an ontologically significant determination of time through the concept of becoming. Hence, in the following, we will complete our analysis of subjectivity, time, and language in the *Encyclopedia* by demonstrating how, from the standpoint of an ontology of subjectivity, time as intuited becoming is realized in the *word*—an exemplary, preliminary instance suggesting how to conceive the relation of time and language.

2.3. Language and Time

Hegel never developed a full-fledged philosophy of language, but he clearly thought that language was a very important matter for philosophy, and particularly so in the later part of his career. In addition to addressing the matter of language and philosophy in the 1831 Preface to the second edition of the *Science of Logic*, Hegel's *Geistesphilosophie* contains his most explicit reflections on the development of language and the significant role it has for rational thinking.¹⁷¹

chapter from Augustine, who appeals to the most immediate answer to our experience of time, which accords with our own line of interpreting the ontological significance of Hegel's account of time.

¹⁷¹ The Preface to the *Logic* echoes what Hegel accomplishes in the *Geistesphilosophie*, and there is a circular sense in which the account of cognition from the Theoretical Psychology explains the rational mode of cognition underlying the *Logic*. However, one could equally argue that the *Phenomenology of Spirit* accomplishes the same

However, it is not the entirety of a potential Hegelian philosophy of language that concerns us here with respect to Hegel's views on time. Rather, just as the *Naturphilosophie* developed an essential relationship between time and subjectivity, the *Geistesphilosophie* draws an analogous connection between language and subjectivity such that time and language together have a key ontological role for the being of subjectivity. Specifically, it is how the subjective becomes objective in language through the production of words—*intuitions* in a certain sense—which are both spoken and written. Ultimately, we are demonstrating how Hegel conceived of a link between time, language, and subjectivity that flows from Nature to *Geist*.

As already stated, the account from the Theoretical Psychology has three parts, which, following Bernard Mabile, are different *elevations* of reason, or rational mental activity.¹⁷² The first stage of intuition is far from the completion of an account of rational thinking because it is only the development of the immediate, as reflected upon *für uns* from §446 to §450, and clearly higher order cognition is involved in reflecting upon intuition. As Richard Dien Winfield states the issue:

Because the content of intuition is immediately given, intuition can neither discriminate anything about what it intuits, nor have anything communicable to convey. Intuition's conjunction of the subjective and objective determination offers at best a mute certainty that what the subject feels is no less authenticated in something given apart from the subject. With no mediation to apprehend, nor any mediating apprehension to perform, intuiting intelligence has no reasons to offer nor anything to say or think concerning its intuition.¹⁷³

goal. Nevertheless, the *Logic-Geistesphilosophie* parallel is manifest in Hegel's comments in the Preface to the 1831 *Logic*: "The forms of thought are first set out and stored in human *language*, and one can hardly be reminded often enough nowadays that thought is what differentiates the human being from the beast. In everything that the human being has interiorized, in everything that in some way or other has become for him a representation, in whatever he has made his own, there has language penetrated, and everything that he transforms into language and expresses in it contains a category, whether concealed, mixed, or well defined" (SL, 12; W5, 20). We will return to the importance of this passage and the connection between Logic, thinking, and language in the fourth, final chapter.

¹⁷² Bernard Mabile, *Cheminer avec Hegel* (Chatou: Éditions de la Transparence, 2007), 130.

¹⁷³ Winfield (2010), 85.

What Winfield means, here, is that from the perspective of the intelligence as intuition, higher order concepts are lacking to make more determinations of what is being cognized. In other words, as ‘mute certainty’, the intuitive intelligence needs language. And this is precisely why intuition proceeds to representation, wherein the intelligence develops itself concurrently with language on the way to founding fully actualized thought.

Briefly, the transition from intuition to representation occurs with the apprehended given *becoming* the possession of the intelligence as an image [*Bild*] that can be recollected.¹⁷⁴ Hence, the first moment of representation is recollection [*Erinnerung*], which in and of itself is a concept with broad systematic relevance, especially concerning the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Recollection is then followed by imagination [*Einbildungskraft*] and then memory [*Gedächtnis*], which accomplishes the transition to thought [*Denken*].

In the Addition to §450, the concluding paragraph on intuition, Hegel deploys an explanation for the transition to representation that appeals to both time and language. We read, “When we talk about an intuition sublated to representation, language too is quite correct in saying: *I have seen this.*”¹⁷⁵ Hegel is remarking that language use presupposes that all language involves mediation, and thus sense-experience is far too immediate for it to be able to linguistically articulate itself as such. Additionally, Hegel is claiming that time has a key

¹⁷⁴ We need only briefly explain the activities covered under recollection. First, the intuition, as the content of feeling becomes the image, which is an abstraction of the content from its externality as the given content. Second, the image is preserved by the intelligence in its “nocturnal pit” [*nächtlichen Schacht*], which describes how images are preserved indiscriminately in and by the intelligence in order to be recalled some other time (§453R). Third, the intelligence thus becomes the capacity to recall images that are its own possession. As Hegel explains in §454, “The image, which in the pit [*Schachte*] of intelligence was only its property, is now, with the determination of externality, also in its possession. The image is thereby posited both as distinguishable from the intuition and as separable from the simple night [*einfachen Nacht*] in which it is initially submerged. Intelligence is thus the power which can externalize its property and which no longer needs external intuition for the existence of the property in intelligence.” PM §454, 188; W10, 260.

¹⁷⁵ PM §450A, 184; W10, 256.

implication for the conceptualization of our cognitive apprehensions.¹⁷⁶ Hence, in describing the intelligence, which is a mode of ontologically theorizing about (human) subjectivity, Hegel is demonstrating that both language and time together have a key role: the activity whereby we acknowledge that from a given sense-experience we can later recall that content in the absence of its original empirical immediacy only makes sense if we understand both the entirety of the relation as one of time, i.e., of *having-been*, and the capacity for the understanding of our cognitive operations as dependent on language for their comprehension.

From intuition to representation, the move is from the immediacy of the sensible to the active subject's possession of an image, a very primitive and indeterminate form of sign. In order to avoid the apparent problems of the pejorative view of subjectivity as a purely self-relating ego, it is necessary that the intelligence reverse the process from intuition to representation—namely, the representing intelligence must *become* objective.¹⁷⁷ This is partially accomplished in Hegel's account of imagination and the role of the word, which is about the manifestation of a discursive exteriorization whereby the subject becomes objective through the positing of the spoken word.¹⁷⁸ But, more generally, the process of objectification elucidated in the Psychology is based

¹⁷⁶ Joseph C. Flay argues that both Hegel's account of essence and of time are connected insofar as they involve the goal of something *having-been*. Flay explains, "The goal of time, i.e., of the becoming of things, is the past, i.e., to be not as what *is* as having been. But this, again, was precisely the description given essence: *Das Wesen ist was gewesen ist*." Joseph C. Flay, "Essence and Time in Hegel", *The Owl of Minerva* 20 (Spring 1989), 191.

¹⁷⁷ Hegel himself identifies this issue in opening paragraph of the section on representation, where he states: "The representation is intelligence's *own* possession still with one-sided subjectivity, since this possession is not self-contained *being*, but still conditioned by immediacy." PM § 451, 184-185; W10, 257.

¹⁷⁸ In introducing the entirety of the Psychology in §444, Hegel describes the productivity of Subjective *Geist* in the Theoretical Psychology as culminating in the word [*das Wort*]. Later, in §451A, Hegel sketches this idea as one of the stages of the development of representing intelligence, by characterizing it as a restoration [*Wiederherstellung*] of the subjective and objective. However, it is worth mentioning that there is an apparent distinction between the name and the word, since it is developed in the literature on language in Hegel's Psychology. In *The Company of Words* (1993), John McCumber claims that there are two accounts of the word provided. He calls them representational names and names as such. While representational names are the ordinary words governed according to representational truth, names as such are meaningless words that have originated in meaningful spoken language. Thus, for McCumber, names are refined species of words. Also, this approach appears to be generally consistent with Jacques Derrida's remarks on Hegel and language from "*Le puits et la pyramide: Introduction à la sémiologie de Hegel*" (published in *Marges de la philosophie*, 1972), where he claims that the name is, for Hegel, the word *par excellence*. A different approach belongs to Reid who, in *Real Words: Language and System in Hegel* (2007), states

upon the idea that the words we use for things, given that we are social beings, cannot be arbitrary. Hence, Hegel is providing an account that draws upon our implicit sociality in determining the objectivity of language as universal, rather than arbitrary. While it is in the moment of memory and the transition from memory to thinking that the account of language as universal and objective takes place, we suggest a differing approach centered around the nature of two mediums of linguistic practice: speech and writing.¹⁷⁹ We will begin with the supposed prioritization of speech in the Psychology's account of the imagination, and then proceed to challenge that priority by evoking the Hegelian conception of history and the role of writing for the activity of historiography.

2.3.1. Speech

While the whole of Hegel's exposition of the imagination need not be recounted here, the third form of the imagination, which Hegel calls sign-making fantasy [*Zeichen machende Phantasie*], concerns language explicitly.¹⁸⁰ And, in addition to the fact that Hegel reflects upon

that the name is an 'empty marker' whose meaning is open, which implies that the name can be applied to anything. Reid contrasts this with the word, as distinguished by a content defined as *Gehalt* and likened to the substantial thing of *die Sache*. While both name and word are linguistic entities, the latter has a richer objectivity, especially as concerns scientific discourse, as Reid argues. Aside from remarking that Hegel does oscillate between name and word in the representation section at large, we see no need to enter into this terminological debate here so long as we remain within our focus of speech or spoken language.

¹⁷⁹ For an account of Hegel's conception of memory, we suggest the following: H.F. Fulda, "Vom Gedächtnis zum Denken," in *Psychologie und Anthropologie oder Philosophie des Geistes*, 321-360, ed. F. Hespe and B. Tuschling (Stuttgart: Frommann-holzboog, 1991), and, Stephen Houlgate, "Hegel, Derrida, and Restricted Economy: The Case of Mechanical Memory," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 34 (1996), 79-93.

¹⁸⁰ We also acknowledge some parallels regarding the role of synthesis between Kant and Hegel on the imagination, but exploring that and developing the potentially relevant differences belongs to a different and ambitious project. For analyses of Hegel on the imagination, we refer the reader to "Hegels Theorie der Einbildungskraft" (1991) by Klaus Düsing and *Hegel's Theory of Imagination* by Jennifer Ann Bates (2004). While Bates argues for the importance of the imagination for the project of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, his infrequent use of the term outside of the Philosophy of Subjective *Geist* lends to our view that a thoroughgoing analysis of the imagination is not necessary to get to the heart of the matter of the subjective *and* objective significance of language for Hegel. Furthermore, in a review of Bates' work, Reid comments that Hegel's avoidance of the term imagination [*Einbildungskraft*] was likely due to the one-sidedly subjective connotation that it had come to imply in post-Kantian philosophy, and this one-sided intention of the imagination is at odds with the equally important objectivity of *Geist* in both the *Geistesphilosophie* and his system at large. See, Jeffrey Reid, Review of "*Hegel's Theory of Imagination*, by Jennifer Ann Bates," *Dialogue* 45, no. 3 (2006), 591-594.

language there, the significance of this particular form of imagination is further emphasized as the concretization of subjectivity, which Hegel explains in §457R: “only in fantasy does intelligence present itself not as the indeterminate pit and the universal, but as individuality, i.e. as concrete subjectivity, in which the self-relation is determined to being as well as to universality”, and, Hegel continues, “it determines the content as *being*.”¹⁸¹ This concretization of subjectivity by determining the content of the intelligence as being is accomplished through spoken language, which gives the sign an intuitive form, and an essential ontological structure of the sensuously intuitive is time.

§459 is the most critical passage concerning the relation of language and time in the *Geistesphilosophie*, particularly with respect to the relevance of intuition:

The intuition, which in its immediacy is initially something given and spatial, acquires, in so far as it is used as a sign, the essential determination of occurring only as sublated. Intelligence is this intrinsic negativity; thus the more appropriate shape of the intuition that is a sign is a reality in *time*,—a disappearance of the reality as soon as it is, and, in its further external psychical determinacy, a *positedness* by intelligence, emerging from its own (anthropological) naturalness,—the *sound* [*Ton*], the fulfilled externalization of self-announcing inwardness. Sound articulating itself further for determinate representations, *speech* [*Rede*], and its system, *language* [*Sprache*], give to sensations, intuitions, representations a second, higher reality than their immediate one, in general an existence that carries weight in the *realm of representation*.¹⁸²

The universal power of the intelligence is its negativity because negativity belongs to *Geist* in general, as announced in §382 of the Introduction to the *Geistesphilosophie*.¹⁸³ In determining itself as objective, the intelligence posits a sign, as a spoken word. This word-sound is finite because it vanishes through the medium of sound, a medium whose *being is temporal*.

Furthermore, the being of this word is intuitive because time is a structural aspect of the sensuous, and equally the most adequate form for the being of *Geist* as such. We can illustrate

¹⁸¹ PM §457R, 192-193; W10, 268.

¹⁸² PM §459, 194-195; W10, 270-271

¹⁸³ PM, §382, 15; W10, 25-26.

this same point syllogistically by claiming that language, generally, is the middle term between being and the active subject whose premier function is *to think*.

Strictly speaking, *Geist* as the intelligence is finite because finitude is the mode of being of all of the modes of Subjective *Geist*. This, in part, highlights the adequacy of the spoken word for determining the being of the intelligence, which is itself a way of conceiving subjectivity in all its versatility. Spoken words are finite because they are temporary; they disappear immediately after their pronouncement, but the sensible, intuitive existence of the sound of the spoken utterance brings the attention *home* to the speaking subject, which in the form of the word is intuitive and objectively determined.¹⁸⁴

Here in the *Geistesphilosophie*, Hegel appears to be advocating for some type of superiority of the spoken form of language, as opposed to the written. The supposed superiority of speech to writing for Hegel, which is claimed in the literature by Jacques Derrida (1972), Daniel J. Cook (1973), John McCumber (2006), and Michael Forster (2011), is sourced to §459.¹⁸⁵ While Hegel only addresses language as speech in the primary content paragraph of §459, the Remark does state that spoken language is the original language, largely because Hegel believes that a written, alphabetic language is phonetic at root.¹⁸⁶ Notably, Derrida links the privilege of speech to writing from §459 to Hegel's statement in the *Naturphilosophie* that time

¹⁸⁴ On the relation of intuition to signs, McCumber writes: "The spoken sound here is, though intuited, not strictly speaking an intuition; it is a 'sign.' The relationship of signs to intuitions for Hegel is rather intricate. A sign is, first of all, an intuition which, in being intuited, reveals itself to have no significance of its own and by so doing presents (*vorstellt*) something else—its meaning. The sign is thus not a mere intuition, but functions as the attaching of an intuition, which itself is of an external existent, to a universal meaning." John McCumber, *The Company of Words: Hegel, Language, and Systematic Philosophy* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 224. Hereafter cited as McCumber (1993).

¹⁸⁵ While Michael Forster argues that Hegel is following in the tradition of Herder in giving priority to spoken language, and that Hegel held this view continuously throughout his career, Forster is careful to also note that the idea that speech is the basis of all language is a particularly indefensible claim beyond a certain reflection upon chronological development. See Michael Forster, *German Philosophy of Language: From Schlegel to Hegel and Beyond* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 166.

¹⁸⁶ PM §249, 194-198; W10, 271-277.

is the truth of space, which Derrida interprets as teleological.¹⁸⁷ This confuses matters because the being and meaningfulness of writing is, for Hegel, dependent upon, rather than prior to, the phonetic aspect of language and refers to the phonetic nature of alphabetic scripts. Hence, what Derrida claims with respect to writing and speech cannot be said about the relation of space and time, for Hegel, and this is not to mention that we rejected the teleological reading of Hegel's *Naturphilosophie* in the previous chapter.

Against the presumptuousness of the claim that Hegel primatizes spoken language to written language *tout court*, we need only highlight Hegel's reason for discussing writing in §459R: it is not meant to dismiss writing, but rather to critique the significance of a symbolic, hieroglyphic script with respect to an alphabetical one. Instead of focusing on Hegel's dismissal of 'the hieroglyphic script of the Chinese', which Hegel claims is intimately connected to their 'stationary culture', the answer to why Hegel views alphabetical languages as superior is because we do not think in symbols or images, especially as concerns *philosophical thinking*. Hence, in §462R, Hegel states that *we think in names*, words.¹⁸⁸ The production of imaginative signs and symbols is not the fundamental element of thinking—language is. In fact, Hegel's Theoretical Psychology is making the argument that language is necessary for there to be thinking at all, and this is why the imagination is not the final word on rational thinking. In other words, we think in concepts that can be linguistically formulated, not intuited or creatively associative images or symbols; these all have roles in what constitutes the mental life of a rational individual, but they are not adequate for the rationality of philosophical discourse and its articulation of truth.

Consequently, it is not so much a matter of whether or not speech is the source of writing, or of one being more primary to the other; this is not a matter where Hegel makes a one-

¹⁸⁷ Jacques Derrida, "Le puits et la pyramide: Introduction à la sémiologie de Hegel," in *Marges de la philosophie*, 79-127 (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972), 103-104.

¹⁸⁸ PM §462R, 199; W10, 278.

sided claim concerning the nature of language and its forms. Furthermore, Hegel even adopts Wilhelm von Humboldt's claim that cultural development is connected to language development, so it follows from that that he references a similar developmental connection between speech and writing, which he articulates in §459R: "The development of spoken language is very closely connected with the habit of alphabetic writing, which is the only way in which spoken language acquires the determinacy and purity of its articulation."¹⁸⁹ Therefore, as a holistic ground for thought, language is shaped by the mutual relation of both speech and writing with each other.

Lastly, speech is connected to a specific time determination. Through its essential association with intuition, the spoken utterance is a means for subjective meaning to become objective, and become, as a sound, which is finitely temporal.¹⁹⁰ As the word comes to substitute for the immediate experiences of sensation and the images generated from those experiences, the process of the subjective becoming objective is one of the creation of meaningful language. Yet, if language is only spoken, then it is only ever finitely temporal, meaning that its being is dependent upon the momentariness of the act of speaking and sound creation, whereas thought is universal and enduring. As John McCumber explains, "It is characteristic of the spoken word, in contrast to other types of entity, to annihilate itself as it comes into being: a word vanishes as it sounds. This sort of annihilation is the peculiar, negative sort of being that a word has."¹⁹¹ The question is as to how the being of subjectivity, which is here theorized as the intelligence, is more substantive than the transient being of the spoken word? This question arises because thought is infinite, and also defined by the negative. There is, then, an apparent tension between

¹⁸⁹ PM §459R, 196; W10, 274.

¹⁹⁰ Hegel states this point in the Remark to §458: "The right place [*Die wahrhafte Stelle*] for the sign is the one indicated: intelligence—which in intuiting generates the form of time and of space, but appears as the recipient of the sensory content and as forming its representations out of this material—now gives its independent representations a determinate reality out of itself, *uses* the filled space and time, the intuition, *as its own*, deletes its immediate and peculiar content, and gives it another content as its meaning and soul." PM §458R, 194; W10, 270.

¹⁹¹ McCumber (1993), 221.

the transience of speech and the other dynamic of becoming, which is decisively non-finite. The two aspects of time cannot constitute a disjunction; they must be resolvable, especially in terms of Hegel's ontology of subjectivity. The matter at hand, then, is how this can be so. We contend that the beginning of an answer can be found in Hegel's conception of historiography.

2.3.2. Writing

In introducing the object of his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Hegel outlines three types [*Arten*] of history: original, reflective, and philosophical history. The first of these, *die ursprüngliche Geschichte*, is the type of history exemplified by the work of Herodotus and Thucydides, “whose descriptions are for the most part limited to deeds, events, and states of society, which they had before their eyes, and whose spirit they shared.”¹⁹² These fathers of history accomplished their task in a manner synonymous to that described in Hegel's account of cognition in the *Theoretical Psychology*, i.e., some intuitive and individual experience is transformed into a universal representation. As Hegel's lecture continues, “They [the *Geschichtsschreiber*] simply transferred what was passing in the world around them to the realm of mental representation. An external appearance is thus translated into an internal representation.”¹⁹³ Far from being simply a figurative cognitive *translation*—and Hegel's usage of *übertragen*, rather than *übersetzen* indicates that the verb (to translate) has a figurative intention here—the creation of history is fundamentally *linguistic*, as illustrated by Hegel's term *Geschichtsschreiber*. Translated literally, *Geschichtsschreiber*, which is a portmanteau of *Geschichte* and *Schreiber*, history and writer, means ‘*writer of history*’, a meaning quite obscured in the English translation of *Geschichtsschreiber* as ‘historian’ favored by some translators, e.g., Leo Rauch, J. Sibree, and Ruben Alvarado.

¹⁹² LPH, 1; W12, 11.

¹⁹³ LPH, 1 (translation modified); W12, 11.

The recognition of the role of writing in the term *Geschichtsschreiber* has not gone unnoticed in the scholarship on Hegel's approach to history. In *Real Words* (2007), Reid claims that *Geschichtsschreiber* would be better translated into English as historiographer, which means both the study of historical writing and the writing of history, whereas historian means a student or expert on history. According to Reid, by conceiving of history *historiographically*, Hegel is addressing how history is meaningful both *for us* and *through us*, dialogically. To be meaningful in that way history must, if nothing else, be *language*, and this is even more necessary when justifying the truth of history for science, as Reid does.¹⁹⁴ In a similar vein, Gilles Marmasse (2015) holds that Hegel's survey of the different types of historiography are preliminary approaches to the more general question: how do we write history?¹⁹⁵ Thus, while individual experiences, speeches, sensory intuitions, etc., are important as the building blocks for the work of the original historiographer, these are inscribed as writing, whose endurance far exceeds the transient nature of the spoken utterance. Through the accomplishments of the original historiographers, the spirit of the times of Herodotus and Thucydides, for example, are captured in writing. In this way certain deeds and events endure in writing beyond their momentary being in such a way that they can be meaningful comprehended *by* and *for us* years and years later. Hence, writing is unique and important due to its ability to endure, which far exceeds that of speech. However, despite having a semi-permanence that demonstrates a strong potential for endurance, there are many examples in history of written works being destroyed or lost.

Therefore, writing as such does not represent the transcendence of finitude.

¹⁹⁴ "The historiographical aspect of this philosophy, whose content is formed by original and reflective historiography, helps us understand how its Scientific embodiment is essentially language, whether expressed in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, in the *Philosophy of Right* or in the Objective Spirit section of the *Encyclopedia*. History may be many things, but unless it is language, it is nothing to Science." Jeffrey Reid, *Real Words: Language and System in Hegel* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 60. Hereafter cited as Reid (2007).

¹⁹⁵ Gilles Marmasse, *L'histoire hégélienne entre malheur et réconciliation* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2015), 15. Hereafter cited as Marmasse (2015).

There are two unique aspects of original history that distinguish its type of approach in a manner that is relevant for our current purposes herein. First, the original historiographer is concerned with the present, namely *their* present, and so the distance between the writer and their object is null. Hegel explains, “what is present and living in their environment is their essential material [*wesentlicher Stoff*]. . . The author’s spirit, and that of the actions he narrates, is *one and the same*.”¹⁹⁶ Second, and following in that vein, the historiographer need not be held accountable for exact details of their present, like the precise wording of the speeches recounted, since the exact details do not matter so much as the *Zeitgeist* that is represented.¹⁹⁷ Yet, despite this emphasis on the present time, the writing of this history makes the age recounted into something that is universally enduring and whose being does not depend on the moment of the lived present at all, as, for example, the spoken word does in its immediate, individual transience. Because history is written, it can become meaningful *for us* many centuries later in a different age, and this is one of the crucial aspects for conceiving the relationship between history and subjectivity.¹⁹⁸

For Hegel, history is both the manifestation and development of *Geist*, which is the meaningful human world of culture [*Bildung*], philosophy, art, politics, religion, etc. Just as the opening of the *Geistesphilosophie* states, knowledge of *Geist* is a self-knowledge; the history of *Geist* is the *human* story, which, as history, develops as finite becoming. Later, when reflected upon through the work of the original historian, for example, we comprehend from a different

¹⁹⁶ LPH, 2 (translation modified); W12, 12.

¹⁹⁷ LPH, 3; W12, 13.

¹⁹⁸ It is also worth noting that the discussion of language belongs to the account of Subjective *Geist*, while history is treated in Objective *Geist* (§548-§552). When we combine elements of each moment of the *Geistesphilosophie* in a manner in which they naturally come together in the writing of history, then the activity of historiography becomes one where the subjective significance of language described in the Theoretical Psychology becomes objective as history. To put the matter into metaphysical language, the writing of history involves the individual becoming universal because the finite individual of Subjective *Geist* only achieves justification socially and through a communally founded objective structure, like history.

standpoint. In other words, while this development occurs historically, it is not comprehended historically, but ahistorically *qua* truth. Therefore, like Logic, the development of *Geist* becomes ahistorically, and comprehending how this is so, for Hegel, is essentially the task of viewing his philosophy as a philosophy of the becoming of truth, which encapsulates a notion of time that more than just a finite becoming.

Furthermore, the notion of the present, which is fundamental to the method of the historiographer of original history, is significant at a macrocosmic level concerning the whole of a philosophy of history. This concept of the present on a grand scale is not a finite present; it is the philosophical present of the eternal ‘now’. A written history contains a series of events, largely chronological, that unfold temporally and compose the contents of that history itself. If the history is to be the manifestation of reason and the story of the freedom of *Geist*, and Hegel indeed thinks of history in this way, then the temporal chronology must be adequate to a logical counterpart, and Logic is, for Hegel, the realm of the ahistorical. Hence, in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel explains:

While we are thus concerned with the idea of spirit [*Geist*], and in the history of the world regard everything as only its manifestation, we have, in traversing the past, however extensive its periods, only to do with what is *present*; for philosophy, as occupying itself with what is true, has to do with the eternally present. Nothing in the past is lost to it, for the idea is ever present, the spirit [*Geist*] immortal, which is to say, it is not past and it is not not-yet, but is essentially *now*.¹⁹⁹

What the example of works of original history demonstrate is the role of writing, as the writing of history, in elevating the fleeting, individual events to something universal and enduring, and

¹⁹⁹ Hegel continues, “This necessarily implies that the present form of spirit [*Geist*] comprehends within it all earlier stages. These have indeed unfolded themselves in succession independently, but what spirit [*Geist*] is, it has always been in principle; distinctions are only the development of this implicit [*dieses Ansich*]. The life of the ever-present spirit [*Geist*] is a cycle of stages [*Stufen*], which looked at in one aspect still exist beside each other, and only as looked at from another point of view appear as past. Spirit [*Geist*] still possesses in its present depth the aspects that it seems to have left behind it.” LPH, 72-73; W12, 105.

as such the object of history is *not* finitely temporal because it is the becoming of the philosophical comprehension of the universal truth of history itself. Not only is this the ground of the objectivity and meaningfulness of a complete philosophy of history for us *qua* language, it is an expression of the subjective becoming objective, as mirrored in *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*: “The course of history does not show us the Becoming of things foreign to us, but the Becoming of ourselves and of our own knowledge.”²⁰⁰ That said, the justification of the thesis that history, the body of which has become finitely, leads to a conception of time as ahistorical cannot be fully justified without clarifying how Hegel’s mature views on the concept of history, as developed in the *Encyclopedia*, *Philosophy of Right*, and *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, naturally frame that inference.

2.4. Toward History

If one restricts oneself to the *Geistesphilosophie*, then there is a tendency to favor speech to writing. While some find this contextually appropriate, it is limited insofar as it is used to make general, systematic claims about the priority of speech for Hegel at large; it is also difficult because it ignores the objective determinacy gained by writing, which Hegel acknowledges.²⁰¹ Systematically, speech alone cannot be the premier type of language because speech is fleeting, temporal, individual, finite, and dependent on the limitedness of the sound that embodies it. As a vehicle for meaningful thought, language cannot just be finite, which speech is; so here enters the significance of a *written* language, whose being has an endurance that exceeds the temporally present ‘now’, as exemplified in Hegel’s views on historical writing and the meaningfulness of *Geist for us*. Therefore, when seen from within the frame of the ‘writing of history’, original

²⁰⁰ LHP I, 4; W18, 22.

²⁰¹ PM §459R, 196-197; W10, 274-275.

history presents an interesting case, which challenges a common reading of Hegel that affords priority to speech over writing.

Consequently, the claim that Hegel wholly prioritizes the spoken form of language to the written is not only a one-sided claim, and thus quite uncharacteristic of his method of thinking, but the priority of the speech to writing is also challenged when we extend our analysis to Hegel's understanding of history as well, even if only in a preliminary way. From the perspective of Hegel's philosophical system, *both* speech and writing have significance within the domain of the importance of language for the articulation of thinking in general, or, the subjective determining itself objectively. Moreover, as both speech and writing, language is better grasped as demonstrating a finite and non-finite becoming; the spoken utterance is a finite moment, albeit, following the *Geistesphilosophie*, an ontologically significant one, and the written word outlives its individuality, exceeds its creation, and represents the individual become universal as something true.

The connection between language and a twofold notion of time depends heavily on the way it *becomes*, which is fundamentally an ontological matter, just as the *Geistesphilosophie* is an account of the becoming of *Geist*, or, as world history is the history of *Geist*. The matter can also be framed as such: finite, historical becoming is comprehended philosophically in a non-finite, ahistorical way from the standpoint of philosophy itself.²⁰² There is, then, something specific to the concept of history that connects the twofold notion of time as becoming in an ontologically significant way for how subjectivity objectively determines itself with respect to language and time generally. In the concept of becoming, the finitude of sensation and the infinitude of thought are reconciled as two modes of the being of becoming. From exclusively

²⁰² This is the characterization of the 'time' of the philosophical standpoint in the Introduction to the *Naturphilosophie*: "Philosophy is timeless comprehension, of time too and of all things generally in their eternal mode." PN §247A, 16; W9, 26.

within Subjective *Geist*, which is decisively finite, the account of language and its relation with time ought to emphasize a finite becoming, which it does explicitly in the spoken word. The question is, then, as to whether or not language, like time, reveals non-finite becoming—and the road toward this issue, as completed in the role of language, subjectivity, and time in the *Science of Logic* is paved by history, which we have preliminarily argued requires the reconciliation of what is at stake in the classical notions of temporality and eternity.

Before beginning to address the ontological significance of time as ahistorical development for subjectivity and language, the limitations of a finite consideration of the being of the subject as temporal and as spoken language must be overcome. This is accomplished in the transition from Subjective to Objective *Geist* in the *Geistesphilosophie* and Hegel's account of history with respect to human socio-political communities, to which we shall now turn in the ensuing chapter.

Lastly, up to this junction, the material we have covered from Hegel's *Encyclopedia* has greatly emphasized time and subjectivity, and we have begun to show the essential implications of the relevance of language therein. In the following chapters we will shift the emphasis more toward language and subjectivity. Our intention is to argue for the importance of language for the being of subjectivity in ways that implicate the concept of time as finite and infinite or historical and ahistorical. It is the purpose of the ensuing chapters to make that issue explicit.

Chapter 3: The History of Subjectivity

In the previous two chapters we argued for the foundational ontological role of language and time for the becoming of subjectivity according to Hegel's view of being as becoming more generally. One of the central aspects of his concept of becoming is the finite temporal kind, which makes up the body, i.e., developmental form and content, of history. History, for Hegel, is neither a transcendental conceptual synthesis nor an *a priori* form of providence; rather, history is the reflection upon empirical human affairs, which, as we argued in the previous chapter, are known and meaningful in historiographical form. Here, we take up Hegel's concept of history as the place where the objective and actively determined being of subjectivity becomes realized and significant through political constitutions. There is, therefore, something essential to history as language, particularly as written language, that gives meaning to what we know as history, and that helps us grasp the becoming of subjectivity therein as well.

We begin with the transition from Subjective to Objective *Geist*, and then explore Hegel's concept of world history from the *Encyclopedia*. This account is consistent with the view of history as historiography and sets forth the pivotal conceptualization of knowable, historical subjectivity: the Spirit of a People, or *Volksgeist*. Next we address subjectivity in history through political constitutions, which are both linguistic embodiments of the *Volksgeist* of a particular nation and a stage in the development of world history. We conclude by reflecting upon the connection between freedom and language in history. Ultimately, in analyzing Hegel's statements about constitutions with respect to their importance for the cognition of history, we aim to argue for a conception of the becoming of subjectivity as manifested through history as the history of constitutions.

3.1. From Subjective to Objective *Geist*

The project of Hegel's *Geistesphilosophie* is about the knowledge of *Geist*, and particularly the development of the self-knowledge of *Geist*.²⁰³ In Subjective *Geist*, the subject is the finite individual, first conceived as immediate natural embodiment, but fully developed to the point of being a practical intelligence who thinks, has language, and is part of a community of like-minded individuals. The fulfillment of Subjective *Geist* concludes with the transition to a new mode of cognizing *Geist*, whereby *Geist* is not the finite individual, but the human *spiritual* community, the content of which is considered as Objective Spirit.²⁰⁴

The transition to Objective Spirit occurs in the Psychology's fulfillment with the unity of the theoretical and practical intelligence:

The actual free will is the unity of theoretical and practical *Geist*; *free will*, which is *for itself as free will*, now that the formalism, the contingency and limitedness of the previous practical content have sublated themselves. By the sublation of the mediation that was involved in all this, the will is the *immediate individuality* posited by itself, but an individuality that is also purified to *universal* determination, to freedom itself. The will has this *universal* determination as its object and purpose, in that it *thinks* itself, is aware of this concept of itself, is *will as free intelligence*.²⁰⁵

With the finite overcome in the surpassing of Subjective *Geist*, which addresses the finitude of *Geist*, the universal free intelligence has itself as freedom as its universal determination and, most importantly, it *thinks itself* as this freedom. However, although the free intelligence thinks itself as having freedom as its universal determination, this has not yet been fully developed and so it exists *for us* as a *potentiality*.

²⁰³ The task of rising to the command 'know thyself' is how Hegel opens the Introduction to the *Geistesphilosophie*. See PM §377, 4; W10, 9.

²⁰⁴ Given the change in the subject in Objective *Geist*, it is appropriate to translate *Geist* as Spirit; the sense of human community is not lost in translation and the subject is no longer conceived in its finite mode. Furthermore, since one of the central ontological concepts for the state and world history is the Spirit of a people [*Volksggeist*], we follow in line with Inwood's suggestion that "As the *Geist* of a 'people' [*Volk(es)*], *Geist* is more appropriately translated as 'spirit' than as 'mind'." Inwood, 568.

²⁰⁵ PM §481, 214; W10, 300-301.

Aristotle's ontology of potentiality and actuality from the *Metaphysics* is centrally incorporated in Hegel's system. For Aristotle, potentiality and actuality are ways of thinking about being as activity, whereby the truth and priority is always on the side of what is actual or actualized.²⁰⁶ All potentialities correspond to realizable actualities and there is no potency that does not become realized as an actuality. This dynamic characterization of being is especially fundamental to comprehending the transition to Objective Spirit because in paragraph §482R, which concludes Subjective *Geist*, Hegel states that the being of Spirit is now the actualization of freedom, which is also the *essence* of Spirit. However, this ontological characterization must be developed from out of its potency into actuality, which is what Objective and Absolute Spirit, ultimately, accomplish. Therefore, *for us*, the essence and being of Spirit is the actualization and comprehension of freedom, which is what Spirit is at the beginning of Objective Spirit, but only *potentially*, like the seed is potentially the actuality of the fully realized plant.²⁰⁷

In addition to an Aristotelian debt with regard to the significance of actuality in Hegel's philosophy, actuality is equally a category considered in the *Logic* under the Doctrine of Essence. Because actuality [*Wirklichkeit*] is Hegel's substantive ontological term in Objective Spirit, it is worth briefly qualifying the idea of this concept. In the *Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel introduces the concept of actuality as the immediate unity of essence and existence.²⁰⁸ What this means is that what is actual is the active unity of the manifestation and being of what is *posited*

²⁰⁶ Aristotle, *Metaphysics: Books VII-X (Zeta, Eta, Theta, Iota)*, trans. Montgomery Furth (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1985). Concerning the priority of actuality to potentiality, which Hegel incorporates in his philosophy as the priority of Spirit with respect to explaining Nature in his *Geistesphilosophie*, see Theta 8.

²⁰⁷ In the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel says, "it may be said of world history that it is the exhibition of spirit as spirit processes the knowledge of itself as it is in itself; and as the germ bears in itself the whole nature of the tree, and the taste and form of its fruits, so do the first traces of spirit virtually contain the whole of that history." LPH, 17; W12, 31. And again, later in the same Introduction, Hegel discusses the beginning of the history of Spirit in terms of a potentiality that will become actual; this process is necessary because it is necessary that a potency become actual, just as it is necessary that Spirit develop itself as, and into, self-knowing reason. LPH, 52; W12, 78.

²⁰⁸ EL §142, 213; W8, 279.

as actuality. While it is not necessary to explain all of the moments of actuality (i.e., possibility, condition, etc.), it is important that we grasp the fact that actuality is intended as an ontological term for describing being as activity, which is consistent with Hegel's more comprehensive ontology of being as becoming. Furthermore, it is under the heading of actuality that we encounter discussions of necessity, freedom, and reciprocal action, each of which describe the dynamic nature of actual wholes.²⁰⁹ Hence, in giving primacy to the *actuality* of Spirit in Objective Spirit, Hegel is emphasizing the active, relational structure of what there is according to the infinite, self-relation of Spirit to itself in its historical liberation, i.e., out of its potency into the living reality that it essentially is, as *history*.

One way in which the potentiality of Spirit is developed is through world history, which is equally Spirit's being, the manifestation of its essence as freedom, and the ground for its self-comprehension. The explicit treatment of history in Hegel's system occurs in three places: (i) Objective Spirit in the *Encyclopedia*; (ii) the *Philosophy of Right* [*Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*], the elaborated version of Objective Spirit published independently in 1821; and (iii) the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. The *Lectures* are Hegel's substantial account of a philosophy of history, whereas the accounts of world history from the 1830 *Encyclopedia* and earlier *Philosophy of Right* are intended as summaries of the concept of world history.²¹⁰ Lastly,

²⁰⁹ Freedom is the truth of necessity, so it is superiorly determined as such. Reciprocal action is a means of conceiving the formal necessity of relational structures, but it is also superseded in the primacy of freedom. That said, Hegel acknowledges the use of the category of reciprocal action for historical studies in §156A: "In the case of historical studies, for instance, the question discussed first is whether the character and the customs of a people are the cause of its constitution and laws, or whether, conversely, they are the effect of the constitution. Then the discussion moves on to interpreting of both terms, character and customs on the one hand, and constitution and laws on the other, from the standpoint of reciprocal action, so that the cause is also the effect, in the same relation in which it is cause, and the effect is at the same time the cause, in the same relation in which it is effect." However, this approach is, according to Hegel, unsatisfactory and insufficient, since it tells us nothing about the laws, the constitution, or the customs themselves. It is no surprise, then, that this approach is not legitimized in Objective Spirit. EL §156A, 231; W8, 301-302.

²¹⁰ As clarified succinctly by Gilles Marmasse, there is a difference between history and the philosophy of history, for Hegel. The former belongs to Objective Spirit, and the latter to Absolute Spirit *qua* philosophy. This is an important distinction to clarify for our purposes here because we are interested in the relationship of history and

despite its popularity, the 1807 *Phenomenology of Spirit* is *not* the proper source for Hegel's views on history. It is worth noting the problematic nature of that work as a source for Hegel's philosophy of history, which we expand upon briefly in the following. Then, we elaborate the later publication of the *Encyclopedia* and provide an account of the concept of world history as manifested therein. With that foundation established, we define the notion of subjectivity as *Volksgeist*, or Spirit of a People, which is central to Hegel's reflections on history. We will conclude with justifying the relationship of history and subjectivity in terms of the substantive role of political constitutions, as written embodiments of a *Volksgeist*, for the cognition of history.

3.2. History and Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*

Hegel's first major publication, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), was originally conceived as an introduction to his tripartite system of philosophy, of which we only have the *Science of Logic* (excluding the *Encyclopedia* versions of the *Natur-* and *Geistesphilosophie*).²¹¹ As both an earlier work and an introduction to his philosophy in general, it is a text that must be approached with caution, i.e., we must abstain from making absolute claims about Hegel's mature systematic views from only the *Phenomenology*. Richard Dien Winfield summarizes the contentiousness of the issue as follows: "Most readers have treated Hegel's phenomenology as if it were not a propaedeutic introduction that paves the way for genuine philosophical thinking,

subjectivity in Objective Spirit, which deals with the concept of history and political constitutions. Hence, we prioritize the *Encyclopedia* account of Objective Spirit. That said, reference to Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, and specifically its Introduction, is often necessary to further substantiate the outline of history from the *Encyclopedia*; thus, we refer to the *Lectures* when necessary. Lastly, Marmasse also states that Hegel's authentic, speculative philosophy of history is not to be found exclusively in the often-cited Introduction, but in the course of the entire *Lectures* themselves. Given our specific focus, we are not attempting to elaborate a complete account of Hegel's philosophy of history, and therefore we employ the Introduction only insofar as it corroborates what is explicit in Objective Spirit. Marmasse (2015), 33 and 11.

²¹¹ Here it is appropriate to translate *Geist* as Spirit, since it retains its intention in translation. We do not follow the dated English translation of *Geist* as Mind by J.B. Baille.

but as if it were a systematic work of philosophy proper. Thereby they have employed the arguments that the knowing under observation makes as if they were unqualified philosophical arguments.”²¹² For example, Alexandre Kojève famously originally interpreted the *Phenomenology*, and Hegel’s philosophy more generally, as the history of human self-interpretation by making the dialectic of master and slave from the fourth chapter the focal point for explaining Hegelianism.²¹³ Contrarily, for Hegel, it is the whole that is the truth, and although parts are revelatory, they are not the final word.²¹⁴ And of course this is not to mention the problems with drawing conclusions about the substance of a philosophical argument from strictly an introduction to it. Therefore, some brief comments on the problematic nature of history in the *Phenomenology* will suffice and help better frame Hegel’s mature, Berlin reflections on the concept of history.

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a historical work, but the sense in which it is a ‘history’ is complicated. That the *Phenomenology* is a history is clearly stated by Hegel in the work’s Introduction: “The series of configurations which consciousness goes through along this road is, in reality, the detailed history of the *education* [*Bildung*] of consciousness itself to the standpoint of Science.”²¹⁵ History is also equally the outcome and result of the *Phenomenology*, as manifest in the final chapter as comprehended history [*die begriffene Geschichte*].²¹⁶ Far from being opposed, the education of consciousness or Spirit and comprehended history are fundamentally

²¹² Richard Dien Winfield, *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit: A Critical Rethinking in Seventeen Lectures* (Plymouth, UK: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2013), 12.

²¹³ Following this interpretation, Alexandre Koyré describes Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* as a philosophical anthropology. See “Hegel à Iéna”, in *Études d’histoire de la pensée philosophique*, 147-189 (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1971). Hereafter cited as *Hegel à Iéna*.

²¹⁴ “The True is the whole. But the whole is nothing other than the essence consummating itself through its development. Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a *result*, that only in the *end* is it what it truly is; and that precisely in this consists its nature, viz. to be actual, subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself.” PS, 11; W3, 24. We will return to the idea that the true is the whole in the next chapter.

²¹⁵ PS, 50; W3, 73

²¹⁶ PS, 493; W3, 591.

related insofar as both concern the cultivation of self-knowledge, the apex of which is reached in the *Phenomenology* in absolute knowing.

In our view, the primary problem resides in how the *Phenomenology* is neither a philosophy of history nor a history of philosophy. If Hegel claimed the work to be either of those, we would be forced to conclude that the work is a complete, but still very intriguing, failure.²¹⁷ So what kind of history is this history of consciousness, which Hegel calls a *Phenomenology of Spirit*? This is the central question because the notion of history that is proper to the *Phenomenology* makes it impossible to disentangle history from *historicism*.

The *Phenomenology* is a singular accomplishment insofar as it demonstrates Hegel's broad understanding of philosophy, science, history, politics, culture, religion, and art. As Ludwig Siep lauds, "None of his predecessors sought so thoroughly to historicize all religious, philosophical, and scientific standpoints. And none of them gave so systematic a presentation of the genesis of the modern subject free from all bonds of tradition, as Hegel does in the *Phenomenology*."²¹⁸ Hegel's ability to employ historical examples as illustrations of various modes of consciousness and Spirit emphasize how the contents of history can figure as representatives of a form of knowing belonging to the various stages before true knowing, wherein knowing has no specific content for itself except itself—this is absolute knowing.²¹⁹

From these considerations, a key questions emerges regarding the historicism of the

²¹⁷ H.S. Harris comments: "The Science of Experience is properly the speculative philosophy of history as applied to and perfectly exemplified in the history of Western Europe as one self-constituted, and self-conscious (i.e. universally recognized) community. Seen thus, in its *proper* perspective, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a far more interesting essay in the speculative philosophy of history, than the *Philosophy of World History* as conceived and executed at Berlin in the context of Hegel's mature system." H.S. Harris, *Hegel's Ladder II: The Odyssey of Spirit* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Inc., 1997), 732-733. Hereafter cited as *Hegel's Ladder II*.

²¹⁸ Ludwig Siep, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by Daniel Smyth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 7.

²¹⁹ "It is Spirit that knows itself in the shape of Spirit, or a *comprehensive knowing* [in terms of the Notion]. Truth is not only *in itself* completely identical with certainty, but it also has the shape of self-certainty, or it is in its existence [*Dasein*] in the form of self-knowledge." PS, 485; W3, 582-583.

Phenomenology: what is the relationship between historical content and systematic argumentative form?²²⁰

H.S. Harris explores the richness of the historical content of the *Phenomenology* in unmatched detail in his two-volume commentary, *Hegel's Ladder* (1997). The work of Harris is unparalleled and is a substantial contribution to our understanding of Hegel's difficult text and the depth of its contents. However, if we focus on uncovering the historical and literary aspects of every shape and figure that appears in Hegel's gallery of Spirit, as Harris does in *Hegel's Ladder*, then we run the risk of obfuscating the text's explicit systematic arguments, which appeal, according to John Burbidge (2001), to common experience.²²¹ The issue can equally be stated that the form is sacrificed to the content.²²² The problem is that the work is replete with historical content, which fundamentally determines the form of the argument in a strong commitment to historicism. Therefore, the history of the *Phenomenology* is the historicism of defunct epistemological and ontological positions that are overcome so that the presuppositionless project of the *Logic*, and Hegelian science more generally, can *begin*. Lastly,

²²⁰ Another possible question concerning the relationship between the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and history is the following: what is the connection between a philosophical work and the time within which it is written? A philosophy responds to the needs of its epoch just as much as it reflects on the history of philosophy. At the end of his life Hegel intended to produce a second edition of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which indicates the need for a new *Phenomenology*, one different from its original 1807 formulation and notably written during a time of revolution, both political and philosophical. While we will never know exactly what this new *Phenomenology* might have looked like, Hegel did leave behind a note indicating that it should not be changed, but equally that it belonged to the time of its composition, a time where the "abstract *Absolute*" held sway." Michael Forster provides the text for the note as an appendix to *Hegel's Idea of Phenomenology of Spirit* (1998). It was originally collected in the Hoffmeister edition of Hegel's works as "Zur Feststellung des Textes" and dated to 1831. The core of Hegel's system would come to be developed after the publication of the *Phenomenology* in 1807, and it exists largely as the *Science of Logic*, the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*, and the *Philosophy of Right*, which comprise Hegel's mature, published works. It should go without saying that Hegel's original philosophical system is refined in and by those works. Hence, his allusion to a time of the 'abstract absolute', then, appears to be a reference to a time when Hegel's idealistic system was not concretely differentiated from that of either Fichte or Schelling. For example, in the *Encyclopedia* *Phenomenology*, Hegel levels this claim contra Fichte (See PM, §415A, 145; W10, 203). And the claim that the abstract absolute refers to Schelling is supported by Klaus Düsing. See Klaus Düsing "Hegels „Phänomenologie“ und die Idealistische Geschichte des Selbstbewusstseins." *Hegel-Studien* 28 (1993): 103-126.

²²¹ John Burbidge, "Secondness," *The Owl of Minerva* 33 (2001), 31.

²²² We do not mean to fault Harris by any means. Rather, we are merely attempting to define our own approach to the work. It is reasonable to affirm that a work as rich as the *Phenomenology* allows for differing interpretations.

the need for an introduction to Hegel's system, like the *Phenomenology*, is questionable given his inclusion of a substantial *Vorbegriff*, or 'preliminary conception', in the *Encyclopedia*, which treats similar metaphysical and epistemological positions as the *Phenomenology*, but on more conceptual terms. Ultimately, Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is not the proper place to determine Hegel's views on history, since the work tends to problematize history, rather than specifying it, and because history receives its own explicit treatment in the *Encyclopedia*.

3.3. The Concept of World History

In the *Encyclopedia*, the section on world history [*Die Weltgeschichte*] occurs in the third moment of the third subdivision of Objective Spirit, the state.²²³ In the account of the state, the notion of a human community as a specifically determined and individuated people [*Volk*] is achieved. Such peoples, or *nations*, are defined by what Hegel calls their "determinate Spirit of a people" [*Der bestimmte Volksgeist*], and the essence of their *Volksgeist* is what is universally cognized in their history.²²⁴ Hence, the account of world history opens with Hegel making the claim that the history of a people is immanent to their determinate *Volksgeist*, rather than being an abstract hypostatization by some reflective thinker.²²⁵ The reason for this is because the *Volksgeist* is a really determinate particular people whose existence has the form of *time*, which we recognize as an ontological determination.²²⁶

²²³ World history belongs exclusively to the domain of Spirit. Hegel states this explicitly in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, and this is supported by the place of world history in the *Encyclopedia*, where the account of world history occurs in §548 to §552. The other survey of world history is found in the *Philosophy of Right*, which is an expanded version of Objective Spirit and still belongs to the domain of a philosophy of Spirit at large. See LPH, 15; W12, 29.

²²⁴ PM §548, 246; W10, 347.

²²⁵ Hegel returns to this point in §549R where he comments that Spirit does not hover over history as something might hover over water, which is a metaphor that rejects an epiphenomenal account of Spirit.

²²⁶ "It [the determinate spirit of a people] is in *time* and, as regards content, essentially has a *particular* principle and has to go through a development, determined by this principle, of its consciousness and its actuality; it has a *history* within itself." PM §548, 246; W10, 347. A correlative assertion occurs in the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, where Hegel explains that the existence of particular peoples has the form of time. See LPH, 73; W12, 105-106.

Granted that there are particular peoples whose being has the form of time, which we affirm as both coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be, the particular histories of particular peoples are themselves changing according to the notion of time as becoming. Hence, after asserting that peoples, whose *Volksgeist* has the form of time, have histories that are immanent to the development of their being, Hegel draws a distinction between two types of history, which clarifies the concept of world history more determinately. We read, “As a limited spirit its independence is a subordinate matter; the spirit passes over into *universal world history*, the events of which display the dialectic of the particular national spirits [*der besonderen Völkergeister*], the *judgment of the world* [*das Weltgericht*].”²²⁷ Here, Hegel is distinguishing between the histories of particular peoples (i.e., limited Spirits like specific nations) and the history of all particular peoples or nations combined—universal world history.²²⁸ Moreover, and perhaps most significantly, the relationship between the two is described as *dialectical*, which, along with the preceding comments about time, implies that histories are themselves the dynamic essences of peoples. If the being of a people and their Spirit is determined as time, and because time is Hegel’s concept for grasping the coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be of what there *is*, then the general idea is that histories themselves are dynamically correlative with respect to the peoples whose essence any historical account aims toward.

The development of world history is dialectical and the particular interaction among determinate nations of warfare and peace agreements is one example of this type of relationship among individuated peoples. World history, more generally, is the universal that includes individual, national histories, and the particular interactions among individuated nations, as its

²²⁷ PM §548; W10, 347.

²²⁸ In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel describes universal world history as including the particular, limited Spirits as ideal. PR §341, 216; W7, 503.

moments and stages.²²⁹ “As this development is in time and in reality [*Dasein*] and thus takes the form of history, its individual moments and stages [*Stufen*] are the national spirits,” so world history is the infinite universal that includes the finite and limited within it, but, peculiarly, as Hegel continues, “each spirit, being individual and natural in a qualitative determinacy, is destined to occupy only *one stage*, and accomplish only *one* task [*Geschäft*] in the whole deed [*Tat*].”²³⁰ Consequently, world history has the form of the coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be of nations and peoples, and although only one limited Spirit holds the world stage at a particular moment, *all* together participate in the development of the universal totality that is world Spirit, *Weltgeist*.

World history is a way of thinking about being and time through the becoming of Spirit on the world stage. In §549, Hegel explains:

This movement is the path of liberation for the spiritual substance, the deed [*Tat*] by which the absolute final aim [*Endzweck*] of the world is realized in the world, by which the spirit that is at first only *in itself* makes its way to consciousness and self-consciousness and thus to the revelation and actuality of its essence, the essence that is in and for itself, and also sees itself become the externally *universal* spirit, the *world-spirit*.²³¹

Hegel’s account of history here is strongly consistent with the overall project of his *Geistesphilosophie* that *Geist* come to know itself. It is, therefore, a central area whereby *Geist* becomes more self-aware through the consciousness of its own being as time. The movement of world history is the road whereby the world Spirit liberates itself through the revelation of its own essence to itself, and toward the full self-awareness of itself as the self-comprehending

²²⁹ Because the account of history occurs in Objective Spirit, the limited consideration of a finite, individuate *Geist* of Subjective *Geist* is overcome in the notion of spiritual human communality. This distinction between the Subjective and Objective aspects of the *Geistesphilosophie* is relevant to Hegel’s account of history insofar as Hegel distinguishes between individual and universal history, the latter being the intention behind the term ‘world history’.

²³⁰ PM §549; W10, 347. The same point is made explicitly in the *Philosophy of Right*, where Hegel claims both that only one nation can dominate an epoch at one time and that a nation can only be so dominant *once*. The consequence is that when one nation is dominant, the others are derivative and world history is defined by that particular dominant Spirit at that particular time. See PR §347, 217-218; W7, 505-506.

²³¹ PM §549, 246; W10, 347.

Spirit of Absolute Spirit. Therefore, reflection on the history of Spirit and its development means awareness of the *becoming* of Spirit as *Weltgeist*. However, while the importance of a history of Spirit is manifest with respect to the being of Spirit and the overall project of the *Geistesphilosophie*, that Hegel would claim there to be a final aim to history requires explanation. His awareness of this issue is why he devotes almost the entirety of the Remark to §549 to clarifying the idea of an aim to history.

The suggestion of a final aim [*Endzweck*] to history immediately conjures up the ideas of predetermined historical progression and historical teleology, which, granted the horrors of the 20th Century, are especially troublesome. As Hegel himself acknowledges at the outset of §549R:

That the presupposition is made, in the case of history, of an *aim* that is in and for itself, and of the determinations that develop from that aim according to the concept, is called an *a priori* view of history, and philosophy has been reproached with writing history [*Geschichtsschreiben*] *a priori*. On this point, and on history-writing in general, we need to go into further detail.²³²

Hegel begins the Remark as such in order to clearly highlight the sense in which he does *not* condone an *a priori* treatment of history as the proper philosophical treatment of it, which he goes on to justify.²³³ However, concerning the idea of history-writing [*Geschichtsschreiben*] as such, Hegel takes no issue, and this Remark provides a succinct account of how the task of historiography should be framed.²³⁴

²³² PM §549R, 246; W10, 347.

²³³ In the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel rejects the idea that the movement of world history is either arbitrary or the work of blind fate, but the justification of this claim depends on the fact that we already know at this point in the *Encyclopedia* (or system) that Spirit is reason, and that what Spirit is, is what becomes as the self-knowledge of Spirit. PR §342, 216; W7, 504. And again in the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel explains to his audience that every philosophical treatment of history approaches its object as rational, and although this appears as a presupposition with respect to history, it is *not* a presupposition with respect to philosophy as such; rather, philosophy as such demonstrates that what there *is*, is rational, and so history is no exception to this ontological form. Moreover, the rationality of the essence of history will also reveal itself through a thoroughgoing consideration of the object of world history itself, and this is what the whole of Hegel's philosophy of history accomplishes. See LPH, 8-10; W12, 20-22.

²³⁴ That the historian [*Geschichtsschreiber*] is engaged in the writing of history was justified in the previous chapter.

The commitment to an *a priori* account of history is a one-sided and subjective (in the pejorative sense) treatment of history. “What deserves censure,” Hegel explains, “can only be the presupposition of arbitrary representations or thoughts and wanting to find and represent events and deeds in conformity with them.”²³⁵ This treatment of history attempts to construct a narrative according to an arbitrary whim, and is thusly biased with respect to the contents of history, i.e., it is insufficiently objective. Against, this *partial* approach, Hegel turns toward a comparison between a historian and a judge, which he intends as a means for clarifying the idea of an aim to history, especially with respect to the methods of historiography.

In the administration of a case, there is the expectation that the judge be impartial, that “a judge should regard both of the contending parties with equal disinterest.”²³⁶ However, the impartiality of the judge with respect to the contending parties is only possible if the judge is partial to something essential to the proper adjudication of the judicial process, namely *justice*. Hence, the impartial administration of a court case by a judge requires that the judge be partial to justice, which challenges the idea that complete and total impartiality is a reasonable procedure.²³⁷ In other words, the final aim of a case administered by a judge is justice, but without sacrificing what is reasonably expected as impartiality toward the content.

By way of the example of the partiality of the judge, whose activity is clearly defined with respect to a final aim, Hegel turns to the historian and notes that without any aim, or discernable object, the composition of the ‘historian’ would be no more than an arbitrary amalgam of events “in their unrelated and thoughtless particularity.”²³⁸ Hegel’s general point

²³⁵ PM §549R, 246-247; W10, 348.

²³⁶ PM §549R, 247; W10, 349.

²³⁷ “In the case of the judge it is at the same time assumed that he would administer his office foolishly and badly, if he did not have an interest, in fact an exclusive interest in justice, if he did not have that for his aim and his sole aim, and if he abstained from judgment. We can call this requirement on the judge *partiality* for justice, and we know very well here how to distinguish this from a *subjective* partiality.” PM §549R, 247; W10, 349.

²³⁸ PM §549R, 247; W10, 349.

about the work of the historian and historiography is that history has an aim because it must have an object; the historian has a presupposed aim because otherwise there would be no criteria to decide which events are important for the narrative account, e.g., the fall of the Roman empire can be the object of a history whereby a historian sets out with an aim to describe that object, which obviously evidences some form of partiality on the part of the historian.²³⁹ However, the limited nature of the objects of the historian and the seemingly unending task of enumerating every detail of every nation and their activities is not exhaustive of the final aim of world history. What, then, is the final aim of universal world history? For Hegel, the answer, as justified by philosophy itself, is *reason*.

According to Hegel, it belongs to philosophy to settle whether or not there is a final aim to history, which he embraces as *reason*. Significantly, this is *not* the commitment to an *a priori* account of history.²⁴⁰ His claim is that if we set out to examine history in and for itself, then what we will uncover is reason, and equally, therefore, *ourselves*. Hegel states:

That in the course of the spirit (and the spirit is a spirit that does not just hover over history as over the waters, but weaves in it and is the sole moving force) freedom, i.e. the development determined by the concept of spirit, is the determinant and only its own concept is the spirit's final aim, i.e. truth, since the spirit is consciousness, or in other words that *reason* is in history, will at least be a plausible belief, but it is also a cognitive insight of philosophy.²⁴¹

²³⁹ “This much is admitted, that a history must have an *object*, e.g., Rome, its fortunes, or the decline of the grandeur of the Roman Empire. Little reflection is needed to see that this is the presupposed aim which lies at the basis both of the events themselves and of the assessment of them to decide which of these events have importance, i.e., a closer or more remote relation to the aim. A history without such an aim and without such an assessment would be only an idiotic effusion of the imagination, not even a fairy tale, for even children expect some interest in their stories, i.e., at least a hint of an aim and the relation of events and actions to it.” PM §549R, 247-248; W10, 349-350.

²⁴⁰ “That a final aim lies in and for itself at the basis of history, and essentially world-history, that the aim has actually been and is being realized in it—the plan of providence—, that in general *reason* is in history, must for itself be settled philosophically, and thus as necessary in and for itself.” PM §549R, 246; W10, 347-348.

²⁴¹ PM §549R, 249; W10, 352. Concerning the example of the judge, Hegel makes reference to Spirit as the ‘absolute judge’ with respect to history in the Addition to §259 of the *Philosophy of Right*: “The one and only absolute judge which always asserts its authority over the particular is the spirit which as being in and for itself, and which reveals itself as the universal and as the active genus in world history.” PR §259A, 282; W7, 406.

Therefore, the final aim of history can be described as follows: the final aim of world history is nothing more than the continued becoming of Spirit through the transcending of the present and our subsequent philosophical reflections upon it and its own self-apprehension—history has an aim, but it does not end and is not, therefore, in any sense *over*.²⁴² Furthermore, there is reason in history because the development of Spirit as freedom is Spirit's *own* final aim, and as such it is the aim of a history of Spirit through the self-elevation of Spirit to its own fully actualized self-awareness.

Since Spirit is its own aim, knowledge of world history belongs to world history, which is why Spirit's knowledge of itself through its dialectical, historical development is crucial to its rising to the task of becoming self-knowing Spirit, i.e., to the elaboration of 'reason in history'. As Hegel explains in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, "World history shows how the spirit gradually comes to the consciousness of and willingness regarding the truth; this dawns on it; it discovers salient principles, and at last it arrives at full consciousness."²⁴³ Grasping this idea is fundamental to the proper understanding of Hegel's philosophical concept of history in general, namely that history is rational because it exhibits active, rational progression *for us* who reflect upon it. Hence, the meaning of the claim that there is reason in history is that we recognize ourselves in *our* history insofar as it *becomes* our history. As Reid comments, "we are what we are through history and that history is what it is through us."²⁴⁴ Thus, history is not, for Hegel, merely the serial account of events or any set of changes because the enumeration of externally connected events does not fulfill the task of Spirit's self-recognition in history as

²⁴² The same general point is advanced as a possible interpretation by Inwood in his commentary to §549: "The world has no 'final aim' in the sense of a dramatic conclusion towards which it progresses: its final aim always lies in the historian's present." Inwood, 596.

²⁴³ LPH, 49; W12, 73-74.

²⁴⁴ Reid (2007), 59.

reason in history.²⁴⁵ This can also be explained with recourse to the fact that the bad infinite is not definitive of what constitutes a rational structure, especially as concerns time as becoming *qua* the true infinite, which is isomorphic to the rational and dynamic structure of subjectivity.

As the progressive movement of reason, history demonstrates the collective subject, *Spirit*, coming to know itself. Hence, in what follows, we clarify the specific sense of subjectivity that is relevant to the self-knowledge of Spirit and history in order to pose the question of the relation between subjectivity and history in terms of the substantive role of constitutions, which define the *Volksgeist* of a nation in a written, historical form.

3.4. History, Reason, and the *Volksgeist*

In her book *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (2009), Susan Buck-Morss states that Hegel was the last person to seriously think through the central question of the philosophy of history, which is: “how are we to make sense out of the temporal unfolding of collective, human life?”²⁴⁶ The meaningful essence of this unfolding, collective life is Hegel’s well-known universal subject—*Spirit*. Thus, following Reid’s claim that “history is a process of knowing,” we affirm that making sense of human history means making sense of Spirit.²⁴⁷ As noted above, there is reason in history because history is the history of Spirit. Clarifying the idiosyncratic

²⁴⁵ We follow Reid’s interpretation of the important connection between reason and history as founded in an important subjective point. Reason is, according to Reid, ‘human self-recognition in otherness’, which means that recognizing ourselves in the past implies the overcoming of the otherness of the past and its transition to *our* past (see *Real Words*, chapter 5). This approach and emphasis on subjectivity and reason is therefore distinct from any identification between history and some arbitrarily connected sequence of events. J.M. Frizman summarizes this issue succinctly: “History is not simply a sequence of events, according to Hegel, but rather it is the narrative of the progressive realization of freedom. That history is progressive is linked to self-consciousness and self-determination. Humans continually understand more fully their social institutions and themselves as their own creations, not as natural or divine givens.” J.M. Frizman, *Hegel* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2014), 119-120. Hegel himself provides further elaboration on this matter in the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, where he distinguishes the different approaches to history. While he advocates for the philosophical approach, the account of a sequence and set of events belongs to the reflective approach to history. LPH, 4; W12, 14-15.

²⁴⁶ Susan Buck-Morss, *Hegel, Haiti, and Universal History* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 109.

²⁴⁷ Reid (2007), 67.

notion of Spirit at stake in and for history, for Hegel, will lead to the overall explication of the ontology of subjectivity expounded therein.

One of the most central, foundational, and fundamental elements of Hegel's concept of history is that history has a rational structure, which makes it like, and knowable by, Spirit as such. Hence, history belongs within the *Geistesphilosophie*, and with respect to history's rational essence, there is only a history of Spirit coming to find and know its essence as reason in its own history.²⁴⁸ As Karin de Boer comments, "As far as its occurrence in world history is concerned, the concept of spirit exclusively refers to the mode of thought that underlies the efforts of successive civilizations both to organize themselves in a rational way and to comprehend the principle of this self-organization."²⁴⁹ Specifically in Objective Spirit, the crucial conception of subjectivity, of Spirit, and of Spirit's active rational essence, especially as concerns history, is the idea of the Spirit of a people or nation as *Volksgeist*.

A people or a nation—both of which are suitable translations of Hegel's usage of the German word *Volk*—is that aspect whereby the state is immediately the active being of a determinate people, whose essence is equally that of the state as a single, but internally complex, totality.²⁵⁰ As Hegel defines it in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, a *Volksgeist* is "a determinate spirit, which constructs itself into an existent world, which then stands and exists, in

²⁴⁸ That there can only be a history of Spirit, for Hegel, means that nature has no history. On this matter Hegel is distinct from Hobbes, for example, who distinguishes between natural and civil history in chapter nine of *Leviathan*. However, this idea is not unique to Hegel or the tradition of German idealistic philosophies. For example, in *Physical Geography* (1802), Kant rules out that there is such a thing as a natural history; of nature, according to Kant, there can only ever be descriptions. See Immanuel Kant, "Physical Geography (1802)," In *Natural Science*, 434-679, trans. Olaf Reinhardt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 450. Following in line with Kant's view, in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel characterizes the description of changes in nature as *boring*, most explicitly because nature is cyclically repetitive and produces nothing new, especially as compared to the type of change proper to the history of Spirit, or uniquely human life and affairs. Concerning history and the history of Spirit, Hegel highlights the underlying principle of development [*Entwicklung*], as central to the realization of Spirit, i.e., in history we see the actualization of reason as both the essence of history and Spirit as such. LPH, 49-50; W12, 74-75.

²⁴⁹ Karin de Boer, "Hegel's account of the Present," In *Hegel and History*, ed. Will Dudley, 51-67 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), 52-53.

²⁵⁰ PM §545, 245; W10, 345.

its religion, in its ritual worship, in its usages, in its constitution and political laws, in the entire extent of its institutions, in its doings and deeds. That is its work – that is what this people *is*.”²⁵¹

Hence, if world history is the coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be of particular nations and individuals, then there must be something characteristic to nations, and more determinately as states, that makes them like Spirit—this is the *Volksgeist*.

The *Volksgeist* is the central conception of subjectivity with respect to the essence of a nation, which Hegel conceives as concretely fulfilled as a state. The subjectivity of the nation is objectively determined in the state, since it is only in the state that there is a unified totality with an internally complex, self-determining structure. Hegel writes, “For spirit in its self-consciousness must become objectified to itself, and objectivity involves, in the first instance, the emergence of differences which make up a totality of distinct spheres of the objective spirit.”²⁵²

One of the manners in which subjectivity as *Volksgeist* is objectively guaranteed in and by the state is through a state’s political constitution, which explicitly defines the state’s internal structure and articulates its overall essence. Furthermore, the subjectivity of particular peoples must be grounded in something that lends itself to defining the history of those peoples and which equally makes the writing of history possible, since Hegel views the historian as a writer of history, as we argued in the previous chapter. Hence, we claim that it is through political constitutions that we have an objective history of the development of subjectivity in its being as both the writing of history and the writing of constitutions. In what follows we will expand upon Hegel’s notion of political constitutions and demonstrate their profound importance, as written documents, for Hegel’s notion of history, as a mode of, and reflection upon, historical becoming.

²⁵¹ LPH, 68; W12, 99.

²⁵² LPH, 48; W12, 73.

3.5. Subjectivity, History, and Constitutions

The third stage of Objective Spirit is Ethical Life [*Sittlichkeit*]. It includes three primary moments within it, as moments of the development of Spirit in its objective mode. After the family and civil society, the third subdivision of Ethical Life is the state. The three stages of the state in Objective Spirit are (α) Constitutional Law [§537-§546], (β) External Public Law [§547], and (γ) World History [§548-§552]. Having already provided a survey of Hegel's idea of world history, we will now return to the immediate moment of the state's development in political constitutions in order to show how constitutions are necessary for history and the self-consciousness of Spirit as world history.²⁵³ Ultimately, Hegel's idea of Spirit, and especially of Objective Spirit, is fundamentally linked to political constitutions.

Hegel singles out the significance of a constitution with respect to the state in two paragraphs, which each serve as introductory outlines of the division of the state. First, in §517, which concludes the introductory paragraphs to the whole section on Ethical Life, Hegel asserts that the constitution [*Staatsverfassung*] is “the self-conscious substance, as the spirit developed to an organic actuality.”²⁵⁴ Second, when introducing the tripartite division of the state in §536, Hegel describes the constitution [*Verfassung*], or the internal state constitutional law [*das innere Staatsrecht*], as the state's “internal structure as self-relating development.”²⁵⁵ For the state to relate to itself as such, it must be both a whole and aware of itself, especially if it is to relate to itself generally as totality, or specifically with respect to its inner structural determinations. This follows because the state is the stage whereby the Ethical Life achieves consciousness of itself, a

²⁵³ As above, our focus will be the *Encyclopedia* account of Objective Spirit. However, reference will be made to the *Philosophy of Right*, as needed or insofar as it provides further clarification.

²⁵⁴ PM §517, 229; W10, 319.

²⁵⁵ PM §536, 236; W10, 330.

level of awareness that is embodied in the political constitutions of particular nations.²⁵⁶

Therefore, the fundamental idea, which will be elaborated in the content paragraphs on constitutions, is that political constitutions play a key role in both the self-consciousness of the state (§517) and its immanent self-relating structure (§536). And thus, the development of Objective Spirit into the state achieves subjectivity first in and through constitutions, and then, as we will later review, this is fulfilled in the self-comprehension of Spirit in and as world history.

3.5.1. Hegel's Idea of a Constitution

Before proceeding, we must pause and reflect upon a terminological matter regarding Hegel's use of constitution as *Verfassung*, first in his early unpublished work *The German Constitution* [*Die Verfassung Deutschlands*], and then particularly insofar as he talks about the state as a politically constituted organism in both the later *Philosophy of Right* and *Encyclopedia* accounts of Objective Spirit. Our aim is to show that the notion of a constitution is, for Hegel, more than a formal, organizing principle, since it is concrete and objective as a written political constitution, which determines the state as a self-relating whole.

Hegel's early, political essay, *The German Constitution*, which he wrote and reworked in several drafts between 1798 and 1802, contains many of the ideas that would receive a more developed treatment in the later presentation of his philosophy of Objective Spirit. The essay begins with the strong claim that "Germany is no longer a state," and proceeds to argue for this thesis.²⁵⁷ In one specific case, he contrasts the idea of the German state in thought with the German state in actuality, i.e., the formal conception of a constituted state as different from the actual being of this state and its manifestation in reality. Hegel writes, "The system of the state in

²⁵⁶ Hegel begins the section on the state with the claim: "The state is the *self-conscious* ethical substance." However, it is only once political constitutions are introduced that we can further grasp the linguistically objective form of that awareness. PM §535, 236; W10, 330.

²⁵⁷ GC, 6; W1, 461.

thought [*des Gedankenstaates*] is the organization of a constitution [*Rechtsverfassung*] which is powerless in all that is essential to a state.”²⁵⁸ The claim, here, is that a formal conception of political constitution is impotent, and fails to live up to what is realized in an *actual* state. Hegel never abandons this idea of an abstract constitution, as it appears again in his account of Objective Spirit. However, as we argue, it is far from the final statement on what is meant by a political constitution.

Hegel devotes several paragraphs in the *Philosophy of Right* to a general notion of constitution as the immediate, organized and rationally purposive articulation of the state. For example, in §269, Hegel describes the state as an organism with a political constitution [*politische Verfassung*], but there is not yet any specific statement regarding the further articulation of this form of purposive organization in any concrete way.²⁵⁹ Leo Rauch suggests that because the state is immediately the place where the interests of individuals are reconciled with the universal aim of the state as a whole, Hegel’s use of *Verfassung* in §269 should be taken as referring to “nascent reason” in the state, “as the organizing principle(s) of a state, that by which it is constituted.”²⁶⁰ Hence, according to Rauch, constitution in this sense, as used in §269 along with the qualification of ‘political’, does not refer to the idea of something written. Furthermore, his earlier translation of the Introduction to Hegel’s *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* translates *Verfassung* consistently as ‘form of government’.²⁶¹

A corresponding discussion of the state as a constituted organism occurs in *Encyclopedia* §539, which begins, “As a living spirit pure and simple, the state can only be an organized

²⁵⁸ GC, 41; W1, 505.

²⁵⁹ PR §269, 290; W7, 414.

²⁶⁰ Leo Rauch, “Hegel, Spirit, and Politics,” In *The Age of German Idealism*, ed. Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins, 254-289 (London: Routledge, 1993), 283.

²⁶¹ Leo Rauch, trans., *G.W.F. Hegel: Introduction to The Philosophy of History* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1988).

whole, differentiated into particular agencies, which, proceeding from the *one* concept (though not known as concept) of the rational will, continually produce it as their result. The *constitution* [*Verfassung*] is this overall articulation of *state-power*.²⁶² The general description of the state as a living, organized whole echoes the language of the *Philosophy of Right*, and confirms the immediate idea that the state is a rationally purposive organized totality.²⁶³ However, the question remains as to how this is concretely articulated, since the idea of a constitution as an abstract form begs the question of the concrete, determinate content of that form with respect to both time and objectivity.

For the state to be a functional organism, the state cannot operate and have its structure defined by an abstract notion of rational constitution. For example, as Hegel addresses in paragraphs on the administration of justice, it is important that the members of a society know its laws; if we expect for laws to be obeyed, then they must be publicly available in some objective form to be known and respected.²⁶⁴ Hegel is fully aware of the fact that the political constitution of a state cannot be solely its abstract, immediate organizing principle, and evidence for this is manifest in the 1808 sketch of the *Encyclopedia*, the *Philosophische Encyclopaedia für die Oberklasse*. There, Hegel describes the constitution of the state as *positing* the state's powers, defining the individual's rights with respect to the state, and establishing the normativity of citizen participation within the state.²⁶⁵

²⁶² PM §539, 237; W10, 331.

²⁶³ Rauch's reading of *Verfassung* is supported by Inwood's commentary to §539, where Inwood writes, "The 'constitution' is not identical to the 'rational will' nor is it the 'concept' from which the state develops. It is the overall structure of the state as it has developed from the rational will. In this sense a living organism, such as a tree, has a constitution or something analogous to a constitution: its overall structure." Inwood, 583.

²⁶⁴ PM §529 and §530, 232-233; W10, 323-326.

²⁶⁵ "The constitution posits [*setzt*] the division and relation of the various State powers and the sphere of action of each, especially the rights of individuals in relation to the State and their share of participation in those powers which they ought to have, not merely in the choice of Government, but also in so far as they are simply citizens." PP, 166 (translation modified); W4, 64. In a similar fashion, Hegel qualifies the state constitution in the *Lectures on*

The 1808 sketch is useful in that it establishes consistency in Hegel's thinking about this matter because the 1830 *Encyclopedia* account of the constitution makes the same claims, but with more detail and explanation. In addition to the political constitution providing a concrete articulation of the state and its government, it is through the constitution that the state, and thereby the *Volksgeist*, becomes conscious of itself. "The constitution presupposes this consciousness of the spirit, and conversely the spirit presupposes the constitution; for the actual spirit itself only has a determinate consciousness of its principles, in so far as they are present for it as existent."²⁶⁶ In order for the constitution to be posited as being and to embody the rational self-awareness of a nation, it cannot be conceived solely as an abstract notion of the 'form of a government' or its general organization. Consequently, although the abstract notion of constitution has a very important role in Hegel's account of the state in *Objective Spirit*, it is not the solely definitive form and concrete articulation of a fully realized political constitution. Hence, we argue, a political constitution must take the form of language as a *written* document in order for it to be the objective determination of the subjective essence and principle of the *Volksgeist* whose development the constitution embodies.²⁶⁷

3.5.2. Language and Constitutions

Although we have already indicated the problematic nature of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* as a treatise on his concept of history, its content-rich sixth chapter, entitled *Spirit*, lends support to the importance of language for the objective being of *Spirit*, first under the subheading

the Philosophy of History as defining the state's organization, arrangement, and the mechanism of the state's power. LPH, 41; W12, 63.

²⁶⁶ PM §540, 239; W10, 336.

²⁶⁷ The linguistic significance of constitutions is suggested by Reid in chapters one and five of *Real Words*. We are taking up this idea here and developing it in terms of our own overarching focus on not only language, but subjectivity and time as well.

of Culture.²⁶⁸ Hence, it is worth briefly revisiting this earlier work before returning to the account of language in the *Geistesphilosophie*.

In the analysis of counsel, the ‘I’ is conceived as speaking expression, but in a more robust manner than in an earlier observation of individuality.²⁶⁹ Here we learn that speech is necessary for the subject to be *for others*, and as such the subject gains “*real existence* [*Dasein*].”²⁷⁰ In commenting on the need for self-renunciation in order for self-interest not to conflict with state power and authority, Hegel claims that language is necessary; the type of alienation, which occurs in the self-renunciation of one’s self-interest and particular individuality, can only occur in language. What is thusly established is that language is both essential for the being of the subject, and, equally so, for a functioning intersubjective social structure. This is why we find Hegel articulating the claim that language is how the self becomes objective, exists, and is *for others*: “It is the power of speech, as that which performs what has to be performed. For it is the *real existence* of the pure self as self; in speech, self-consciousness, *qua independent separate individuality*, comes as such into existence, so that it exists *for others*. Otherwise the ‘I’, this *pure ‘I’*, is non-existent, is not *there*.”²⁷¹ An individual renounces their individuality through speech, which is universal, as clearly formulated by the dialectic of sense-certainty; in speech, the ‘I’ becomes both the manifestation of the universal self and the extinguishing of the particular self. “Consequently,” we read, “the true sacrifice of *being-for-self*

²⁶⁸ Our focus is the form of the argument *qua* explicit references to language. We will not discuss the manifold historical contents of this area of the text, which are so rich and challenging that attempting to deal with both form and historical content will be an instance of missing the forest for the trees.

²⁶⁹ There are two uses of expression in the central paragraph on language. One is with reference to physiognomic expression [*Ausdrucke*]. This is contrasted to the *Dasein* of the self through spoken expression [*Aussprechen*]. Therefore, in this part of the text, an earlier notion of expression as speech is taken to its ontological and linguistic conclusion. See PS, 308-309; W3: 376.

²⁷⁰ PS, 308; W3, 376.

²⁷¹ PS, 308; W3, 376.

is solely that in which it surrenders itself as completely in death, yet in this renunciation no less preserves itself.”²⁷²

The analogy to death and sacrifice raises the relation of time to both subjectivity and language, particularly as concerns speech. As developed in the *Encyclopedia*, speech is embodied in the definitively finite medium of sound. So although the subject, here, comes-to-be through speech, *qua* speech the individual self *vanishes*, i.e., ceases-to-be.²⁷³ In other words, the subject becomes through speaking, but as a finite becoming.²⁷⁴ Hegel’s repeated use of the term *Dasein* to denote the being of the subject makes this point explicit. If we contrast the being of the individual as speech with the idea of the political constitution of the state, which is itself a universal individual, then the fleeting dependence on speaking for being is replaced with the endurance of the written word.

Further on in the *Phenomenology*, in the Morality section of the Spirit chapter, the ontological role of language for both the being of the individual subject and Spirit as *Dasein* is taken up again. Hegel writes:

Here again, then, we see language as the existence of Spirit. Language is self-consciousness existing *for others*, self-consciousness which *as such* is immediately *present*, and as *this* self-consciousness is universal. It is the self that separates itself from itself, which as pure ‘I’=‘I’ becomes objective to itself, which in this objectivity equally preserves itself as *this* self, just as it coalesces directly with other selves and is *their* self-consciousness. It perceives

²⁷² PS, 308; W3, 375.

²⁷³ “The ‘I’ that expresses itself is *heard or perceived* [*vernommen*]; it is an infection in which it has immediately passed into unity with those for whom it is a real existence, and is a universal self-consciousness. That it is *perceived or heard* means that its *real existence dies away*; this its otherness has been taken back into itself; and its real existence is just this: that as a self-conscious Now, as a real existence, it is *not* a real existence, and through this vanishing it *is* a real existence. This vanishing is thus itself at once its abiding; it is its own knowing of itself, and its knowing itself as a self that has passed over into another self that has been perceived and is universal.” PS, 309 (translation modified); W3, 376.

²⁷⁴ The correlation between language and time is also touched upon in the Religion chapter, where prophetic speech is contrasted to the religious statue: “Where this exists at rest, speech is a vanishing existence; and whereas in the statue the liberated objectivity lacks an immediate self of its own, in speech, on the other hand, objectivity remains too much shut up within the self, falls short of attaining a lasting shape and is, like Time, no longer immediately present in the very moment of its being present.” PS, 432; W3, 521.

[*Vernehmen*] itself just as it is perceived by others, and the perceiving is just *existence which has become a self* [*zum Selbst gewordene Dasein*].²⁷⁵

It is clear that in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* language is the means by which the self, the subject, or, more comprehensively, Spirit becomes and is objective. Joseph Flay explains, “Language, and specifically speech, is the ‘middle term’ between one individual and other individuals, between the individual and his tasks and the culture itself as the objectification of spirit. What was before relatively abstract as we found it first in self-consciousness, is now a historical phenomenon: the unity of the world through language, language as the *Dasein des Geistes*.”²⁷⁶ As a result, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* supports the view that language has an ontologically constitutive and productive role with regard to the objectivity of subjectivity. This same thesis is treated more systematically in the *Geistesphilosophie*.

In the discussion of language and words from the Theoretical Psychology, the necessity of language for thought is explicitly claimed. For example, in §462A, we read:

We only know our thoughts, only have determinate, actual thoughts [*wirkliche Gedanken*], when we give them the form of *objectivity* [*Gegenständlichkeit*], of *being distinct* from our *inwardness*, and thus the shape of *externality*, and of an *externality*, too, that at the same time bears the stamp of the highest inwardness... Accordingly, the word gives to thoughts their most worthy and genuine reality [*Dasein*].²⁷⁷

The immanent rationality of the subject of the intelligence must posit itself into objectivity as language in order to freely recover itself. As the embodiment of subjective thought and objective, written words, language mediates between the inner and outer by guaranteeing the active being of the two together, as the actual, rational being and cognition of Spirit more generally.

The significance of language to thought, as treated in the previous chapter, is never abandoned and left behind in the development of the *Geistesphilosophie* from the Theoretical

²⁷⁵ PS, 395; W3, 478-479.

²⁷⁶ Joseph C. Flay, *Hegel's Quest for Certainty* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 187.

²⁷⁷ PM §462A, 200 (translation modified); W10, 280.

and Practical Psychology to Objective Spirit. Hegel need not repeat the need for subjectivity to concretely articulate itself linguistically because the matter is presupposed and carried forward into the development of Objective Spirit itself. As a result, a political constitution, both as an expression of a *Volksgeist* and a key aspect of the cognition of history, must be a rationally organized and principled whole that is made objective in language. Therefore, a political constitution is definitively objective as something written.

In the Introduction to the *Geistesphilosophie*, Hegel states, “the entire activity of subjective *Geist* is directed to grasping itself as itself, to proving itself to be the ideality of its immediate reality. When it has attained to being-for-itself, then it is no longer merely subjective, but *objective* Spirit.”²⁷⁸ As Objective Spirit, Spirit has achieved being-for-itself and it expresses this self-awareness in the domain of human socio-political affairs where states are formed and concretely articulated in constitutions. Therefore, if the consciousness of a Spirit, as a particular *Volksgeist*, is articulated in a political constitution, then reflecting upon the history of the actuality and cognition of Spirit means reflecting on the history of those constitutions. Hegel explains, “A constitution has *only developed* from the spirit identically with that spirit’s own development, and has run through, together with the spirit, the conceptually necessary alterations and stages of formation. It is history and the indwelling of spirit (and, in fact, history is only the history of *spirit*) by which constitutions have been and are made [*gemacht werden*].”²⁷⁹ In other words, the history of Spirit is the history of the making of constitutions.

Hegel makes a complimentary argument in the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. There, he explains, “A state is an individual totality, of which you cannot select any particular, even if supremely important, side, such as the state constitution

²⁷⁸ PM §385A, 21 (translation modified); W10, 33.

²⁷⁹ PM §540R, 240; W10, 336.

[*Staatsverfassung*], and deliberate and decide respecting it in that isolated form.”²⁸⁰ The idea is that a political constitution is inseparable from all the spiritual elements of what defines the *Volksgeist* of the nation, as concretized in the state itself. What makes a people who they are is reflected in how they embody their essence in their state constitution. Furthermore, and as concerns the significance of this for history, Hegel continues:

Not only is the constitution something which is most intimately connected with and dependent upon those other spiritual forces, but the specific nature of the whole spiritual individuality, including all the forces it embodies, is only a moment in the history of the grand whole, which, in that entire process, predetermines what represents the highest sanction as well as the highest necessity of the constitution.²⁸¹

Consequently, world history is solely the history of nations that have formed states and who express themselves essentially in their constitutions. Or, world history is the history of the making of constitutions, which is to say the same thing. Hence, the idea, being, and history of Spirit is inseparably linked to political constitutions. Now, what remains is to revisit the notion of subjectivity that is adequate to both Spirit and world history insofar as political constitutions are concerned.

According to Hegel, a state’s constitution provides the articulation of what is universal about a people; this allows for objective reflection and consciousness of what this universal aspect actually is, namely the particular *Volksgeist* of a people.²⁸² The *Volksgeist* is a people’s

²⁸⁰ LPH, 42; W12, 65.

²⁸¹ PM §540, 239; W10, 336.

²⁸² A caution is needed here. Hegel is not ignoring the important natural determinations of a people and the role of those in the determination of nationality. Nationality is closely connected to the natural geographical, climatic, etc., determinations of a people and defines the variety of their anthropological characteristics *as* a people. Hegel makes this matter explicit in the opening sentence of the sections on history in Objective Spirit, writing, “The determinate spirit of a people, since it is actual and its freedom is as nature, has on this natural side the moment of geographical and climatic determinacy” (PM §548, 246; W10, 347). Along with this, the actuality of the rational essence of a people is what is embodied in their constitution and this is significant with respect to history and Spirit and freedom. There are certain customs that define a people and these find expression in how a people determine themselves in their ethical and lawful structures. For example, a constitution includes the objectively written laws, which then find actualization in the state apparatus of courts, which are spiritual structures, rather than natural ones. Such matters are properly spiritual, rather than natural, but should not be taken as wholly separate from the anthropological aspect of

determinate self-consciousness of their essence, and the essence of Spirit is, in general, *reason*, so the fact that a constitution is rational is guaranteed according to the essence of Spirit as such. But aside from this formal embodiment of reason, a political constitution is tied to the development of a particular people and specifically how they become conscious of themselves as such.²⁸³ While this is in part deeply rooted in Hegel's approach to human nature, as he qualifies one sense of the uniqueness of humanity to be our awareness of our own laws, this connection between the development and self-consciousness of a people in their constitution is also easily demonstrated by means of a historical example.²⁸⁴

3.5.3. The U.S. Constitution

Granted that one of the primary aspects of the activity of Spirit in general is to know itself, it makes sense that Hegel describes the process of the self-knowledge of Spirit as coming to know itself as its own object through its own activity.²⁸⁵ Specifically, one way in which a *Volksgeist* actively realizes itself determinately is in the political constitution of a state, which is objectively embodied in writing. In other words, the *Volksgeist* is really existent in a nation's unique constitution.²⁸⁶

The U.S. Constitution is a good illustration, *for us*, of the significance of a political constitution that Hegel has in view for the history of Spirit and the embodiment of a *Volksgeist*. That said, the currency of this particular example is *for us* because Hegel did not view the United States as a part of history during his own lifetime, describing it, along with Canada and all of

a nation any more than one should solely focus on the supposed priority of a people's anthropological determinations. Concerning why nature has no history, see footnote 248 above.

²⁸³ PM §540, 239; W10, 336.

²⁸⁴ "What makes man man is *awareness* [*wissen*] of his law, and he can therefore genuinely obey only such known law, just as his law can only be a just law, if it is a *known* law." PM §529R, 233; W10, 325.

²⁸⁵ LPH, 68; W12, 99.

²⁸⁶ See PM §539; W10, 331-332 & LPH, 59; W12, 87. To this, as in footnote 282, we add the caution that there are also natural, anthropological aspects that contribute to the determination of nationality, but the ethical customs of a nation are properly the content of Spirit and find objective expression in a people's written constitution.

South America, as “the land of the future.”²⁸⁷ The objects of history include (i) the past, which history reflects upon, either as reflective history or the written history of an original historian, and (ii) the present as the *historiographer’s* present. By viewing the Americas as belonging to the future, Hegel is suggesting that it belongs to future thinkers, i.e., *us*, to reflect upon the historical peoples of that geographical determination.²⁸⁸

While much could be highlighted from the U.S. Constitution, like circumstances regarding its framing, the amendments, etc., the preamble alone will suffice for our case and its exemplification. The preamble to *The Constitution of the United States of America* (1787) states:

We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, and promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

This example of a constitution that reflects the *Volksgeist* of a nation in a written document succinctly illustrates key aspects of Hegel’s views on history, subjectivity, and their relation through political constitutions. First, the view that the essence of a particular people is embodied in their written political constitution is captured in the wording ‘we the people’, which means the document reflects the universal subjectivity of the people, the *Volksgeist*, both as subject and as

²⁸⁷ LPH, 80; W12, 114.

²⁸⁸ It ought to be mentioned here that Hegel adhered to only three types of state constitutions in his account of Objective Spirit: democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy. However, in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel states that America (in general) is a good example of a ‘republican constitution’, which replaces a monarch with a rotating president, as the so-called head of state. See LPH, 78; W12, 112. For Hegel, however, the constitutional monarchy is the most reasonable and highest realization of reason in the state, and this point is made explicitly in *Encyclopedia* §542: “The Monarchical constitution is therefore the constitution of *developed* reason: all other constitutions belong to lower stages of the development and realization of reason.” PM §542, 241; W10, 339. That said, by using an example of a non-monarchical constitution, we acknowledge our proximity to Marx’s critique of Hegel. Against Hegel’s view that a constitutional monarchy is the highest form of the state, Marx states: “In the monarchy the whole, the people, is subsumed under one of its modes of existence, the political constitution; in democracy the constitution itself appears only as one determination, and indeed as the self-determination of the people. In monarchy we have the people of the constitution, in democracy the constitution of the people... The constitution appears as what it is, the free product of men.” Such a free production of the people by the people is especially witnessed in the case of the U.S. Constitution. Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel’s ‘Philosophy of Right’*, trans. by Annette Jolin and Joseph O’Malley (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 29-30. Hereafter cited as *Critique of Hegel’s ‘Philosophy of Right’*.

the object of their own reflective self-interpretation. This is important because in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel states, “World history is the interpretation [*Auslegung*] of spirit in time.”²⁸⁹ The same issue is explained less hermeneutically by Inwood, who comments that “a ‘political constitution’ is a society’s consciousness of itself, because it subjects the social order to explicit reflection, codification, and control.”²⁹⁰ Therefore, what is illustrated by the example of the U.S. Constitution is the consciousness of a nation’s *Volksgeist*, as essentially embodied and posited in and through the nation’s *own* written self-articulation.

Furthermore, the *Volksgeist* of the nation is really existent [*Dasein*] in and through the political constitution because it is only when a people become or form a state that they belong to world history as such.²⁹¹ The development of a *Volksgeist* emerges temporally, as a finite becoming, whose history and rational essence is expressed and embodied in its own constitution. As Hegel states in his discussion of world history in *Objective Spirit*: “The self-consciousness of a particular people is the bearer of the current state of development of the universal spirit in its embodiment and is the objective actuality in which the spirit sets its will.”²⁹² In other words, the objective being of the subjective principle of the *Volksgeist* is realized, and has active being, in and through the constitution of a nation, and this articulation of their essence is a reflection of their own specific historical development.

History belongs only to peoples who have formed a state and, therefore, articulated themselves and embodied their essence in a political constitution. In, by, and through the constitution of a state, “the state is reasonable freedom objectively knowing itself and existing for itself. For its objectivity is precisely this, that its aspects manifest themselves not ideally but

²⁸⁹ LPH, 66; W12, 96-97.

²⁹⁰ Inwood, 570.

²⁹¹ “In world history, only those peoples can come under our notice which form a state.” LPH, 36; W12, 56.

²⁹² PM, §550, 249; W10, 352.

in a characteristic reality, as such passing over into reality by means of its self-referring activity, through which the whole, the soul, the individual unity, is produced and is the result.”²⁹³ This means that constitutions are needed to comprehend world history, which is composed of the particular peoples of historical progression. Ultimately, since the constitution is the written statement of the *Volksgeist*, it is a linguistic account of a historical subjectivity, and, as written, it is the proper object of history as historiography.

3.6. History, Subjectivity, Freedom

Having emphasized the linguistic element of constitutions as central to their concrete objectivity, we are now well positioned to situate written constitutions, as the linguistic being of the subjectivity of a people, or their *Volksgeist*, with respect to Hegel’s concept of history more generally. While in the previous chapter we remarked upon the necessity of the writing of history and the task of the historian, here we emphasize the aspect of language in the concept of history as such, which is subjective, but in no way divorced from the objective being of history as time. Furthermore, what our account exposes, is how the concrete actualization of subjectivity is freedom, i.e., the becoming of subjectivity as history is isomorphic to the movement of freedom, as the self-determination of Spirit in linguistic form.

In a brief reflection upon the word ‘history’ [*Geschichte*] in the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, Hegel states in no uncertain terms that history is a speculative word well suited to reason, rather than the divisive understanding. History, Hegel explains, unites both what is subjective and objective, which makes it a word whose meaning is quite significant and no accident regarding the idea of history itself. More specifically, what is unified in the concept of history is *both* what has happened [*das Geschehene*] and the narration

²⁹³ LPH, 43; W12, 66.

of those events themselves [*Geschichtserzählung*], i.e., the objective events and their subjective, linguistic account.²⁹⁴ Consequently, history is *both* what has happened and historiography.²⁹⁵

This approach to the idea of history can be extended to highlight the relevance of written political constitutions to what defines a *Volksgeist*, as embodied and determined in the objective totality of the state. What makes up the state and the individuals, which are a part of it as a totality, is multiple:

The state, its laws, its arrangements, are the rights of individuals who are its members; its natural features, its mountains, air, and waters, are their country, their fatherland, their external property; the history of this state, their deeds; what their ancestors have produced belongs to them and lives in their memory. All is their possession, just as they are possessed by it: for it constitutes their substance, their being.²⁹⁶

The state and its people are essentially defined by a complex aggregate of features, which all together determine it as it is. One of these is its written political constitution, which is one important way in which a state and its *Volksgeist* is determinate, i.e., becomes objective to itself. Hegel continues, “For spirit in its self-consciousness must become objectified to itself, and objectivity involves, in the first instance, the emergence of differences which make up a totality of distinct spheres of the objective spirit,” and such an immanently developed set of differences is what is set forth in a state’s constitution.²⁹⁷ In sum, just as the state is an aggregate totality, which makes up its abstract ‘constitution’ as a whole, the state is equally how it essentially

²⁹⁴ “In our language, *history* unites the objective with the subjective side, and denotes quite as much the *historia rerum gestarum*, as the *res gestae* themselves; it is no less what happened than the narration of what happened.” LPH, 56; W12, 83.

²⁹⁵ The idea that history is both what has happened and what has been written about what has happened is consistent with the various methods of history with which Hegel opens his *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*. For example, in original history, the distinction between the events and their narration is null because the author of original history belongs to the specific epoch being narrated. Yet another example is critical, reflective history, which is the history of various historical interpretations: this is a “history of history, a criticism of historical narratives and an investigation of their truth and credibility.” So rather than having the object of history as such, this critical history takes written historical narratives as such as the objective side of history. The basic, yet absolutely fundamental idea underlying all of this, i.e., Hegel’s concept of history, is the *central* role of language in the writing of history. LPH, 7; W12, 18.

²⁹⁶ LPH, 48; W12, 72.

²⁹⁷ LPH, 48; W12, 73.

defines itself in its written constitution. So the subjectivity of a people, as their *Volksgeist*, is both all the varying elements that make up a state *and* the written articulation of their essence as a constitution; as such, the constitution is, as Shlomo Avineri explains, “the normative basis for the political order evolving over the years.”²⁹⁸

As argued by Reid, the writing of history, i.e., the activity of historiography, is what makes history meaningful.²⁹⁹ To that, we add that the writing of constitutions makes states *historical*, namely meaningful, particular moments of the development of the history of world Spirit. What is determinate in history are the particular *Volksgeists*, and their dialectic with one another makes up what counts as historical progression and development. The objective being of the subjective *Volksgeist* is determined in the constitution of a particular nation. Therefore, if history is the writing of history as historiography, then history is equally the writing of constitutions. However, for this to be consistent with our account of Hegel’s ontology of subjectivity, historiography and constitutions must share the fundamental ontological mode of being as *becoming*.

If what essentially defines a people, i.e., their *Volksgeist*, is the result of a process of development and subject to change, then their self-reflection and self-determination in their political constitutions must also be dynamic, rather than static. It is significant that Hegel says that the being of the constitution is becoming; this describes how it *is*, and not merely that a constitution is defined by the transience of the form of change [*Veränderung*].³⁰⁰ The key passage for this claim occurs under the consideration of the legislative power of the state, which

²⁹⁸ Shlomo Avineri, “The Discovery of Hegel’s Early Lectures on the Philosophy of Right,” *The Owl of Minerva* 16, no. 2 (1985), 203.

²⁹⁹ Reid (2007), 68.

³⁰⁰ Marx rightly highlighted that the being of political constitutions is really a becoming in his commentary to §298 of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*, explaining Hegel’s point thusly: “According to the law (illusion), the constitution *is*, but according to reality (truth) it *becomes*.” *Critique of Hegel’s ‘Philosophy of Right’*, 56.

is both a part of the constitution and that which is capable of engendering the progression of the state by guiding the evolutionary transformation of its laws according to the state's own universal aim.³⁰¹ This change, however, does not define the being of the constitution as such. Rather, it makes a claim about the dynamic and developmental nature of political constitutions, which *mirrors* the dynamic and developmental nature of the essence of a people and their *Volksgeist*. Hence, "The constitution *is*, but it just as essentially *becomes*, i.e. it undergoes progressive development. This progression is a change which takes place imperceptibly and without possessing the form of change."³⁰² Therefore, in making reference to the difference between becoming and change, the former having an ontological priority that is more adequate to the notion of Spirit, we can better grasp the connection between political constitutions and Spirit in their dynamically developmental being as the concrete determination that unifies reason and history, *in* history and *as* the history of Spirit, or *us*. What remains, then, and in order to conclude our account of subjectivity and history, is the justification of history as the place where we witness a deep connection between language and freedom, as the self-determination of Spirit as such.

Concerning Spirit as freedom in general, Hegel explains in the Introduction to the *Geistesphilosophie*: "The entire development [*Entwicklung*] of the concept of *Geist* displays only *Geist*'s freeing of itself from all the forms of its reality which do not correspond to its concept: a liberation which comes about by the transformation of these forms into an actuality perfectly adequate to the concept of mind."³⁰³ The project of the *Geistesphilosophie* begins with the task of rising to the command to 'know thyself'. The story of Spirit, as we have emphasized, is the story of its own self-determination, which, in its Objective mode, is the story of the historical

³⁰¹ PR §298, 336; W7, 465.

³⁰² PR §298A, 336; W7, 465.

³⁰³ PM §382A, 16; W10, 27.

self-determination of nations in their constitutions. Ultimately, this account of the self-determination of Spirit is the story of its freedom, which is, according to Hegel, both the substance and essence of Spirit as such.³⁰⁴ Consequently, we claim that the history of Spirit evidences a strong connection between freedom and language because the movement of freedom is the movement of subjectivity: the self-determination of Spirit in history as embodied in the linguistic form of the constitution.

As we have aimed to make evident, there is, according to Hegel, a significant and necessary connection between a *Volksgeist* and their determinate political constitution. The idea that one can exist without the other is unfounded, which means that the development of the Spirit of a people is equally the development of their political constitution, as determined in linguistic form: “A constitution has *only developed* from the spirit identically with that spirit’s own development, and has run through, together with the spirit, the conceptually necessary alterations and states of formation.”³⁰⁵ Herein lies two fundamental ideas: (i) the history of Spirit is the history of constitutions, and, (ii) as the development of Spirit, history is the story of freedom, i.e., the rational self-determination of Spirit as such, as exemplified through the linguistic form of the constitution. Hence, if history is known and meaningful as language, i.e., historiography, then the *Volksgeist* knows itself and is meaningful in its linguistic articulation in a political constitution, which is the result of a nation’s own unique historical self-development and self-determination. Therefore, the self-determination of Spirit is the account of its self-knowledge and being as language, which evidences that there is an important connection between freedom and language, for Hegel.

³⁰⁴ PM §382, §382A, & §484.

³⁰⁵ PM §540R, 240; W10, 336

Having illustrated the correspondence between the development of Spirit and its political constitution, it is necessary to note how this process is indicative of an isomorphic movement of subjectivity in both history, as Spirit, the *Volksgeist*, and World Spirit, and Logic, as the rational form of all systematic thinking. Because the central characterization of this movement is *development*, some attention to the structure of the concept is necessary, as articulated in Hegel's account of subjectivity from his *Logic*. While we will substantially explore that terrain in the following chapter, here, we will briefly investigate the movement of subjectivity as the movement of the concept and its structure because it is particularly fruitful for specifying the notion of freedom as self-determination, both as concerns this chapter and our transition to the next.

In the third, main division of Hegel's *Encyclopedia Logic*, the Doctrine of the Concept [*Begriff*], we encounter a systematic consideration of the dynamic structure of subjectivity. What is significant about the concept, for Hegel, cannot be overstated: it is totality, the free, self-developing and self-determining whole that contains everything within itself; it is the standpoint of Hegel's system of absolute idealism.³⁰⁶ As the free, determinate totality, the concept has a noteworthy dynamic structure: "the movement of the Concept is *development*."³⁰⁷ If the movement of the concept is development, then, as totality, what develops is what is already present in it ideally, so the movement of the concept, i.e., development, is *self-development*.³⁰⁸ Thus, the connection between the movement of Spirit as history and the movement of the concept is *freedom*, namely self-determining development.

³⁰⁶ EL §160-§160A, 236-237; W8, 307-308.

³⁰⁷ EL §161A, 237; W8, 308.

³⁰⁸ Hegel frequently employs the same illustration for this immanent self-unfolding and development, both in the *Encyclopedia Logic* and elsewhere. We previously quoted Hegel employing the seed-tree example above in our discussion of the transition to Objective Spirit. But again, in the *Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel explains, "For example, a plant develops from its germ: the germ already contains the whole plant within itself, but in an ideal way." EL §161A, 237; W8, 309.

In addition to the isomorphic dynamic structure of history and the concept, Hegel's account of the state in Objective Spirit is systematically related to the concept. This is generally so because both are self-determining totalities. Concerning the state, Hegel affirms, "The essence of the state is the universal in and for itself, the rationality of the will; but, as self-aware and self-activating, it is subjectivity pure and simple and, as actuality, it is *one* individual."³⁰⁹ As a self-determining whole, the structure of the state mirrors that of the concept in that the state has a complex self-relational structure. In the state, the self-determination of individual persons is linked to the universal aim and self-determining structure of the state as the societal whole.³¹⁰ And as a complex of institutions, e.g., executive, legislative, etc., the social order is autonomously self-determining, self-mediating, and *self-developing*. The relation between language and freedom is, therefore, implicated herein by the way a state's constitution embodies the essence of the people that it is an expression of, while equally stating the functions of government. This is, thus, one way to conceive freedom in the state *qua* self-determination.

Moreover, as a determinate people, the state is specified as a specific individual, which relates to other specifically determined states by means of warfare or external public law.³¹¹ Hence, on the world stage, what we witness in history is the interaction, development, conflict, dominance, and disappearance of determinate Spirits, the essence of which is the universal world Spirit, which engenders the reconciliation of the eternal truth of reason with the finite becoming of history. As Hegel himself frames the matter in the *Encyclopedia*:

The thinking spirit of world history [World Spirit], when it sheds these limitations of the particular national spirits as well as its own worldliness, grasps its concrete universality and ascends to *awareness of the absolute spirit*, as the eternally actual

³⁰⁹ PM §537, 236; W10, 330.

³¹⁰ To this we should add that because Hegel views the constitutional monarchy as the highest realization of reason in a state, the monarch represents the universal aim of the state as one, active individuality. See §542 & 542R, 241-242; W10, 338-339.

³¹¹ PM §545-§546.

truth in which rational awareness is free for itself, and necessity, nature and history are only servants of its revelation and vessels of its honor.³¹²

The self-conscious unity of reason and history is the freely produced result of Subjective and Objective Spirit, which furnishes the grounds for the contemplation of art, religion, and philosophy in Absolute Spirit. As echoed in the Introduction to the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*: “World history shows how the spirit gradually comes to the consciousness of and willingness regarding the truth; this dawns on it; it discovers salient principles, and at last it arrives at full consciousness.”³¹³

3.7. From History to Logic

The reconciliation of reason and history, or the becoming of reason in history as historical becoming, raises a very general, but fundamental philosophical question: if what is historical is subject to change, then what is the status of the classical notion of truth as the universally unchanging? One place where this question emerges is in the *Encyclopedia Logic*, where Hegel reflects on the structure of the concept and its truth with respect to the actual, which we have already indicated here in this chapter as the being of Spirit. By way of introduction to the whole Doctrine of the Concept, in §162R, Hegel states that what we claim as true with respect to the actual, e.g., the free development of Spirit as history, is true as a result of the logical forms and structure of the concept.³¹⁴ This question emerges equally in the Introduction to *Lectures on the Philosophy of History*, where he contrasts history and Spirit’s development with the philosophical grasp of the truth, which is eternal, in the philosophical, ahistorical ‘now’ of the present:

³¹² PM §552, 250; W10, 353.

³¹³ LPH, 49; W12, 73-74.

³¹⁴ EL §162R, 239; W8, 310.

While we are thus concerned with the idea of spirit, and in the history of the world regard everything as only its manifestation, we have, in traversing the past, however extensive its periods, only to do with what is *present*; for philosophy, as occupying itself with what is true, has to do with the eternally present. Nothing in the past is lost to it, for the idea is ever present, the spirit immortal, which is to say, it is not past and it is not not-yet, but is essentially *now*.³¹⁵

Consequently, if Hegel's characterization of human development and subjectivity places a strong emphasis on the significance of history, then how is the traditional philosophical conception of truth not compromised? This issue is resolved through Hegel's main statement on truth as the thinking about thinking, his *Logic*, and particularly through his conception of becoming and its ontological role in determining subjectivity. Therefore, in the subsequent, final chapter, we will achieve a comprehensive grasp of how Hegel's ontology of subjectivity is determined by both language and time by exploring the account of subjectivity from both Hegel's *Science of Logic* and the framework of truth articulated in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, which is an introduction to Hegelian Logic.

³¹⁵ LPH, 72; W12, 105.

Chapter 4: The Logic and Language of Subjectivity

Hegel's notion of the concept defines the ontological structure of subjectivity. This is because thinking of the concept as an ontology of subjectivity is consistent with the project of Hegelian Logic as thought thinking itself thinking about being. Moreover, such an approach provides an account that demonstrates how subjectivity differentiates itself linguistically and then resolves this self-determination in the form, content, and structure of the concept as such. Hence, the being of the concept, or the being of subjectivity, is something that becomes. And, as a dynamic entity, the movement of the concept defines the movement of subjectivity, so this movement is a becoming that is not historical. Completing the steps of that inference is the task of this final chapter and our aim is to satisfy the hypothesis from the first chapter that time as becoming is, for Hegel, more than merely finite. To that end, in this chapter, we will argue that Hegel affirms an ontological relation between the concept (the architectonic of subjectivity) and time and language.

From Hegel's idea of the true as the whole, which is a clear statement concerning the nature of truth for Hegel and his philosophy, we are led to the idea of the concept [*Begriff*]. The concept is totality and defines the form, content, and structure of being and truth. Hence, we argue for conceiving the concept as an analog of subjectivity, or more specifically in conceiving the true as subject. It is evident, then, that the question of the relationship between Hegel's idea of the concept and its coincidental idea of subjectivity requires not only that we attend to both in terms of their ontological significance, as comprehensions of being as becoming, but also that we focus our attention on the pertinence of language, specifically the propositional language form. In so doing we will do justice to our assessment that Hegel's philosophy delivers a dynamic

ontology of subjectivity through a speculative analysis of language, which resists edification, formalism, dogmatism, and externally arbitrary claims about subjects and subjectivity.

We will accomplish the goals of this chapter by first reflecting on the relevance of language for Hegel's *Logic*, then by turning to Hegel's idea of truth and its connection to conceiving subjectivity. The connection between subjectivity and truth will be further realized through an exposition of the movement of the concept as evidence for a non-finite, ahistorical notion of becoming through the idea of the speculative sentence, wherein both the notion of a grammatical and psychical subject is in play. Next, we will evidence Hegel's debt to Hölderlin through the latter's critique of Fichte and through the historical significance of ahistorical becoming for German Idealism generally. Ultimately, we shall show the relevance of the notion of time as non-finite, ahistorical becoming for Hegel's notion of truth, the speculative significance of language, and the ontology of subjectivity.

4.1. On the Relation of Language and Logic

One particularly favorable introduction to Hegel's *Science of Logic* frames the work in terms of its own original introduction, the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel makes it clear in the 1812 Preface to the *Logic* that the *Phenomenology* is the first part of his system of philosophical science, and that he intended it to be followed by a second part on Logic, Nature, and Spirit.³¹⁶ However, this intended second part never came to be, as it was conceived in 1812; instead, Hegel produced the *Encyclopedia*. Therefore, strictly as an introduction to Logic, the role of the

³¹⁶ SL, 10-11; W5, 18.

Phenomenology is problematized by Hegel's complete system in outline in the *Encyclopedia*, which has its own unique introduction and *Vorbegriff* or 'preliminary conception'.³¹⁷

Rather than emphasize the transition of the *Phenomenology* to the *Logic*, we shall take up an alternate entry point into the latter text and the pertinent issues therein, one particularly suited to explicitly raising the question of language and that further leads to the significance of both subjectivity and time. In the following, we begin with framing Hegel's *Logic* as ontology because the status of the project as ontology naturally raises the question of the relevance of language for *Logic as ontology*. By framing the type of work the *Science of Logic* is, we aim to specify the relation between language and *Logic* for Hegel, both in terms of how it recognizes the historical status of human language and how it is a coherent discourse on philosophical truth, which we shall explore in the ensuing sections of this chapter.

4.1.1. Logic, Ontology, and the Relevance of Language

What Hegel intends by 'logic' is not what is habitually understood by that word today, but neither is it wholly indifferent to the common usage of 'logic' as coherent, rule-governed reasoning. Although Hegel's notion of *Logic* has everything to do with systematically structured thinking, it is not restricted to rules of thinking and includes the study of the ultimate nature of reality. Thus, for Hegel, *Logic* is metaphysics.

Metaphysics is an old science and Hegel's general metaphysical approach is largely an appropriation of Aristotle's own view of metaphysics as ontology. In Book IV of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle states, "There is a science which studies Being *qua* Being, and the

³¹⁷ With that said, Hegel's 1831 Preface to the *Science of Logic* does not challenge the type of introduction that his *Phenomenology of Spirit* affords, writing, "The need to occupy oneself with pure thoughts presupposes a long road that the human spirit must have traversed." SL, 14; W5, 23.

properties inherent in it in virtue of its own nature.”³¹⁸ Such a science of being as such is ontology, since it is quite explicitly the study of being. Equally, ontology is metaphysics, for Aristotle, because, as he writes, “he who understands the modes of Being *qua* Being should be able to state the most certain principles of all things.”³¹⁹ In other words, the science of being as such is the study of the ultimate nature of reality. Therefore, when we say that Hegel’s Logic is metaphysics—and several commentators make this claim in differing ways, like Burbidge (2014), Stern (2009), and Houlgate (2006), for example—we mean that it is metaphysics *because* it is a science of being as such. First and foremost, then, is this notion of Logic as *ontology*, which we justified in our first chapter in terms of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* and the project of Logic as thinking about thought thinking being.

Hegel’s *Logic* and its ambitions evidence the fact that the idea of Hegel’s Logic as metaphysics and/or ontology demands that the significance of language be taken into account. For example, John McCumber comments, “The immanent development of thought is a development in language, or words, and only language, or words, can constitute its ‘objects.’ Thought thinking thought is words articulating words and can be nothing other than that.”³²⁰ Although McCumber does not aim to frame the relation between language and Logic in ontological terms, if we start from the idea of Logic as the study of the concept of being *qua* thought, then the way in which thought thinking itself thinking being is articulated is philosophical discourse; this implies that McCumber’s comment is correct insofar as language is a key determinant of the objects of a scientific, systematic account of Logic.

³¹⁸ Aristotle, *Metaphysics: Books I-IX*, trans. Hugh Treddenick (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933), 147. Hereafter cited as *Metaphysics*.

³¹⁹ *Metaphysics*, 161.

³²⁰ John McCumber, “Sound—Tone—Word: Toward a Hegelian Philosophy of Language”, in *Hegel and Language*, ed. Jere O’Neill Surber, 111-125 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 112.

The relation between language and thought is very important to Hegel. As framed explicitly by Jeffrey Reid, language, as objectively true discourse, for Hegel, is “true objectivity, as the realization of thought and being.”³²¹ For Hegel’s Logical project to be a true metaphysics, then the content must be objective thinking, a content that is not separated from the form of thinking as language, implying that there is a very central role for language in the exposition philosophical science. Focusing on the problem of a presupposed disjunctive relationship between form and content, Hegel writes in the general Introduction to the *Science of Logic*:

The concept of logic has hitherto rested on a separation, presupposed once and for all in ordinary consciousness, of the *content* of knowledge and its *form*, or of *truth* and *certainty*. Presupposed *from the start* is that the material of knowledge is present in and for itself as a ready-made world outside thinking; that thinking is by itself empty, that it comes to this material as a form from outside, fills itself with it, and only then gains a content, thereby becoming real knowledge.³²²

What Hegel critiques here is a habitual notion of ‘logic’ that begins with empty, formal structures and applies them arbitrarily to a variety of contents according to some sort of truth-guaranteeing procedure. The fundamentally external, static, and mechanical nature of this approach, which assumes a disjunction between form and content, is *not* what Hegel intends in his own notion of Logic, which is about being that becomes.

Hegel makes sure to emphasize the dynamic nature of the Logical, scientific enterprise, as he conceives it. He continually distances himself both from methods of external reflection based on hypothetical assurances and from importing other specific procedures, like mathematics, which would begin with some formula that would fully determine the content throughout. Hegel’s philosophical approach demands both dynamic content and dynamic form, since neither thinking nor the thoughts themselves lack a significant and scientific movement.

³²¹ Jeffrey Reid, *The Anti-Romantic: Hegel Against Ironic Romanticism* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 54. Hereafter cited as Reid (2014).

³²² SL, 24; W5, 36-37.

Hence, in 1812 Hegel writes, “It can only be *the nature of the content* which is responsible for *movement* in scientific knowledge, for it is the content’s *own reflection* that first posits and *generates what that content is*.”³²³ Therefore, as the form and content for the expression of objective thinking, language must have a key role in the development of scientific knowledge. In fact, having himself recognized the importance of the relationship between Logic and language, Hegel draws our attention to their connection in the 1831 Preface to the second edition of the *Science of Logic*. In addition to demonstrating a keen perceptiveness for the importance of language to philosophy, Hegel’s reflection on language in the Prefaces are intended to argue that his own Logic can be presuppositionless, i.e., without any formalistic or structural assumptions, while simultaneously respecting the historical variance of human language and its tradition and use. However, before developing Hegel’s own view on the relation of Logic and language, it is worth surmounting an objection concerning their relationship and the status of Logic as a presuppositionless science.

4.1.2. Gadamer on Language as the Presupposition of Logic

In the appropriately titled ‘With what must the beginning of science be made?’, which opens the *Doctrine of Being*, Hegel specifies explicitly the sense in which the beginning of Logic is without assumption(s):

If no presupposition is to be made, if the beginning is itself to be taken immediately, then the only determination of this beginning is that it is to be the beginning of logic, of thought as such. There is only present the resolve, which can also be viewed as arbitrary, of considering thinking as such. The beginning must then be absolute or, what means the same here, must be an abstract beginning; and so there is nothing that it may presuppose, must not be mediated by anything or have a ground, ought to be rather itself the ground of the entire science.³²⁴

³²³ SL, 9-10; W5, 16.

³²⁴ SL, 48; W5, 69.

The beginning presupposes nothing except for the resolve to think about thinking being, and, therefore, contrary to Kant's philosophy, Hegelian Logic does not begin with the transcendental structures that make cognition possible. As a result, what Hegel is asking of the reader is, as Houlgate summarizes, "that we give up everything we have learned about thought from Plato, Aristotle, Leibniz, or Kant (or twentieth-century symbolic logic)."³²⁵ What is true in and about Hegel's logical project, then, is not something given beforehand, but must be something that *becomes*.

The status of Hegel's Logic as presuppositionless has not been without opposition, especially as concerns the importance of language. For example, Hans-Georg Gadamer writes, "The determinations of the *Logic* are not without the 'casing' of language in which thought is sheathed," which problematizes the relation of Logic and language for Hegel.³²⁶ The fundamental issue concerning the relation of Logic and language is, according to Gadamer, that Hegel's Logic *presupposes* language. As Gadamer elaborates:

When Hegel undertook to uncover 'the logical' as that 'innermost' in language and to present it in its entire dialectical self-differentiation, he was correct in seeing this undertaking as the attempt to reconstruct in thought the thoughts of God before the creation—a reality prior to reality. But even that reality or 'Being' standing at the beginning of this contemplative repetition in our thought, the content of which is ultimately to be fully objectified in the concept, always presupposes language in which thinking has its own abode.³²⁷

Regarding the status of language as a presupposition of Hegel's Logic, Gadamer's critique takes form around three primary issues. First, if Hegel's Logic presupposes language, then the failure to provide a prior account of language undermines the success of the Logic as such. Second, insofar as Hegel's Logic employs language, it is fundamentally incapable of exhausting the

³²⁵ Houlgate (2006), 30.

³²⁶ Hans-Georg Gadamer, "The Idea of Hegel's Logic," in *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*, trans. P. Christopher Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 99. Hereafter cited as *The Idea of Hegel's Logic*.

³²⁷ *The Idea of Hegel's Logic*, 94.

variety and tradition of human language. And third, for Gadamer, our human standpoint, or *nature*, is defined fundamentally by *finitude*, which is inescapable and ultimately governs over language and its use.³²⁸

The problem with language and Logic as presuppositionless is well summarized by Houlgate: “Hegel’s dependence on language means not only that certain words and concepts have to be presupposed at the outset of his *Logic* but also that the whole course of his logical derivation of the categories is guided, at least in part, by the ordinary historical meanings and associations that words have come to acquire over time.”³²⁹ Following that, Gadamer’s criticism is that human language is defined by such variety and diversity that it fundamentally resists the idea of being systematically exhausted in some form, particularly Hegel’s all-encompassing concept [*Begriff*]. So, on the one hand, there is the image of Hegel’s Logic as elaborating an eternal vocabulary and grammar, as Gadamer presents it in terms of Hegel’s statement from the Introduction to the *Science of Logic* that the objective content of Logic is “*the exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and of a finite spirit.*”³³⁰ And, on the other hand, there is Gadamer’s position, which affirms finitude and the truth of the inexhaustibility of language, rather than the truth of the rationality and completeness of the whole, which is, according to Hegel, grasped conceptually. In our own view, there is, in fact, no problematic disjunction between the two, as Gadamer’s claim that Hegel’s Logic presupposes language simply does not accord with how Hegel treats the importance of language for Logic in the 1831 Preface to the *Science of Logic*. By elaborating Hegel’s statements about language from

³²⁸ With the exception of an emphasis on uniquely human rationality, it is not apparent that Hegel’s Logic depends on a view of human nature. For Gadamer, on the other, a lot appears to hang on the idea of human nature. He writes, “Our human nature is so much determined by finitude that the phenomenon of language and the thinking wherein we seek to get hold of it must always be viewed as governed by the law of human finitude.” *The Idea of Hegel’s Logic*, 94.

³²⁹ *The Opening of Hegel’s Logic*, 73.

³³⁰ SL, 29; W5, 44.

that Preface and then contextualizing them in terms of their debt to the post-Kantian, hermeneutist, and philosopher of language J. G. Hamann, we can dispense with the problematic of language as a presupposition and view it in terms of its significance for the elaboration of Hegel's ontology of subjectivity.

4.1.3. Hegel on Language and Logic

For Hegel, the relationship between Logic and language is closely connected with a philosophical apprehension to any kind of presupposition, since, as a scientific and systematic project, the elaboration of Logic is without presupposition.³³¹ Simply put, this means that it is an undertaking that assumes nothing. However, as Gadamer has claimed, the very nature of the linguistic form that Logic assumes, both for Hegel and for philosophy more generally, calls into question the degree to which Logic can or cannot presuppose anything. Hegel demonstrates a keen perceptiveness to this matter, and it is reflected in how the 1831 Preface to the *Logic* makes the issue of language explicit.

As covered in our second chapter, the *Encyclopedia Psychology* makes the argument that thought is dependent on language, namely that language founds thought and that all thoughts are ultimately rationally linguistic. Hegel's commitment to that position, which he would have inherited from its earlier presence in the writings of J.G. Hamann, is further confirmed in the 1831 Preface, where Hegel states, "The forms of thought are first set out and stored in human *language* [*Sprache*], and one can hardly be reminded often enough nowadays that thought is what differentiates the human being from the beast."³³² Just as Gadamer situates his view on

³³¹ "Logic, therefore, cannot say what it is in advance, rather does this knowledge of itself only emerge as the final result and completion of its whole treatment. Likewise its subject matter, *thinking* or more specifically *conceptual* thinking, is essentially elaborated within it; its concept is generated in the course of this elaboration and cannot therefore be given in advance." SL 23; W5, 35.

³³² SL, 12; W5, 20.

language within the framework of a certain philosophical position about human nature, so does Hegel, but quite differently.

Hegel appreciates language for how it qualifies what is unique to humanity, and in some sense it is grounds for the superiority of the human to the animal. Unlike Aristotle's conception of the human as the rational animal, for Hegel, the human being is no animal, being so radically differentiated by the capacity for language, a capacity that grounds the rationality of thinking in general. That said, Hegel's *Science of Logic* is not a treatise on human nature and it would be quite peculiar to read it as solely a work of that kind, or a work wholly dominated by the questions pertinent to the philosophy of human nature. Rather, the project of Hegel's Logic concerns *thought*.

If we recognize that Hegel is committed to the view that all thought is linguistic, then the inference that forms of thought are forms of language is not difficult to accept. Linguistic forms, like the standard proposition or syllogism, have held a traditional significance to a commonplace approach to 'logic', but one that Hegel is decisively critical of, writing, "What is commonly understood by logic is considered with a total disregard of metaphysical significance."³³³ This common understanding can be summarized as the complete abstraction from everything to the point of focusing on pure forms which have some supposed philosophical role when applied externally to some content. In addition to rejecting this division between form and content, the lifelessness of this approach is rejected through analogy, an analogy that strongly informs how Hegel conceives the relationship of Logic and language.

In both the 1831 Preface and the general Introduction to the *Logic*, Hegel conceives the relation of language and Logic against the analogical notion that either is a skeleton, or set of

³³³ SL, 27; W5, 41.

lifeless bones. In so doing his claim is that, despite a certain historical familiarity, neither Logic nor language are purely formalistic structures or disciplines:

The received material [of customary logic], the known thought-forms, must be regarded as an extremely important fund [*Vorlage*], even a necessary condition, a presupposition to be gratefully acknowledged even though what it offers here and there is only a bare thread, the dead bones of a skeleton thrown together in a disorderly heap.³³⁴

The sense in which customary logical forms are lifeless is presumably grounded, for Hegel, in what is missing in them. As he states clearly in the ensuing Introduction, “For the dead bones of logic to be quickened by spirit and become substance [*Gehalt*] and content [*Inhalt*], its *method* must be the one which alone can make it fit to be pure science.”³³⁵ Hegel’s use of the dead bones, or skeletal, analogy is meant to illustrate how little the idea of a rigid, presupposed structure determines what is active, living, and substantial in the content of Logic as such. In other words, Hegel’s premier characterization of Logic as a presuppositionless science outright rejects the view of either Logic (or logical forms) or language (or linguistic forms) as pre-given, recalcitrant structures, which formally determine philosophical content.

Yet, given that Hegel’s Logic is characterized as without presupposition and that it affirms a linguistic commitment regarding the nature of thought, since language has shown itself to be subject to historical variation, how is Hegel’s project not undermined, as Gadamer suggests? One of the main upshots of the 1831 Preface is how it rises to the challenge of this question, especially for those who view the significance of this matter in terms of its importance for 20th Century philosophy. In what follows, our approach is to frame Hegel’s debt to J.G. Hamann regarding the idea of language and thought and to interpret Hegel’s reflection on language in the 1831 Preface as an indirect reflection on that debt, namely that all thought is

³³⁴ SL, 12; W5, 19.

³³⁵ SL, 32; W5, 48.

linguistic and that the formal and historical aspects of language do not undermine its role and philosophical standing.

4.1.4. Hamann and Hegel

Hegel's reflections on the relevance of language to the project of Logic from the Preface to the Second Edition of his own *Science of Logic* challenge us to see language as neither purely formal nor solely historical. In that vein, Hegel owes a great debt to the writings of Johann Georg Hamann (1730 – 1788), who carefully noted the importance of language to both the Kantian critical project and beyond to philosophy more generally. The historical connection between Hamann and Hegel is far from arbitrary. Hegel's second Preface was written in 1831 and a few years earlier, in 1828, Hegel had reviewed Hamann's collected works. So, at the very least, by the time Hegel wrote the 1831 Preface to the *Science of Logic*, he knew the writings of Hamann well, regardless of whether or not it was fashionable to refer to him anymore than Herder.

The important essay for our current exposition is Hamann's *Metacritique on the Purism of Reason*, which was originally published in 1800, despite being written in 1784 as a response to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. In the content of the essay, Hamann challenges Kant on his reliance upon dualisms, particularly insofar as Hamann perceives Kant as erecting a problematic chasm between reason and language. According to Hamann, Kant deploys a notion of reason that is uniquely purified: "For besides the characteristic distinction of reason as object or source of knowledge or even as kind of knowledge, there is a still more general, sharper, and purer distinction which enables reason to ground all objects, sources, and kinds of knowledge."³³⁶ This purified reason is essentially reason conceived as independent, namely (*i*) independent of

³³⁶ Johann Georg Hamann, *Writings on Philosophy and Language*, trans. by Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), 207. Hereafter cited as *Hamann*.

tradition and belief; (ii) independent of everyday experience; and (iii) independent of language, since language is defined by both its tradition and its customary use.³³⁷

The gravity of language surrounds two particular issues on which Hamann is performing his *metacritique* of Kant. First, there is a problem with the purification of reason as such. According to Hamann, this erects a chasm between reason and language, which fundamentally disjoins the foundational role of language for thinking. As Cristina Lafont comments, “If thinking is inextricably bound up with an already existing language that makes it possible, the very idea of a presuppositionless starting-point, which underlies the depiction of reason as ‘pure,’ is a mere illusion.”³³⁸ And second, there are the issues surrounding the epistemological dualisms of the division of cognition into sensibility and understanding, a division both Hamann and Hegel are apprehensive to. Having already documented Hegel’s own rejection of dualisms, we will focus on Hamann’s claim that one cannot separate language from thought.

The notion of the purity of reason is problematic for Hamann because it separates reason from tradition, history, and experience. Hamann deems this is unacceptable because language is grounded in tradition, history, and its regular, habitual use and experience. Since language is fundamentally determined by the history of its use and the corresponding variance that that entails, the project of an exposition of purified reason is undermined by the very means of expression it employs. Interestingly, Hamann’s argument against Kant is very similar to the one raised against Hegel by Gadamer, but the difference is that Hegel is not guilty of the issues raised by Hamann against Kant and his transcendental project. In sum, Hamann is critical of the view that rejects the historical aspect of human language in favor of a transcendent and formal edifice,

³³⁷ These are the three “purifications of reason” that Hamann discusses. *Hamann*, 207-208.

³³⁸ Cristina Lafont, *The Linguistic Turn in Hermeneutic Philosophy*, trans. José Medina (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1999), 8.

writing, “The synthesis of predicate with subject (the proper object of pure reason) has for its middle term nothing more than an old, cold prejudice for mathematics before and behind it.”³³⁹

Hegel describes Hamann’s *Metacritique on the Purism of Reason* as “quite curious” in spite of its short length.³⁴⁰ In the review of Hamann’s works, Hegel’s short reflection on the *Metacritique on the Purism of Reason* rightly acknowledges the issue of language, as Hamann himself raises it.³⁴¹ And although Hegel’s remarks on that essay are also brief, he carefully notes two of the important theses that arise. First, Hegel states that Hamann frames both the problem and solution of reason as language.³⁴² By this we take Hegel to be acknowledging something akin and favorable to his own philosophical position of the dynamic interrelation of both form and content. Second, Hegel also rightly notes that, for Hamann, language founds and grounds thought.³⁴³ This particular commitment is extremely important for Hegel given its explicitness in the development of *Geist* in the *Theoretical Psychology*, where Hegel argues that language is necessary for there to be fully actualized rational thinking. As is often the case with Hegel, he tends to emphasize only those views that have some connection to his own philosophical system, and it is in that way that we interpret his brief remarks about language in Hamann’s work in his review.

However, according to Lisa Marie Anderson, Hegel “underappreciates” Hamann’s reflections on language, since, as she puts it, “Hegel seems concerned with Hamann’s view of language as such only in his analysis of Hamann’s objection to the Kantian critical project.”³⁴⁴ And again, further on, “Hegel’s review offers almost nothing, for example, on the substance (as

³³⁹ *Hamann*, 210.

³⁴⁰ HS, 36; W11, 326.

³⁴¹ HS, 36-38; W11, 326-329.

³⁴² HS, 36; W11, 326.

³⁴³ HS, 37; W11, 327.

³⁴⁴ Lisa Marie Anderson, *Introduction to Hegel and Hamann* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2008), xv. Hereafter cited as Anderson.

opposed to the personal circumstances) of Hamann's writings on Herder (*Herderschriften*), in which he worked through his own theory of language in response to his friend's prizewinning and now-seminal essay on the origin of language."³⁴⁵ While those two areas demonstrate a less broad or rigorous treatment from the standpoint of Hamann scholarship, from our own ground in Hegel studies, the emphasis, or lack thereof, is perhaps quite telling, or at least more informative than Anderson might lead us to believe, especially when we recognize the presence of Hamann's views in Hegel's 1831 Preface.

There are two key areas of Hegel's discussion of language in the 1831 Preface where a thesis about language and its importance for thinking can be traced to Hamann. First, Hegel rules out the idea that there is any being that has meaningful significance for philosophy that is not expressible in language. While this can be interpreted as a refutation of the infamous *Ding an sich*, it is more of a direct statement regarding the linguistic nature of all thinking, and *qua* Logic of being as well. Second, Hegel fully acknowledges and celebrates the historical tradition of language for philosophy. He notes this as a key hallmark of the importance of language for philosophy and explains it by remarking upon the German language in particular and highlighting a specific example.

As we have already noted, language defines what is unique to human beings and our capacity for rational philosophizing. What we think about is linguistically expressible and it is in that way that things and concepts have meaning for us. Hegel writes:

In everything that the human being has interiorized, in everything that in some way or other has become for him a representation, in whatever he has made his own, there has language penetrated, and everything that he transforms into language and expresses in it contains a category, whether concealed, mixed, or well defined. So much is logic natural to the human being, is indeed his very *nature*.³⁴⁶

³⁴⁵ Anderson, xv.

³⁴⁶ SL, 12; W5, 20.

The indistinguishable relation between the forms of thinking and forms of language is, therefore, an essential aspect of Hegel's idea of Logic. Furthermore, Hegel is suggesting that the foundations of systematically true logical thinking reside in language inherently. Thus, following Hamann, we do not need to *purify* our thinking from its history or tradition, and this is a point repeated by Hegel in the 1831 Preface, and again in the general Introduction to the entire *Science of Logic*.³⁴⁷

Mirroring the affirmation in the *Encyclopedia* that 'we think in words' (§462R), Hegel adheres to the thesis that thoughts are linguistically articulated. Given the permeation of thought, along with the linguistic nature of thought's expression, logical forms and thought forms are natural to human language just as much as thinking and Logic, as quoted above. Hence, Hegel states, "It is to the advantage of a language when it possesses a wealth of logical expressions, that is, distinctive expressions specifically set aside for thought determinations."³⁴⁸ Hegel then repeats his critique of non-alphabetic, symbolic scripts, which we already discussed in the second chapter in terms of their representational nature and insufficiency for the dynamic becoming of rational thought. Far from being a foil for a nationalistic impulse for the superiority of the German language in particular, Hegel is claiming that the objective form of logical concepts or categories derives from their expression as substantives and verbs. The emphasis on the verbal nature of language is highly important, since verbs are the linguistic entities of movement and activity, and therefore most well suited for the dynamism of thinking and the becoming of being.³⁴⁹ Accordingly, we can agree with Alexandre Koyré's assessment that, "On

³⁴⁷ "He who has mastered a language and is also acquainted with other languages with which to compare it, to such is given the capacity to feel in the grammar of the language the spirit and culture of a people [*Volks*]; the same rules and forms now have an enriched, living value. In the medium of the language, he can recognize the expression of spirit as spirit, and this is logic." SL, 36; W5, 53.

³⁴⁸ SL, 12; W5, 20.

³⁴⁹ SL, 12; W5, 20.

pourrait dire que, contrairement à la tradition millénaire de la philosophie, Hegel pense non pas en substantifs, mais en verbes.”³⁵⁰

Given this verbal emphasis, which is completely appropriate to both the dynamic nature of being and the activity of thinking, Hegel’s lauding of the German language is far from a nationalistic impulse. Hegel reflects, “The German language has many advantages over other modern languages, for many of its words also have the further peculiarity of carrying, not just different meanings, but opposite ones, and in this one cannot fail to recognize the language’s speculative spirit.”³⁵¹ The most well known of such a German word that embodies what is unique to Hegel’s own speculative philosophy is *Aufheben*, which explicitly illustrates his general point regarding language’s speculative spirit.

Frequently translated into English as ‘sublation’, *Aufheben* has the unique status of being a term that manages to have two simultaneous, yet conflicting intentions, namely that it means both to cancel and to preserve. *Aufheben* is strongly indicative of Hegel’s claim that speculative philosophy does not need to assume a special vocabulary, but can find what is logical in what is natural to the human being, i.e., linguistic thinking, as we have already emphasized. Hence, the employment of language in Logic is not in conflict with language in its tradition and use, which Hamann stressed in his critique of Kant, and, Logic does not presuppose language, as Gadamer claims. Rather, language presupposes Logic in the sense that Logic is in language as a potentiality that philosophical science develops into actuality and full realization.³⁵²

³⁵⁰ *Hegel à Iéna*, 174.

³⁵¹ SL, 12; W5, 20.

³⁵² Regarding this matter, we follow the interpretation of Stephen Houlgate, who comments: “The German language constitutes a historical presupposition of Hegel’s speculative philosophy since it forms part of the historical and cultural context that gave birth to that philosophy. It does not, however, constitute an ineliminable hermeneutic precondition of speculative philosophy since one does not have to speak German in order to understand that philosophy or to philosophize speculatively oneself... Language as such, by contrast, is a necessary hermeneutic precondition of speculative philosophy insofar as all thought must occur in words.” Houlgate (2006), 78.

Insofar as Logic is the science of thinking, it will involve linguistic forms, since they are the forms in which thought is grounded and in which it articulates itself. Hegel puts the matter bluntly in a Remark situated between the accounts of the particular concept and singularity from the opening section of the Doctrine of the Concept: “Since the human being has in language a means of designation that is appropriate to reason, it is otiose to look for a less perfect means of representation to bother oneself with.”³⁵³ Moreover, if language is what is unique to human beings in general, and all thought is grounded in language, then the science of thought *qua* language is Logic. As Hegel claims, “Logic is the supernatural element that permeates all his [the human being’s] natural behavior.”³⁵⁴ In other words, the philosophical significance of language is that language is neither external to thought, as what is uniquely human, nor to being, especially insofar as it is meaningful *for us*. Therefore, following the interpretation of Jean Hyppolite from *Logique et existence* (1952), language is the medium or interpenetrating identity between thinking and being; it is the medium for the expression of the primary interconnection of thinking and being.

One of the upshots of this view is that a metaphysics that reduces the ultimate nature of reality to physical or material reality completely misses all the concepts and other spiritually significant matters that define the meaningfulness of being for us. And herein resides a way in which to qualify Hegel’s idealism: it is not a choice of metaphysical commitments to either physical things or supernatural things, but the two together in a mutually self-determining, non-disjunctive relation of form and content, which finds meaningful expression in and through Logic and philosophical discourse. That said, the importance of language as a meaningful philosophical discourse is not limited to the status of something that speaks about things in

³⁵³ It is worth remarking that Hegel uses *Darstellung*, not *Vorstellung*, since the mere representation of reason would be of lesser significance than its presentation, which is what we take Hegel to be intending here. SL, 545; W6, 295.

³⁵⁴ SL, 12; W5, 20.

general; it is equally that in which the self affirms itself to be among a community of like-minded recognizing selves. In other words, language is much more than just the words that are about things, since that would restrict language to predication and would ignore the sense in which language embodies the subject. Therefore, having addressed the relationship of Logic and language, we are now well positioned to develop the idea of subjectivity that centrally underlies that framework and gives substance to Hegel's notion of truth. As we shall come to clarify, the becoming of subjectivity in language is both how truth is comprehended and how it is conceived according to a notion of time as non-finite, ahistorical becoming.

4.2. Truth, Subjectivity, and Language

In order to not undermine the project of Logic in general, the philosophical significance of language must lend itself to (i) being a discourse about truth, which is a classical philosophical aim, and (ii) embodying the subject, which a key contribution of German idealisms, especially Hegel's. In order to demonstrate Hegel's faithfulness to this dual aim, we propose to explore the connection between truth and subjectivity in two key places where the relevance of language and becoming are explicit.

First, there is the Doctrine of the Concept, which is the third part of both the *Science of Logic* and the more abbreviated *Encyclopedia Logic*. The Doctrine of the Concept is where Hegel delivers his definitive ontological statements about subjectivity, objectivity, and the absolute Idea. Most relevant for our purposes is the subdivision on subjectivity, wherein the traditional logical elements of concepts, judgments, and syllogisms have import for philosophical thinking. What is unique to Hegel's approach to those linguistic forms, as we have already indicated, is the dynamic and living manner in which the material is engaged. As Hegel writes in the 1816 Foreword to the Doctrine of the Concept: "The task is to make it fluid again, to review

the concept in such dead matter.”³⁵⁵ This revival, we shall argue, centers around Hegel’s notion of truth as the whole that *becomes* according to the notion of the self-development of the concept.

Second, having largely set aside the relationship between the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Science of Logic* in the previous section, we will now take it up insofar as the Preface to the former is written as the introduction to the latter. Hegel’s Preface to the *Phenomenology* functions quite well as an introductory statement concerning the *Logic*, especially given that it was written after the work it supplements.³⁵⁶ Moreover, it is in the Preface to the *Phenomenology* that Hegel argues for a conception of truth as subjectivity, and characterizes it in terms of ‘subject becoming substance’, or the ahistorical, non-finite becoming of the subject in the speculative sentence. Therefore, in the following, we will define the notion of truth that Hegel expounds and further qualify it in terms of the ontology of subjectivity insofar as subjectivity becomes in the speculative sentence. This demonstrates that language is the ontological site of the subject insofar as it becomes in terms of a becoming that is not finite and historical. The aim is to establish the ground for the conception of time as ahistorical becoming, which we view as central to the project of Hegel’s ontology of subjectivity, particular in terms of its connection to language.

4.2.1. The True is the Whole

Truth is the traditional *telos* of philosophy; it defines both what it is about and what it is aiming for. At stake, then, is the type of account of truth that a philosophy provides. For Hegel,

³⁵⁵ SL, 507; W6, 243.

³⁵⁶ In reading the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as an introduction to the *Science of Logic*, we are following Jere O’Neill Surber’s suggestion that the Preface be read as a “linguistic introduction” to the *Logic*. See Jere O’Neill Surber, “Hegel’s Philosophy of Language: The Unwritten Volume,” In *A Companion to Hegel*, ed. Stephen Houlgate and Michael Baur, 243-261 (West Sussex, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2011), 251.

there are not conflictingly true historical philosophical positions, only partial grasps of what is ultimately his encompassing, tripartite system of science. Yet, there is, as Hegel explains in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, a tendency to think of the true and the false as completely separate, and having some sort of independent being from one another. “Against this view,” Hegel tells us, “it must be maintained that truth is not a minted coin that can be given and pocketed ready-made.”³⁵⁷ Just as Logic does not begin with anything ready-made, pre-given, or assumed, neither can presumptions be made by a philosophy about the truth. Accordingly, Hegel asserts, “The True is the whole” [*Das Wahre ist das Ganze*].³⁵⁸ In addition to being the most succinct of Hegel’s statements about truth and philosophy, there are three ways in which it is quite illuminating in defining and contextualizing the kind of account of truth that his own philosophy provides.

First, Hegel does not think that it is the job of a philosophy worthy of the name to provide a narrative account of truth. In other words, truth is not the narration of something insofar as it is determined by something given, e.g., the dead bones of ‘logic’ insofar as they are unquickened by thought. As Hegel states in the reflections on the Doctrine of the Concept, “Philosophy ought not to be a narrative [*Erzählung*] of what happens [*geschieht*], but a cognition of what is *true* in what happens, in order further to comprehend on the basis of this truth what in the narrative appears as a mere happening.”³⁵⁹ Hegel’s specific use of language that is strikingly similar to how he characterizes history ought not to be ignored here. As we explained in the previous chapter, for Hegel, history is both what has happened [*das Geschehene*] and the narration of those events themselves [*Geschichtserzählung*], i.e., the objective events and their subjective,

³⁵⁷ PS, 22; W3, 40.

³⁵⁸ PS, 11; W3, 24.

³⁵⁹ SL, 519; W6, 260.

linguistic account. Therefore, Logic is not the science of the history of truth. Rather, it is truth itself, as it develops for thought, as thought about being.

Second, the true is the whole if it is a truth that results, and this is the idea of the true as a result of a dialectical process. As Hegel writes in the Preface to the *Phenomenology*, the existence of truth requires that it come to be in a systematic form that is ensured by philosophical science, as Hegel conceives it. He writes, “To help bring philosophy closer to the form of Science, to the goal where it can lay aside the title ‘love of knowing’ and be *actual* knowing—that is what I have set myself to do. The inner necessity that knowing should be Science lies in its nature, and only the systematic exposition of philosophy itself provides it.”³⁶⁰ Consequently the true is the whole insofar as it is systematically developed in and by philosophy itself.

Third, having spoken to the nature of truth as a result, as something that becomes through a systematic process of philosophical development, what remains to understand is what precisely the whole, in fact, *is*. In other words, if the true is the whole, then what is the whole? The answer is that it is the *concept* [*Der Begriff*]: “the Concept is *totality*; thus, in its identity with itself it is what is *in and for itself determinate*.”³⁶¹ Therefore, the account of truth must be viewed in terms of the following question: what is the relation between truth and a systematic account of the concept? An account of the concept is what the Doctrine of the Concept provides, especially the first section on subjectivity, which treats the concept as such, the judgment, and the syllogism, all of which are the traditional dead bones of ‘logic’, but also equally the true, living forms of thinking, as comprehended in Hegelian Logic.³⁶² Hence, in order to capture the sense in which Hegel’s philosophy, specifically as ontology, is a discourse about truth, it is necessary to account

³⁶⁰ PS, 3; W3, 14.

³⁶¹ EL §160, 236; W8, 307.

³⁶² In asserting the importance of linguistic forms and the relevance of language to Logic more generally, we do not assent to Jim Vernon’s position that Hegel’s account of the concept in the *Logic* is an implicit articulation of an explicitly deducible universal grammar. See Jim Vernon, *Hegel’s Philosophy of Language* (2007).

for a dynamic anatomy of truth, which is what Hegel's account of subjectivity in the Doctrine of the Concept in the *Logic* affords. After having elaborated the development of the concept, we will be sufficiently grounded in the structure of totality in order to comprehend Hegel's linguistic articulation of truth as subject that becomes substance in the speculative sentence.³⁶³

4.2.2. The Development of the Concept

In viewing Hegel's *Logic* as a work of ontology, we must also recognize that the aim of ontology is also fundamentally linked to theorizing about subjectivity. In other words, thinking about being means also thinking about subjectivity *as* being. It is in that vein that Klaus Düsing characterizes Hegel's *Logic* as a work of ontology, stating: "Its philosophical underpinnings lie in a systematic approach to ontology and the theory of subjectivity, in which Hegel brings together various forms of ontology and distances himself from others."³⁶⁴ There is no better place to witness the central place of subjectivity to ontology than Hegel's Doctrine of the Concept. Furthermore, the ontology and subjectivity relation is rooted within the classical philosophical aim of comprehending the truth. To that end, and concerning the significance of the concept for Hegel, Richard Dien Winfield comments, "The concept can be the privileged vehicle of philosophical method because the anatomy of conceptual determination is the anatomy of truth."³⁶⁵ Hence, by investigating the development of the concept, we will be equally investigating the development of truth.

The third main division of Hegel's *Logic*, both in the *Encyclopedia Logic* and *Science of Logic*, is the Doctrine of the Concept. Under the main heading of 'concept', Hegel treats

³⁶³ While we recognize that the judgment is the posited differentiation that emerges from the concept as such in both of Hegel's *Logics*, since our overarching apparatus is truth and subjectivity, we will focus on the propositional form in the Preface because it is grounded in those terms.

³⁶⁴ Klaus Düsing, "Ontology and Dialectic in Hegel's Thought," In *The Dimensions of Hegel's Dialectic*, ed. Nectarios G. Limnatis, 97-122 (London: Continuum, 2010), 97.

³⁶⁵ Richard Dien Winfield, *From Concept to Objectivity: Thinking Through Hegel's Subjective Logic* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006), 65.

subjectivity, objectivity, and the Idea, so from the standpoint of Hegel's entire system of philosophy, the contents of the Doctrine of the Concept have quite a large bearing on the whole, both micro- and macrocosmically. In fact, this notion of the whole, or of totality, is particularly central to this part of Hegelian Logic, since one of the definitions of the concept from the *Encyclopedia Logic* is that the concept is totality and, therefore, the true standpoint of "absolute idealism."³⁶⁶ Again, in the *Science of Logic*, the concept is defined as the "absolute foundation [*absolute Grundlage*]."³⁶⁷ And insofar as the concept is the whole, as totality, it is also the true, since the true is the whole. Yet, despite the fundamental importance of *the* concept, by the sheer fact that by the concept Hegel means the *whole*, we faced with a difficulty: if the concept is the whole, totality, and the absolute foundation, then can we begin by answering the question 'what is the concept?', or, equally, 'what is truth?'

If we cannot begin with a definition of the concept, then this is simply because we cannot begin by assuming anything about the essential structure and development of the absolute foundation of thought. In other words, the elucidation of the nature of the concept as subjectivity, objectivity, and Idea, is not something with which we can begin as a preconceived presupposition. This is perfectly in line with Hegel's approach to the opening of Logic as a presuppositionless science, as we have already noted. So, methodologically, if the concept is not something with which we can begin with as ready-made, then it is something whose elucidation will define what it is, both for the reader of Hegel's *Logics* and *for us* here.

The account of the Doctrine of the Concept will both tell us what the concept *is*, and justify the sense in which it is equally the absolute foundation of all, including itself, and the ground of all mediation and mediating structures. But, of course, the Doctrine of the Concept

³⁶⁶ EL §160A, 236; W8, 307.

³⁶⁷ SL, 508; W6, 245.

must have something upon which to make its beginning, and this something must not undermine its immediacy. Therefore, in addition to the brief statement about the concept as totality from the *Encyclopedia*, Hegel writes in the *Science of Logic* that the concept is, of course, in the beginning something immediate, as that which the Doctrines of Being and Essence have *become*. Now, the case for this is made in both the Doctrine of Being and the Doctrine of Essence with respect to the dialectical way in which one gives way, and gives rise, to the next. Hegel explains, “Being and essence are therefore the moments of its [the concept’s] *becoming*; but the concept is their *foundation* and *truth* as the identity into which they gave sunk and in which they are contained.”³⁶⁸ Within the preceding Doctrines, then, we have the genesis of the concept; the concept is the truth of being and essence, as that which the two have become [*Geworden*].³⁶⁹

As that which has become, the concept is similar in its characterization to *Geist*, since in the transition from Nature to *Geist*, Hegel describes the latter as that which Nature has become, as the *truth* of the latter (§388). The concept is similar in that the concept is the truth that has come to be out of the preceding stages of Logic.³⁷⁰ However, since the concept is not the end of the story, it both comes on the scene in its becoming and then continues to become for us who think it over and allow it to *develop*. Hence, with regard to the becoming of the concept, Hegel explains: “In the sphere of *Being* the dialectical process is passing-over into another, whilst in the sphere of *Essence* it is shining into another. In contrast, the movement of the *Concept* is

³⁶⁸ SL, 508; W6, 245.

³⁶⁹ The matter can also be stated in terms of the question: ‘what is the concept of the concept?’, since the answer is found in the expositions of being and essence, which have become the concept: “In the science of the concept, the content and determination of the latter can be proven solely on the basis of an *immanent deduction* which contains its genesis, and such a deduction lies behind us.” SL, 514; W6, 252.

³⁷⁰ We do not suggest a strict correlation between *Geist* and the concept, however, since the concept is much more expansive. Hegel himself cautions against this identification as well, writing, “The concept is also not to be considered here as the act of the self-conscious understanding, not as *subjective understanding*, but as the concept in and for itself which constitutes a *stage of nature* as well as of *spirit*.” SL, 517; W6, 257.

development [*Entwicklung*].³⁷¹ Consequently, the concept is not *static* because it is the truth that has become and because it is defined by its own development, which we argued in the previous chapter is specifically *self*-development.

In its beginning, the concept is something immediate, as the immediacy that has become from the preceding Doctrines of Being and Essence. This first moment is the concept as such, which is both the whole of its parts and each of its parts as equally constituting the whole, a whole designated as ‘the concept as such’. The parts of the concept as such are universality, particularity, and singularity; each of these is at once determinate and a determination of the concept as such.³⁷² What characterizes the development of these determinate parts is the concept as such, first as the universal concept that becomes the particular, then as the particular becoming the singular. Finally, the three together are posited as the whole concept, which differentiates itself in the judgment [*Urteil*], whereby “the concept divides and posits itself as the *negative* or the *other* of itself.”³⁷³ In order to demonstrate the movement of the concept, we will need to demonstrate the concept’s self-development.

The immediacy of the concept is the universal concept [*Der allgemeine Begriff*], which Hegel states is the concept as “*absolute self-identity*” and “*pure self-reference*.”³⁷⁴ This idea of the universal concept, which opens the content on subjectivity in the Doctrine of the Concept, is as much a reflection on the idea of the concept in general, as it is on the notion of universality as such. The universality under consideration here is not the indeterminate universality of pure being-nothing, which characterized the thought-experiment that leads to the dynamic beginning with becoming. Regarding this difference, Hegel states:

³⁷¹ EL, §161A, 237; W8, 308.

³⁷² SL, 529; W6, 273.

³⁷³ SL, 528; W6, 273.

³⁷⁴ SL, 530; W6, 274-275.

Being is simple as an *immediate*; for this reason we can only *intend* it without being able to say what it is; therefore, it is immediately one with its other, *non-being*. The concept of being is just this, that it is so simple as to vanish into its opposite immediately; it is *becoming*. The *universal* is, on the contrary, a *simple* that is at the same time *all the richer in itself*, for it is the concept.³⁷⁵

While the Doctrine of Being, and thereby the whole Logic itself, begins with the idea of being as becoming, the Doctrine of the Concept begins with the universal concept as a whole that is determined by the preceding content of the Doctrines of Being and Essence.³⁷⁶

The richness of the universality of the concept is further distinct insofar as it is not the mere generality of common features, which, Hegel reminds us, belongs to a very ordinary understanding of universality.³⁷⁷ Although universality is defined by its abstractness, when we go to explain what is contained in this concept we introduce determinations and differentiations into it and thereby alter the simplicity of the concept of universality itself, but without beginning to conceptualize something radically different. “The universal,” Hegel writes, “even when it posits itself in a determination, *remains* in it what it is. It is the *soul* of the concrete which it inhabits, unhindered and equal to itself in its manifoldness and diversity.”³⁷⁸ Therefore, universality is not the idea of commonality or shared features, but that which defines the way in which the concept distinguishes itself while remaining itself.

Because the universal cannot be wholly abstract and indeterminate, there must be an immanent ground for its distinguishing, rather than one that is externally applied, and this is the

³⁷⁵ SL, 530; W6, 275.

³⁷⁶ Hegel himself explains this ontologically, as that which has become [*Geworden*]. Specifically concerning the universal concept, he writes: “It is here, as the *content* of our treatise begins to be the concept itself, that we must look back once more at its genesis. *Essence came to be out of being*, and the concept out of essence, therefore also from being. But this becoming has the meaning of a *self-repulsion*, so that *what becomes* [*das Gewordene*] is rather the *unconditional* and the *originative*. In passing over into essence, *being* became a *reflective shine* or a *positedness*, and *becoming* or the passing over into an *other* became a *positing*; conversely, the *positing* or the reflection of essence sublated itself and restored itself to a *non-positing*, an *original being*. The concept is the mutual penetration of these moments, namely, the qualitative and the originative existent is only as *positing* and as *immanent turning back*, and this pure immanent reflection simply is the *becoming-other* or *determinateness* which is, consequently, no less infinite, self-referring, *determinateness*.” SL, 530; W6, 274.

³⁷⁷ EL §163A1, 240; W8, 311.

³⁷⁸ SL, 531; W6, 276.

particular concept, which emerges from the universal concept and which constitutes the self-determination of the universal concept. Interestingly, Hegel says the move from the universal to particular concept is *not* a transition from one thing to its other; we are still dealing with one and the same concept as such here, so the determination of the universal concept as the particular concept posits a limit internally to the universal concept, meaning that the finite is internally posited, and therefore the universal is the true infinite, not a dialectic between something and its other—it is internal self-determination.³⁷⁹

In conceiving the universal concept this way, we are already allowing the concept to develop itself, namely for the universal to become the particular while remaining the same true, whole concept as such. The language Hegel uses in the *Encyclopedia Logic* makes this matter nicely explicit: “The universal is what particularizes (specifies) itself, remaining at home with itself in its other, in unclouded clarity.”³⁸⁰ The universal that determines itself while remaining itself is another way of stating that the determination of the universal is the particularity of the concept. Hence, the universal concept develops itself into the particular.³⁸¹

Particularity [*Besonderheit*] is the determinateness [*Bestimmtheit*] of the concept. Like the universal concept, the particular concept [*Der besondere Begriff*] is a more complex idea than its corollary in the Doctrine of Being as the determinateness of qualitative being. The determinateness of the concept is, therefore, its *Besonderheit*, rather than *Bestimmtheit*, and this is significant with respect to the earlier treatment of the notion of limit and infinity. As Hegel affirms, “It is not a *limit*, as if it were related to an *other* beyond it, but is rather, as just shown, the universal’s own immanent moment; in particularity, therefore, the universal is not in an other

³⁷⁹ SL, 533-534; W6, 279.

³⁸⁰ *EL* §163A1, 240; W8, 312.

³⁸¹ The whole concept posits its particularity and its self-differentiation in and as judgment.

but simply and solely with itself.”³⁸² In other words, the concept’s particularity is not an externally imposed limiting determinacy, but part and parcel of the concept as such *qua* universal. Stanley Rosen assesses the centrality of particularity in terms of the ground by which it defines what the universal concept is, which, as we have argued, is not an external definition.³⁸³ Yet, the significance of particularity and the particular concept is much more robust than that.

The particularity of the concept is also what is meant by the immanence of the moments of the concept as a self-developing and self-determining whole. “The universal determines *itself*, and so is itself the particular; the determinateness is *its* difference; it is only differentiated from itself.”³⁸⁴ While this is crucial to Hegel’s notion of judgment and the speculative sentence, as we shall show below, what we wish to emphasize here and now is the importance of particularity as a dynamic moment of the concept. The universal concept is itself and its determinateness, which is the particular, and this notion of self-difference belongs to nothing other than the concept itself, as the true structure of the whole.

In defining the particular concept as the determinate concept that the self-referring universal concept becomes, we have already advanced to a further distinguishing of the concept as such. As already indicated as the movement of the concept as such from universality to particularity, the concept as such self-develops further to the singular [*Das Einzelne*].

Concerning this movement of thought, and becoming of the concept as such, Hegel writes:

But self-referring determinateness is *singularity* [*Einzelheit*]. Just as universality immediately is particularity in and for itself, no less immediately is particularity also *singularity* in and for itself; this singularity is at first to be regarded as the

³⁸² SL, 534; W6, 280.

³⁸³ Rosen, 417.

³⁸⁴ SL, 535; W6, 281.

third moment of the concept, inasmuch as it is held fast in *opposition* to the other two, but also as the absolute turning back of the concept into itself.³⁸⁵

In the development of the concept as singular, the concept is distinct as the determinate unity of both particularity and universality. In other words, singularity is particular universality, and this tripartite interrelation of the concept is what thought develops as the concept as such.

The pivotal idea that Hegel is emphasizing with respect to the development of the concept, and with respect to the concept as totality more generally, is the way in which the concept *becomes*. Hegel's language on this matter is both succinct and explicit:

Universality and particularity appeared, on the one hand, as moments of the *becoming* of singularity. But it has already been shown that the two are in themselves the total concept; consequently, that in *singularity* they do not pass over into an *other* but that, on the contrary, what is posited in it is what they are in and for themselves.³⁸⁶

The universal and particular are the becoming of the singular, all of which together are the whole concept. The concept *becomes*, here as the self-development of the thought of the concept in its movement, but without ever becoming something other than itself, as typified as 'transition' in the Doctrine of Being, for example.

With the concept conceived as singular, the concept as totality becomes distinct and is determinate as an existent totality. In the *Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel states, "Every moment of the Concept is itself the whole Concept (§160); but singularity, the subject, is the Concept *posited* as totality."³⁸⁷ Hence, having allowed the concept as such to develop, the sense in which this development and movement of thought is equally the self-development of the subject in conceptual terms is further specified. That is, when we think about the concept, we are thinking about the subject. The nature of the relation of the two is what is at stake in the Doctrine of the

³⁸⁵ SL, 540; W6, 288.

³⁸⁶ SL, 546; W6, 297.

³⁸⁷ EL §163R, 240; W8, 311.

Concept, which is Hegel's Subjective Logic, and the sense in which subjectivity is the truth and being of the becoming of the whole is further addressed in both Hegel's ontology of the speculative sentence and judgment.³⁸⁸

In summary, the universal concept is the concept in its identical self-relation, the particular concept is the difference of the concept with respect to its universality, and the singular is, therefore, the concept as both identity and difference. According to Reid, the relation between identity and difference is, for Hegel, neither disjunctive nor static. In other words, the relationship between identity and difference is not a choice of either identity or difference as discrete fixed conceptual entities. In Reid's view, which we think is true to Hegel's own view, the relation between identity and difference is the movement of the concept. Reid writes, "The real relationship between identity and difference is one of movement, specifically, the epic movement of the concept."³⁸⁹ This movement is essentially the ontology of the self-development and self-determination of subjectivity, as we have witnessed it in the concept as such. As a way of conceiving and comprehending subjectivity, our interpretation of the dynamism of the concept and its movement is fundamental. Quite a bit hangs on how we interpret this idea of the movement of the concept, which Reid highlights with respect to Hegel's views on identity and difference. This is due to the ontology of the concept, which defines the form, content, and structure of truth as the truth of the whole.

Each moment, term, and part of the concept is both a part of the concept and capable of constituting the whole concept insofar as it is still inseparably linked to its counter points. There is only the whole concept as a self-transforming totality that becomes. John Burbidge notes the

³⁸⁸ In the general Introduction to the *Logic*, Hegel writes, "The subjective logic is the logic of the *concept* – of essence which has sublated [*aufgehoben*] its reference to a being or to its reflective shine, and in its determination is no longer external but something subjective, freely self-subsisting, self-determining, or rather the *subject* itself." SL, 42; W5, 62.

³⁸⁹ Reid (2007), 18.

significance of becoming of the development of the tripartite concept, which evidences the self-relation of a self-distinguishing and true whole:

In the very early stages of the *Logic* a transition or becoming is identified as the basic link that connects two concepts. In a similar way, the most elementary kind of connection that could make an inference necessary involves two transitions, first from the singular to the particular, and then from the particular to the universal.³⁹⁰

As a means for defining the form and content of subjectivity, the concept as such defines the rational movement of thinking, and the full consideration of subjectivity as concept, judgment, and syllogism is what engenders the inference that subjectivity becomes objectivity. Therefore, Hegel's notion of subjectivity, conceived above in terms of the concept as such, evidences a dynamic ontology of the self-relating process that the concept is: the concept is the coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be of each universal, particular, and singular term, and the resolving of itself in those same terms. Now, having articulated that the singular as subject is what an account of the movement of the concept provides, we can advance to see how this develops further in Hegel's notion of the speculative sentence, wherein subjectivity is speculatively conceived in its becoming and in accordance with the ahistorically true movement of the concept.

4.3. Time and the True Development of the Subject

From as little as a cursory glance at Hegel's 1807 Preface, there can be no doubt that Hegel advocates for a philosophy that is dynamic at its core, saying, "Philosophy must beware of the wish to be edifying."³⁹¹ Not only does such a resistance to philosophical stubbornness manifest itself throughout Hegel's philosophy, but it is also especially typical of Hegel to resist the edification of the subject, or subjectivity. Against dogmatic, formal, and edified approaches to philosophy, Hegel qualifies what is ultimately pivotal for all true philosophies generally: "In

³⁹⁰ John W. Burbidge, *The Logic of Hegel's Logic: An Introduction* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2006), 88.

³⁹¹ PS, 6; W3, 17.

my view, which can be justified only by the exposition of the system itself, everything turns on grasping and expressing [*auszudrücken*] the True, not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject* [*Subjekt*].”³⁹² The question is, then, what does it mean to grasp and to express the true as subject in a manner that does not betray the wish to avoid edification? Briefly, substance as subject means substance as being, or, more specifically, as becoming. Therefore, the exposition of the system is the expression of truth as that which becomes, since “It is the process of its own becoming.”³⁹³

Regarding Hegel’s pronouncement that we must grasp truth as both substance and subject, Terry Pinkard rightly highlights that “everything about our interpretation of Hegel hangs on what in the world we take Hegel to mean by that assertion.”³⁹⁴ What our account of the concept as such has lent to our comprehension of Hegelian subjectivity is that the basic structure of self-determination is the tripartite interrelation of universal, particular, and singular, so the truth of the whole will always be rational in those terms. Hegel’s Doctrine of the Concept is an account of subjectivity insofar as it is account of the systematic structure of self-determination, which we have already earlier repeated as Hegel’s notion of freedom. Hence, when Hegel states in the Preface to the *Phenomenology* that substance must become subject, he means that substance is self-determining, and this notion of self-determining substance is Hegel’s idea of absolute subjectivity or *Spirit*.³⁹⁵

³⁹² PS, 9-10; W3, 22-23.

³⁹³ PS, 10; W3, 23.

³⁹⁴ Terry Pinkard, “Subjectivity and Substance,” *Hegel Bulletin* 36 (2015), 1. Hereafter cited as Pinkard (2015).

³⁹⁵ In the *Phenomenology*, language is the labor of the ‘I’ becoming determinate and having being, which is why Hegel claims repeatedly, ‘Language is the *existence* [*Dasein*] of Spirit’. He is not making the static point that language is a dead letter; rather, he is consistent with the views in his mature work that language is a *mediating process*; this makes it isomorphic to subjectivity, just as subjectivity and time are dialectically isomorphic. This isomorphism amounts to what constitutes the history of Spirit, where history is “Spirit emptied out into Time” [PS, 292; W3, 590]. Spirit is the most comprehensive and fullest notion of subjectivity in the *Phenomenology*, and its temporal externalization in language constitutes the manifestation of its existence, which is indifferent from history: the being of history is the existence of Spirit through language. On this matter we follow closely with Alexandre

In order to justify and reconcile the idea of philosophy as a discourse about truth embodying subjectivity, we propose to treat Hegel's analysis of the speculative sentence as a dynamic ontology of subjectivity insofar as the speculative nature of the propositional form lends itself to an account of what it means to be a subject by explaining this in terms of the becoming of the subject as such. What is unique to Hegel's idea of the speculative sentence is how it conflates a grammatical subject with a psychological one, how it ontologically conceives being in the copula as becoming, and how it is a meditation on the nature of language as such, rather than a single idiomatic form. Ultimately, Hegel's analysis of language furthers the claim that there is no subject that simply *is*; rather, there is only the subjectivity that *becomes*. And insofar as we are concerned with grasping the self-determination of truth as subject, we are in pursuit of a conception of time or becoming that is not strictly finite temporality. In the following, we locate this notion time as the ahistorical becoming of the subject in language (*i*) through the linguistic determination of this idea in the speculative proposition, (*ii*) through the influence of Fichte, Schelling, and Hölderlin, and (*iii*) in the culmination of the scientific standpoint reached by the ascension of Hegel's ladder in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. We conclude by briefly reflecting on the ground of this concept of ahistorical becoming, and its role in language and subjectivity, in Hegel's ontology of judgment [*Urteil*].

4.3.1. The Speculative Sentence

While Hegel's treatment of language in the *Encyclopedia* can be viewed as his most explicit reflection on language, and rightly so, there are other important areas where Hegel

Koyré, who also explains the history of Spirit as the development of time, rather than the filling of time as an empty container, since Hegel refutes the container theory of time. As Koyré rightly emphasizes, that time is conceptualized as becoming lends itself to our own ontological comprehension of the becoming of Spirit as history. Koyré writes, "Hegel décrit le flux de la vie spirituelle concrète, non pas une image abstraite due devenir, et c'est là la raison pour laquelle il dira plus tard que ce ne sont pas les choses ou les processus qui sont dans le temps, mais le temps lui-même qui est en quelque sorte l'étoffe même du devenir, et, par conséquent, de l'être." *Hegel à Iéna*, 176.

reflects upon language that are importantly worthy of consideration. One such case is Hegel's analysis of the speculative sentence, which Daniel J. Cook (1973) has argued is extremely revelatory for framing the general relationship of Hegel's philosophy with language. In support of this approach, Jere Paul Surber (1975) argues that Hegel's analysis of the speculative sentence, which is occupied with the basic linguistic form of subject and predicate relation, grounds how language can be a finite, changing discourse about things *and* simultaneously a metaphysical discourse about ultimate truth. This is because, according to Surber, for Hegel, "Our self-understanding and our understanding of our language are coordinate."³⁹⁶ The connection between thought and language, and the way in which the two together are how we meaningfully conceive what there *is*, is central to how Hegel conceives the project of Logic and to his insistence upon the inseparability of language and thought.

In order to evidence this ontological coincidence between Logic, language, and subjectivity, we must explore Hegel's account of the speculative sentence, as presented in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Furthermore, as argued above, language must be something more than merely predication if it is to give substance to the subject, i.e., for the subject to be ontologically determined in objective, meaningful, and communal philosophical discourse. In the Preface to the *Phenomenology*, Hegel contrasts his own position and its adequacy for philosophical truth with the dogmatic assertion of fixed propositions. So in addition to the claim that the true is subject, given the traditional philosophical reliance on basic propositional forms for expressing truth, we should expect that we can reconcile truth with linguistic forms.³⁹⁷ This is precisely the outcome of Hegel's analysis in the Preface.

³⁹⁶ Jere Paul Surber, "Hegel's Speculative Sentence," *Hegel-Studien* 10 (1975), 215. Hereafter cited as Surber (1975).

³⁹⁷ In "Hegel's Ontological Grasp of Judgment and the Original Dividing of Identity into Difference" (2006), Jeffrey Reid argues that truth and language are linked through Hegel's ontology of judgment by showing that the linguistic

From within the context of a reflection on the need for a speculative philosophy to resist edification, recalcitrance, and formalistic dogmatism, Hegel asks us to consider the following general, linguistic question: what is the relationship between the subject and predicate in the basic propositional form ‘S is P’? Hegel begins by acknowledging that there is an approach that treats the subject in this form as a passive, static bearer of predicative properties or relations. According to Hegel, dogmatism is the label for the view that propositions express a fixed, immediately knowable and determined truth. “*Dogmatism* as a way of thinking, whether in ordinary knowing or in the study of philosophy, is nothing else but the opinion that the True consists in a proposition [*einem Satze*] which is a fixed result, or which is immediately known.”³⁹⁸ Hegel takes up this notion of the general form of a proposition, given as ‘S is P’, and the result of thinking through this form shows that the propositional form is not ultimately one of immediate identity.

Philosophical thought betrays, or challenges, the supposed identity in the standard predicative form. Originally, we take ‘S is P’ as aiming to say something about the subject by ascribing some predicate to it, and this treats the subject passively and fixed. Presumably, the predicative form is aiming to say something determinate about the subject, so the propositional form affirms that the subject *is* the predicate, but in so doing has already altered itself.³⁹⁹ In affirming that the subject *is* the predicate, what the subject *is*, is the predicate, so the predicate becomes the primary substance, the essence of the subject. What transpires in attempting to comprehend the form of the proposition is that the initially attempted statement, i.e., that the

form of predication is adequate to the original self-dividing of the concept, whose movement is the truth of identity and identity and difference.

³⁹⁸ PS, 23; W3, 41.

³⁹⁹ “Starting from the Subject as though this were a permanent ground, it finds that, since the Predicate is really the Substance, the Subject has passed over into the Predicate, and, by this very fact, has been sublated [*aufgehoben*]; and, since in this way what seems to be the Predicate has become the whole and the independent mass, thinking cannot roam at will, but is impeded by this weight.” PS, 37; W3, 58.

subject *is* the predicate, becomes a different idea, namely that the predicate *is* the subject, so the firm foundation of the subject as the edifice of predication is challenged.

In order to provide a more concrete illustration of the movement of thought that is operative in comprehending what the proposition is in its truth, Hegel puts forward the following example: ‘God is being’. The claim that ‘God is being’ asserts that being is what God *is*. What is dynamic and transformational is that in saying ‘being is what God is’, the subject-God becomes the predicate-God, just as being is the predicate that has become the subject, i.e., what a dogmatic view would take as substantial. Hegel continues:

Here thinking, instead of making progress in the transition from Subject to Predicate, in reality feels itself checked by the loss of the Subject, and, missing it, is thrown back on the thought of the subject. Or, since the Predicate itself has been expressed as a Subject, as *the* being or *essence* which exhausts the nature of the Subject, thinking finds the Subject immediately in the Predicate.⁴⁰⁰

Consequently, the way in which the propositional form determines the subject is not a matter of some immediate identity with a predicated property. In fact, as Hegel himself states the matter bluntly, “The general nature of the judgment or proposition [*des Urteils oder Satzes*], which involves the distinction of Subject and Predicate, is destroyed by the speculative proposition [*den spekulativen Satz*], and the proposition of identity which the former becomes contains the counter-thrust against that subject-predicate relationship.”⁴⁰¹ Hence, this linguistic thought experiment reveals that the basic linguistic form of the proposition has an underlying speculative significance that goes beyond what might immediately be presumed in and by it.⁴⁰² For that

⁴⁰⁰ PS, 38; W3, 59.

⁴⁰¹ PS, 38; W3, 59.

⁴⁰² Another important, yet very ordinary and surprisingly simple, point results from Hegel’s account of the speculative sentence: sometimes what we mean is not what we say. This particular idea is taken much further in the opening dialectic of the *Phenomenology*, which uses language as such to challenge the notion that we have an immediate knowledge of singulars, i.e., while one might claim something to be a singular, language has the remarkable power of overturning this and showing that this singular is a universal. Of course, as we have already indicated, singularity and universality are not distinct; they are two moments linked by particularity and altogether constitute the true totality of the concept whose movement is its own self-determination.

reason, the speculative sentence, which by another name is considered as *judgment*, illustrates the dynamic nature of language as such, rather than merely a solitary, idiosyncratic form.

Hegel's speculative sentence is different from the ordinary predicative form in that it recognizes that what the subject *is*, is the result of a dialectical movement. Moreover, the adequacy of the linguistic form of the proposition to philosophical truth must lend to comprehending the true *as* subject. Therefore, the sense in which the subject is revealed as dynamic in the propositional form should aid in our comprehensive grasp of truth and the manner by which truth is the becoming of the subject. To that end, it is pivotal to note that Hegel's use of the word 'subject' [*Das Subjekt*] in the Preface to the *Phenomenology* is not univocal—it is dual, but not subject to a criticism of ambiguity. Thus, what further distinguishes the speculative sentence from the ordinary propositional form is the coincidence of two senses of the subject: a grammatical, linguistic subject, and a conscious, psychical subject. Hence, Hegel's analysis of language is closely connected to an ontology of subjectivity because it goes further than mere predication by embodying a complex notion of what it means *to be* a subject, or, more specifically *to become* one through the movement of conceptual self-determination.

The intersection of two notions of the subject in Hegel's analysis of the speculative sentence is evident in Hegelian interpretation. According to Surber, "For Hegel, the attempt to reflect upon language immediately and necessarily involves us in an effort to reflect upon the nature of consciousness itself. Indeed, the dialectical structure of the proposition as it reveals itself in Hegel's analysis of the 'speculative sentence' reflects the fact that, for Hegel, consciousness itself is essentially a dialectical activity."⁴⁰³ In other words, what the speculative analysis of the predicative form reveals is not solely about the subject as a grammatical entity. Given the strong relation that we have claimed between language and thought, the linguistic

⁴⁰³ Surber, (1975), 222.

subject is also a consciousness, or a thinking ‘I’. Following Surber’s observation of the two senses of the subject, Reid states, “Hegel asks us to accept ‘subject’ simultaneously in both a grammatical and psychical sense. The grammatical subject of the proposition is also the ‘self’ of the proposition.”⁴⁰⁴ Moreover, Reid has further demonstrated a connection between Hegel’s notion of judgment, which is synonymous with the speculative sentence, and the psychical ‘soul’ subject of Hegel’s Anthropology, wherein the grammatical subject is also referenced.⁴⁰⁵

Hegel’s aforementioned example of ‘God is being’ is a clear illustration of the two notions of the subject and is framed within the context of an account of predication whereby something true is said of the subject insofar as it is. In Hegel’s example, God is the grammatical subject and the personal, protestant creator subject; and being is thereby the grammatical predicate and the essence of the subject. This analysis reveals that the grammatical subject of the proposition is not an inert object, or an edified hypostatization. It does this in precisely the same manner in which the thinking subject, the ‘I’, is neither inert nor an edification. As Hegel states early on in the Preface, “The ‘I’ [*das Ich*], or becoming in general, this mediation, on account of its simple nature, is just immediacy in the process of becoming and is the immediate itself.”⁴⁰⁶ Therefore, the sense in which the subject becomes as a linguistic-psychical entity is the essential import and lesson of Hegel’s investigation into the speculative sentence, especially insofar as it tells us something about the notion of truth adequate to philosophy, as we have indicated.

The movement of the concept, which is the movement of thought and speculative thinking and philosophy, is not an external movement imposed upon the propositional form, but is a movement proper to the proposition itself. The form and content of the speculative sentence makes this explicit and this is how the linguistic form of conceiving subjectivity in its movement

⁴⁰⁴ Reid (2007), 21.

⁴⁰⁵ Reid (2007), 22.

⁴⁰⁶ PS, 11; W3, 21.

leads to comprehending truth. Truth is not an object; it is not a thing. Rather truth is the movement of the becoming of subjectivity, as evident in the speculative sentence: “The *proposition* should express *what* the True is; but essentially the True is Subject. As such it is merely the dialectical movement, this course that generates itself, going forth from, and returning to, itself.”⁴⁰⁷ Consequently, the actuality of the truth of speculative philosophy, when grasped as the totality of the subject concept that becomes, is what we witness in Hegel’s analysis of what is speculative in the proposition, or of language as such.

Given the affirmation that only the whole, the totality, as articulated in a complete system of philosophy, is the truth, this true whole can only ever be a whole that *becomes*. Not only does this prevent edification, but also, more importantly, it is faithful to the development of truth as *subject*. The sense in which the truth of the whole becomes, rather than merely *is*, is because Hegel’s subject is not an inert or fixed point.⁴⁰⁸ The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is the coming to be of philosophical science, so it is an account of knowledge in its becoming. The outcome, then, is the starting point of Logic, as that which has become and is rational through and through. One central characterization of the relation of subjectivity, language, and truth is evident in Hegel’s speculative account of the propositional form, especially as concerns the role of becoming therein. Hegel explains:

Since the Concept is the object’s own self, which presents itself as the *becoming of the object*, it is not a passive Subject inertly supporting the Accidents; it is, on the contrary, the self-moving Concept which takes its determinations back into itself. In this movement the passive Subject itself perishes; it enters into the differences and the content, and constitutes the determinateness, i.e. the differentiated content and its movement, instead of remaining inertly over against it.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁷ PS, 40; W3, 61.

⁴⁰⁸ PS, 13; W3, 27.

⁴⁰⁹ PS, 37 (translation modified); W3, 57.

The speculative proposition does not posit an identity, but represents the ‘destruction’ of the presumption of any such primarily posited identity in the grammatical form of the proposition itself. This is as much about the relation between the subject and the predicate as it is about the copula itself, which links them and is their ontological ground. Rather than an identity, the speculative sentence, or the proposition conceived in its truth for speculative thinking, affirms or posits the becoming-distinct of the subject and predicate through the *copula*, which links subject and predicate in the notion of being as becoming, since all being in Hegel’s *Logic* is becoming. And ultimately, that there can be an identity posited in the proposition is not a prior unified ground, but the unified result of their prior difference, a difference reconciled in the concept whose movement we have already discussed.

Ultimately, then, the copula is the ontological ground of the becoming of the subject, and, therefore, of the truth, particularly insofar as it is grasped essentially as subject. Furthermore, what is unique to this notion of becoming is that it is not the temporal becoming of the finite, and it is not history, since there is no history of truth. Only time as non-finite, ahistorical becoming is adequate to describing the truth of the movement of the concept, of the becoming of the subject in the speculative sentence, and, finally, as both together in the self-development of the totality of truth grasped in accordance with the form and content of the concept as such. In the following we shall survey this notion of time as ahistorical becoming and its significance for philosophy, which is not unique to only Hegel, by sourcing it to his influences and fellow German Idealists: Schelling, Fichte, and Hölderlin.

4.3.2. The Currency of Ahistorical Becoming in German Idealism

Two notions of time as temporally limited and eternal activity were current in German Idealism. For example, both conceptions are mentioned by Schelling with respect to the self,

conceived as activity. These finite and eternal depictions of time are the nascent representations of Hegel's own view of time, which he both uniquely and importantly developed non-transcendentally. In the *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), Schelling discusses time as the self's activity whereby the self becomes its own object. His account therein is very closely related to Kant's in that the context of the discussion of time is the self-awareness of *inner sense*, which, for Kant, characterizes the form of time. However, in 1800, Schelling is constructing a post-Fichtean transcendental idealism, and therefore the unity of theoretical and practical reason is essential, which marks one key way in which Schelling's account marks a departure from Kant. On time and the self, Schelling writes:

In that the self opposes to itself the object, there arises for it the feeling of self-awareness, that is, it becomes an object to itself *as* pure intensity, as activity which can extend itself only in one dimension, but is at present concentrated at a single point; but in fact this unidimensionally extensible activity, when it becomes an object to itself, is time. Time is not something that flows independently of the self; the *self itself* is time conceived of in activity.⁴¹⁰

For Schelling, specifically during the period in his thought where he was still actively pursuing the complimentary projects of transcendental philosophy and *Naturphilosophie*, time is the pure intensity of self-awareness whereby the self makes itself into its object, i.e., wherein there is a separation between the self and itself as its object. As such, time as the activity of the self is the self conceived in its finitude and limitation. This is, however, not the only conception of time that Schelling mentions in the 1800 *System*.

In the Introduction to the *System*, Schelling describes the self in terms of its timeless, eternal activity. Schelling writes, "The eternal, timeless act of self-consciousness which we call *self*, is that which gives all things existence, and so itself needs no other being to support it; bearing and supporting itself, rather, it appears objectively as *eternal becoming*, and subjectively

⁴¹⁰ F.W.J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), trans. Peter Heath (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1978), 103. Hereafter cited as Schelling (1800).

as a *producing without limit*.”⁴¹¹ In other words, the eternal becoming of the self is the ground of all objective being, which challenges the notion that Schelling’s self is ever fully complete, as Hegel’s is sometimes portrayed in distinction. With that said, in order to better frame how two notions of time are essential to grasping the self as a dynamic entity for Hegel, we must recognize how Schelling’s fleeting references to time and the activity of the self owe quite a bit to the historical contributions to German Idealism by Fichte. By making this historical connection, we will be able to show how Hegel’s specific way of thinking of subjectivity as time (and also as language) are largely representative of trends in German Idealism more generally, but most explicitly the result of the influence of Friedrich Hölderlin.

Fichte’s philosophical project is an attempt at providing a theory of subjectivity that is grounded in a single, unified principle. According to Dieter Henrich, “The development of the Doctrine of Science can and must be interpreted as the progressive analysis of a concept of the Self. If an interpreter fails to understand this progress, he can do little to further historical interpretations of Fichte’s work and life.”⁴¹² However, Fichte’s aim at a unified theory of subjectivity is problematized by a lack of unification in the entirety of his thinking, since Fichte’s project changes beginning in 1800.⁴¹³ Therefore, in what follows, we will restrict ourselves to Fichte’s pre-1800 conception of philosophy.

According to Fichte’s two *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre* (1797), philosophy begins with a postulate that grounds all experience. As such, philosophy is transcendental, i.e., its job is to demonstrate the validity of the ground of all experience through its foundation. Once

⁴¹¹ Schelling (1800), 32..

⁴¹² Dieter Henrich, “Fichte’s Original Insight,” in *Contemporary German Philosophy: Volume 1*, trans. David R. Lachterman, ed. Darrel E. Christensen, 15-53 (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1983), 18. Hereafter cited as *Fichte’s Original Insight*.

⁴¹³ Frederick Neuhauser explains: “For after 1800 Fichte’s thought is based upon a fundamentally new conception of his system, one that is not only obscure in the typically Fichtean manner, but also extremely difficult to understand as a continuous development of his earlier views.” See, *Fichte’s Theory of Subjectivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 7. Hereafter cited as Neuhauser.

one is committed to transcendental philosophy, there are, Fichte states, only two possible philosophical systems: *idealism*, which begins with the self, and *dogmatism*, which begins and commits to the thing-in-itself. In order for philosophy in general to remain non-arbitrary, it *ought to* agree with experience, which is a point taken up again later by Hegel. The inability to meet this demand, however, is precisely where Fichte locates the problem with dogmatism, i.e., the thing-in-itself does not occur in experience and is, ultimately, an arbitrary invention.⁴¹⁴ Moreover, Fichte conceives the absolute self on different ontological terms than the thing-in-itself, i.e., the absolute self is *not* a thing-in-itself, and so the opposition between these two philosophical systems is explicit.⁴¹⁵

Given that there are only two systems of philosophy, it follows, then, that any philosophy worthy of the name is, according to Fichte, a transcendental *idealism*. Philosophy is an idealism because its foundation and beginning is the ‘I’, the self, or the subject, as an original act. For Fichte, it is the self as *activity*, rather than as *being*, which is the original concept of transcendental idealism. Hence, Fichte argues that being is a concept derivative to activity [*Thätigkeit*], writing:

The essence of transcendental idealism in general, and of its presentation in the Science of Knowledge in particular, consists in the fact that the concept of existence [*Seyn*] is by no means regarded as a *primary* and *original* concept, but is viewed merely as *derivative*, as a concept derived, at that, through opposition to activity [*Thätigkeit*], and hence as a merely *negative* concept.⁴¹⁶

By asserting a disjunctive relationship between being and activity, Fichte is claiming that transcendental idealism is not ontology. This is not to say that the concept of being has no place

⁴¹⁴ J.G. Fichte, *Introductions to the Wissenschaftslehre and Other Writings (1797-1800)*, trans. Daniel Breazeale (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1994), 10. Hereafter cited as Fichte: Introductions.

⁴¹⁵ “The subject’s existence must be understood as fundamentally different from the kind of existence we attribute to things, and for this reason the concepts required for an adequate account of subjectivity will necessarily differ from those used to comprehend objects.” Neuhouser, 103.

⁴¹⁶ Fichte continues, “To the idealist, the only positive thing is freedom; existence, for him, is a mere negative of the latter. On this condition alone does idealism have a firm foundation, and remains consistent with itself.” Fichte: Introductions, 69.

in Fichte's theoretical philosophy. Rather, Fichte wishes to challenge being as the beginning of philosophy, as its point of absolute identity between the subjective and objective, in favor of the act precedent to being.

As an attempt to ground a unified theory of subjectivity, Fichte's philosophy, as we have noted, appeals to a transcendental first principle, which is fundamentally an activity. In the 1794 *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*, Fichte describes this primal activity of the subject as follows: "The self's own positing of itself is thus its own pure activity. The *self posits itself*, and by virtue of this mere self-assertion it *exists*."⁴¹⁷ The essential aspect of Fichte's subject, here, is its activity: the self as an original act. This is part and parcel of what Henrich calls 'Fichte's original insight': "This primordial selfhood first allows a Self to work itself free from its connection with the world and to grasp itself explicitly as what it must have been previously, namely, knowledge that what it is, is knowing subjectivity."⁴¹⁸ In sum, as an attempt to theoretically reconcile the disjunction between freedom and necessity that resulted from Kant's philosophy, Fichte developed a system of philosophy whose aim was the reconciliation of the theoretical through the identity principle of the self-positing 'I', as I=I.⁴¹⁹ While much can be said and acknowledged about Fichte's development upon Kant's philosophy and his own various elaborations of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, we will limit ourselves to the following two matters of immediate and historical interest: (i) Hölderlin's critique of Fichte in the *Judgment and Being* fragment, which was heavily influential on Hegel, and (ii) Hölderlin's appeal to Fichte's characterization of reciprocity in the *Grundlage*, which we find in another fragment, *Becoming*

⁴¹⁷ J.G. Fichte, *The Science of Knowledge: With the First and Second Introductions*, trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 97. Hereafter cited as *Grundlage*.

⁴¹⁸ *Fichte's Original Insight*, 22.

⁴¹⁹ J.G. Fichte, "Concerning the Concept of the *Wissenschaftslehre*", in *Fichte: Early Philosophical Writings*, trans. Daniel Breazeale, 87-135 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 125-126.

in *Dissolution*, and that allows us to justify a connection between the idea of non-finite becoming in Fichte and Hegel's own ontological insistence upon this idea.

Fichte's influence on Hegel's philosophy, and German Idealism more generally, is palpable. For example, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel takes up the Fichtean contribution that there is nothing beyond the knowing activity and relation of consciousness, that being inheres in consciousness only in accordance with its activity of knowing. Beyond that, and despite its status as representative of a subjective idealism, the presence of Fichte in Hegel's writings extends quite far, and this is due in part to the early influence of Friedrich Hölderlin, who is an important mediating figure for deciphering the influence of Fichte's thought on Hegel's own philosophical system. For illustration, in a 1795 letter to Hegel, Hölderlin suggests Fichte's 1794 *Grundlage* and discusses briefly the peculiarities of Fichte's conception of 'I'-hood.⁴²⁰ According to Frederick C. Beiser, along with the *Judgment and Being* fragment, this letter represents evidence for Hölderlin's own break with Fichte's subjective idealism and its insistence upon some principle of identity.⁴²¹ Similarly, Reid cites this same letter in support of his claim that Hegel's ontology of judgment is derived from Hölderlin and the *Judgment and Being* fragment.⁴²² Granted that there is a strong connection between Hegel and Hölderlin—they were also both contemporaries and friends—the key text of Hölderlin's is the *Judgment and Being* fragment.

Widely recognized as having been influential upon Hegel, Hölderlin's *Judgment and Being* [*Urteil und Sein*] fragment was likely composed in early 1795 and represents his critique

⁴²⁰ Friedrich Hölderlin, "No. 94 To Hegel", in *Friedrich Hölderlin: Essays and Letters on Theory*, edited and translated by Thomas Pfau, 124-126 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988). The significance of the timing of this letter cannot be discounted. As Dieter Henrich has stated, "In the few years between 1790 and 1798 all the insights were developed that provided the groundwork for the later systems." See, *The Course of Remembrance and Other Essays on Hölderlin*, trans. by Abraham Anderson (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 73.

⁴²¹ Frederick C. Beiser, *German Idealism: The Struggle Against Subjectivism, 1781-1801* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 387.

⁴²² Reid (2007), 26.

of Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*.⁴²³ The fragment begins by describing judgment [*Urteil*] as “the arche-separation.”⁴²⁴ Judgment is the original separation between subject and object, whose connection Hölderlin contrasts to Being [*Sein*]. The separation, or more generally—the *relation*, between subject and object presupposes a whole wherein the two are related as parts of a unified whole.⁴²⁵ That there is a subject and an object, Hölderlin claims, requires judgment. With a clear reference to Fichte, he writes, “‘I am I’ is the most fitting example for this concept of arche-separation as *theoretical* separation.”⁴²⁶ In other words, the subjectivity of the ‘I am I’ is only possible by means of an original judgment, an original separation; what ‘I am I’ expresses, then, is not an original *identity*, but rather a fundamental *difference*.

The second part of *Judgment and Being* explicitly connects this idea of a primal differentiation with the ontology of the copula as the expression of being in the predicative form. Hölderlin writes, “*Being*—expresses the connection between subject and object... Yet, this Being must not be confused with identity.”⁴²⁷ This is precisely the ground upon which Reid asserts that Hölderlin's influence on Hegel substantiates the ontological nature of judgment in the following way: being is not identity, but that which differentiates itself. To connect this idea

⁴²³ Some have taken the fragment to refer more properly to Schelling than Fichte. Manfred Frank (2003) suggests that content covered in *Judgment and Being* is closer to Schelling than Fichte, a point supported by Devin Zane Shaw (2010). Frank explains, “Several passages in *Urtheil und Seyn* are comprehensible only if they are read as reactions to Schelling's *Vom Ich*... For instance, the claim that Being should not be confused with identity, and the claim that the absolute positing of the I should not be understood as the source of the category of possibility, but must rather be understood as the ground of actuality.” However, Frank cautions that it is not clear whether or not Hölderlin read Schelling's “Of the I as the Principle of Philosophy or on the Unconditional in Human Knowledge,” which was published in 1795. Manfred Frank, *The Philosophical Foundations of Early German Romanticism*, trans. Elizabeth Millán-Zaibert (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 98.

⁴²⁴ Hölderlin, “Judgment and Being,” in *Friedrich Hölderlin: Essays and Letters on Theory*, trans. Thomas Pfau, 37-38 (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 37. Hereafter cited as *Judgment and Being*.

⁴²⁵ In his *Lectures on the History of Philosophy* on Fichte, Hegel says: “The first proposition is then that I am identical with myself, Ego=Ego; that undoubtedly is the definition of the ego. The subject and the predicate are the content; and this content of the two sides is likewise their relation, *i.e.* form. Relation requires two sides; the relating and the related are here, however, the same; for on account of the simplicity of the ego, there is nothing but a relation of the ego to the ego.” LHP III, 487; W20, 394-395.

⁴²⁶ *Judgment and Being*, 37.

⁴²⁷ *Judgment and Being*, 37.

with Hegel's view of subjectivity: what the subject *is*, is how it is determined through its self-differentiation in judgment, or, as we featured prominently above, the speculative sentence.

Therefore, one of the more pertinent aspects of Hegel's account of the 'S is P' linguistic form for this thesis is the identity of the identity and difference of the notions of the subject as both psychological and grammatical, i.e., between the notion of a cognizing self and a linguistic subject.⁴²⁸

This matter arises most explicitly through Hegel's idea of the speculative sentence from the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Concerning judgment, the *Science of Logic* supplies a stand-alone treatment, linking the concept as such with the syllogism. Regarding the original differentiation at the core of this notion, Hegel writes, "Judgment is the self-diremption of the concept; therefore, it is by starting from the *unity of the concept* as ground that the judgment is considered in accordance with its *true objectivity*. In this respect, judgment is the *original division* [*ursprüngliche Teilung*] of an originative unity; the word *Urteil*, thus refers to what judgment is in and for itself."⁴²⁹ It is interesting that Hegel, like Hölderlin before him, makes reference to the etymology of judgment. Furthermore, the concept is the ground of the judgment insofar as the concept is the reason why judgment is not a purely one-sided cognitive affair that neither has ontological consequences nor expresses the self-determination of the true whole of the concept as the dynamic being of totality. This is what Hegel means with the idea of the 'true objectivity' of the judgment. The second part of the above quote refers us to the idea that as the rational ground of the form and content of everything that there *is*, the judgment expresses the original determination, and therefore

⁴²⁸ An alternative frame for the importance of the core concepts of *Judgment and Being* for Hegel's philosophy of subjectivity is offered by Pinkard: "The absolute identity of the two-in-one of which Hölderlin spoke (at least in the *Being and Judgment* fragment and which we can assume he conversed about with Hegel and Issac von Sinclair in Frankfurt) just is the apperceptive self. This conception of agency's apperceptive self-relation comprises more or less the ground floor or Hegel's metaphysics of subjectivity." Pinkard (2015), 4-5.

⁴²⁹ SL, 552 (translation modified); W6, 304.

differentiation, of the whole. So the idea of judgment as an original separating or dividing, as it is taken up by Hölderlin, and here by Hegel, is that the judgment does not express an identity (particularly so among the sides of the judgment, i.e., subject and predicate).

Concerning the notion of the connection between the subject and the predicate in the judgment, Hegel again develops an ontological point. The two are not a contingent combination, but rather the judgment expresses an ontological necessity, especially *through* the copula: “The *copula* indicates that the predicate belongs to the *being* of the subject and is not merely externally combined with it.”⁴³⁰ Hegel then goes on to contrast this notion of an *ontological connection* to that of a *grammatical connection*, which he likens to a ‘subjective standpoint’, by which he means a one-sided vantage point. We read, “Of course, *grammatically* speaking this kind of subjective relation that proceeds from the indifferent externality of subject and predicate is perfectly valid, for it is *words* [*Worte*] that are here externally combined.”⁴³¹ What is interesting about the case Hegel is making here is how he both acknowledges the relevance and applicability of the grammatical considerations of subject and predicate while simultaneously ruling them out as exhaustive of what is meant by them in the judgment and the ontological significance he emphasizes therein. To that end, Hegel distinguishes judgments from general propositions [*Satz*], the latter certainly having a demonstrable grammatical subject and predicate, but without in and of itself constituting what is intended by judgment, which, by another name is the speculative sentence, and conflates both notions of subject as consciousness and grammatical placeholder.

Ultimately, when we think of the connection between subject and predicate in the judgment, just as in in the speculative sentence, their relation is dynamic and ontologically

⁴³⁰ SL, 552; W6, 305.

⁴³¹ SL, 552; W6, 305.

grounded in the copula, which expresses being as an original differentiation, as an original becoming, and which stresses the following central conception: the reciprocity of the grammatico-ontological subject and object-predicate. This particular idea of reciprocal determination was important to Fichte in the *Grundlage*, and the way in which the self relates to itself as the ground of itself and its own activity is central to Fichte's transcendental conception of the self, as abstracted from the temporal conditions of finite, historical human existence.

Fichte writes:

The characteristic form of reciprocity [*das Wechsels*] in the relation of efficacy [*Wirksamkeit*] is a *coming-to-be through a passing-away* (a becoming through a disappearance) [*ein Entstehen durch ein Vergehen (ein Werden durch ein Verschwinden)*]. (Here, be it noted, we must abstract altogether from the substance that is acted upon, from the substrate of passing away, and hence from all *temporal conditions* [*Zeitbedingung*]."⁴³²

The idea that Fichte develops here with respect to reciprocity is that of a becoming that is not finitely temporal. In addition to the explicit statement regarding abstracting from temporal conditions, the expression '*ein Entstehen durch ein Vergehen*' caught Hölderlin's attention. The title of Hölderlin's short text, *Becoming in Dissolution* [*das Werden im Vergehen*, 1800], is recognized as a direct reference to the language used by Fichte to talk about reciprocity and the 'I' in the *Grundlage*.⁴³³ While it is uncontroversial to state that Hegel's relation to Fichte ought to be recognized via the influence of Hölderlin as a mediary figure, what we propose is that through Hölderlin's short text *Becoming in Dissolution*, we are led to a conception of subjectivity as becoming, i.e., as coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be, that Hegel would have encountered in Fichte's *Grundlage* and that reappears in his mature thought on subjectivity, time,

⁴³² *Grundlage*, 165.

⁴³³ Thomas Pfau, Notes to *Friedrich Hölderlin: Essays and Letters on Theory* (Albany: State University Of New York Press, 1988), 172.

and language. In other words, we contend that a notion of subjectivity as non-finite, ahistorical becoming is transferred from Fichte to Hegel via Hölderlin.

Following Yvon Gautier, Hölderlin's *Becoming in Dissolution* is significant for two reasons: (i) it is defined by a Fichtean influence, and (ii) it is a reflection upon the essence of becoming, including finite temporality and eternity.⁴³⁴ Our first clue to both those emphases is the title of short text itself. However, the connection is not superficially restricted to the text's title. Hölderlin writes that the becoming of all, of "the world of all worlds, the all in all which always is," or *totality*, is present only in its becoming, just as language is a living whole that becomes.⁴³⁵ What Hegel later articulates as the true whole that becomes as subject is manifested here in Hölderlin's language and intention.

The connection between Hegel and Hölderlin is also noticed by Gadamer who, despite his challenge to the beginning of Hegel's *Science of Logic*, notes that becoming is central to the self-determining project of Hegelian Logic as such. In fact, Gadamer specifically refers to the Hölderlin text, writing, "Coming-into-being is, if viewed in reference to Existence, just as much passing-away and vice versa—as Hölderlin in his well-known treatise on 'Becoming in Passing-Away' quite properly assumes."⁴³⁶ As a result, it seems clear that Hegel's notion of becoming, and here as ahistorical becoming, is something sourced to a German Idealistic tradition that both develops from and departs from Fichte.

Consequently, and following from our analyses above, time is implicated as the non-finite becoming of the subject as predicate and predicate as subject in the *copula*, the 'is', which we strongly affirm is an 'is' of becoming, rather than the static identical relation of one entity

⁴³⁴ Yvon Gautier, *L'Arc et le Cercle: L'essence du langage chez Hegel et Hölderlin* (Montréal: Les Éditions Bellarmin, 1969), 69.

⁴³⁵ Friedrich Hölderlin, "Becoming Dissolution," in *Friedrich Hölderlin: Essays and Letters on Theory*, trans. Thomas Pfau, 96-100 (Albany: State University Of New York Press, 1988), 96.

⁴³⁶ *The Idea of Hegel's Logic*, 90.

being the same as another. Underlying our interpretation, then, is the *reciprocity* of the subject and predicate. Moreover, this reciprocity is to be understood as ahistorical becoming, as we source the idea to the reciprocity of the ‘I’ in Fichte, and the subsequent philosophical reflection by Hölderlin in his two short texts. To put the matter simply, the merely propositional ‘S is P’ structure is misleading. Hegel’s analysis of this form reveals complexity in terms of both the salient notion of subject and the nature of the relation contained in the copula. Hence, the propositional form is shown to have speculative significance as the speculative sentence insofar as it is the linguistic becoming of the subject, linking an ontology of subjectivity with both language and time. Now, we shall finalize our analysis by taking up this idea of the becoming of subjectivity macrocosmically with respect to the standpoint of Hegel’s philosophy as such, as articulated in the consummating chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*—Absolute Knowing.

4.3.3. The Scientific Standpoint

Despite being a historically problematic text, as we argued in the previous chapter, the reflections from the Preface to the *Phenomenology* are quite illuminating as concerns the relation of subjectivity, language, and truth for Hegel’s philosophical system. The same can also be said of time, as ahistorical becoming. This can be justified by connecting the enigmatic statement from the work’s final chapter on time to another claim about the nature of appearance in the work’s Preface. Since we know Hegel wrote the Preface after the body of the *Phenomenology* was completed, this is a particularly striking connection to develop. The passage in question from the Preface reads: “Appearance is the arising and passing away that does not itself arise and pass away, but is ‘in itself’ [i.e. subsists intrinsically], and constitutes the actuality and the movement of truth.”⁴³⁷ What is the appearance of Spirit but the course of the *Phenomenology*

⁴³⁷ PS, 27; W3, 46.

itself? And insofar as this work presents a gallery of historical views, philosophical personae, and events, the totality of the truth of this appearance is the movement of truth, which is not finitely limited.

Following our reading of Hegel's concept of time as becoming, i.e., as more than finite, historical temporality, truth is the ahistorical becoming of subjectivity. This follows because time is the being of the concept, whose movement, i.e., self-development, is truth, and because the truth is not finite, limited, or subject to change; it must adhere to the dynamic infinitude inherent in Hegel's conception of both being as becoming and becoming as time. In other words, if being is time and the subject is truth, then Hegel's ontology of subjectivity advances the claim that the being of subjectivity becomes as time in language, the latter of which we demonstrated in the speculative proposition. Thus, by addressing the few comments Hegel makes about time and the concept at the end of the *Phenomenology*, and therefore, at the beginning of the scientific standpoint, we will see how language and time, especially as ahistorical becoming, are essential to the project of Hegel's ontology of subjectivity.

For Hegel, science and system are synonymous, and philosophical knowledge is actual and has currency only in the form of a system whose content structure is scientific, i.e., objective and true. Hence, with respect to the subject grasped as the true, Hegel states: "That the True is actual only as system, or that Substance is essentially Subject, is expressed in the representation of the Absolute as *Spirit*."⁴³⁸ This is because Spirit is what is actual, as we discussed in the previous chapter, and it comes to know itself, grasp itself, and express itself as *subjectivity*. Science, therefore, is Spirit insofar as it knows itself as Spirit, and this self-knowledge is the totality of its own becoming and culminates in absolute knowing.

⁴³⁸ PS, 14; W3, 28.

Absolute knowing [*Das absolute Wissen*] is the standpoint of science that is reached in and by the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hence, it is what the work contributes as a form of knowing that is adequate to philosophy. Thus far, we have made it our task to emphasize the actuality of the subject in the speculative sentence. In absolute knowing, we are also equally concerned with activity, despite the fact that, as Burbidge has noted, the word ‘acting’ or *handelnden* is often overlooked in the absolute knowing chapter.⁴³⁹ Absolute knowing surmounts the idea that there is any otherness that is other than the self’s own otherness, and this subject is fundamentally conceived in its dynamic becoming, according to Hegel. This is why the final chapter opens with both a reflection on what came before and with the re-emphasis of the insurmountability of the movement of consciousness.⁴⁴⁰

The unique and crowning achievement of absolute knowing is that subjectivity now knows itself as substance, and both subject and substance are themselves activities. We read, “This substance which is Spirit is the process in which Spirit *becomes* what it is *in itself*; and it is only as this process of reflecting itself into itself that it is in itself truly *Spirit*.”⁴⁴¹ In other words, absolute knowing is the activity of knowing that nothing exceeds the conceptual; this is what it absolutely knows about itself *qua* activity, and it is why absolute knowing represents an apex of self-comprehension and the subject’s self-transparency. Therefore, absolute knowing is not the end of history or knowledge, but the openness to the type of knowing that properly belongs to the systematic and scientific enterprise of philosophy proper, as Hegel conceives it.

As the justification of science, absolute knowing and the conclusion of the *Phenomenology* culminate in the comprehended history of self-knowing Spirit. This is because

⁴³⁹ John Burbidge, “Absolute Acting,” *The Owl of Minerva* 30 (1998): 103-118.

⁴⁴⁰ “This is the movement of *consciousness*, and in that movement consciousness is the totality of its moments.” PS, 479; W3, 575.

⁴⁴¹ PS, 487; W3, 585.

science requires the standpoint achieved in absolute knowing with Spirit's self-knowledge. Thus, chronologically speaking, science presupposes the attainment of Spirit's self-knowledge, which is actual as the *Dasein* of Spirit. While reflecting on how religion makes a claim to true knowledge of Spirit before the achievement of the scientific standpoint, which is unbounded by representations of Spirit's true nature, Hegel addresses the chronology of Spirit's manifestation, writing:

But as regards the *existence* [*Dasein*] of this Concept, Science does not appear in Time and in actuality before Spirit has attained to this consciousness about Itself. As Spirit that knows what it is, it does not exist before, and nowhere at all, till after the completion of its work of compelling its imperfect 'shape' to procure for its consciousness the 'shape' of its essence, and in this way to equate its *self-consciousness* with its *consciousness*.⁴⁴²

There must be a reflection upon, and a comprehension of, the process whereby Spirit overcomes insufficient modes of self-knowledge, which are inadequate for philosophy.⁴⁴³ Hegel's initial remarks on dialectic and skepticism in the Introduction to the *Phenomenology* are one way of conceiving the overcoming of finite knowledge in a dynamic way since dialectic itself is the soul of progress and movement. But what time belongs to absolute knowing, which is the comprehended history of Spirit? Developing the way time is conceptualized in the absolute knowing chapter will rise to the challenges of this question. Moreover, as noted by H.S. Harris, "Hegel's own comments on 'time' bring the magnitude of his achievement home to us; and they also show that he appreciated clearly what his own achievement consisted in."⁴⁴⁴

Hegel's few statements about time in the absolute knowing chapter are perhaps his most difficult and obscure, but they are directly linked to the surpassing of the finite. Concerning the

⁴⁴² PS, 486 (translation modified); W3, 583.

⁴⁴³ One way to conceiving why religion, for example, is not sufficient for the comprehensive knowing of the philosophical standpoint, is stated by Bernard Bourgeois, who writes that religion, like politics, posits a distinction between subjectivity and objectivity, e.g., the subjectivity of religion needs the objectivity of politics. The goal of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, however, is to overcome the subject-object disjunction. See Bernard Bourgeois, *Éternité et historicité de l'esprit selon Hegel* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 2001).

⁴⁴⁴ *Hegel's Ladder II*, 730.

overcoming of insufficient and immediate forms of knowing, and their relation to time, Hegel writes, “Time is the Concept itself that *is there* [*Die Zeit ist der Begriff selbst, der da ist*] and which presents itself to consciousness as empty intuition; for this reason, Spirit necessarily appears in Time, and it appears in Time just so long as it has not *grasped* its pure Concept, i.e. has not annulled Time.”⁴⁴⁵ As already made clear in the content of the *Phenomenology*, consciousness is the intentional consciousness of an object, which, in the form of Spirit, is known to be not different from self-consciousness. The final form of self-knowledge in absolute knowing achieves a substantial unity between self-aware activity of thinking and the dynamic correlative nature of the self’s objects both for the protagonist subject and *for us*. Time is, thus related here insofar as time is a mode of being, and specifically *Dasein*. However, the appeal to time as an ‘empty intuition’ requires explanation. Otherwise it might appear as though Hegel is claiming time is simply formal, in a Kantian sense, and that time, therefore, is not an ontological concept, which we reject.

In a series of lectures delivered while Hegel was in Jena, which lead up to the publication of the *Phenomenology*, he had the opportunity to use the forum for airing ideas that would come to be further developed in his 1807 treatise. Intuition, however, does not receive a substantial phenomenological treatment in the *Phenomenology*, so it is important to properly frame its inclusion here with respect to time. Thus, we suggest that Hegel’s peculiar use of intuition [*Anschauung*] in the above-cited passage should be mediated by his intention of intuition from the 1805-1806 lectures on Spirit.⁴⁴⁶ There, Hegel explains that intuition is an immediate form of

⁴⁴⁵ PS, 487 (translation modified); W3, 584.

⁴⁴⁶ Our interpretative strategy rises to the challenge set forth by Joseph C. Flay, namely that we cannot say anything metaphysical, or otherwise, about time in the *Phenomenology* beyond its epistemological framework. Flay claims, “Nothing can be simply inferred from the way time occurs in the specific problem of knowledge explored in the *Phenomenology* or in the specific problem of articulating a general metaphysics. For a knowledge of the way time functions and exists in other modes of being, one must turn to the exploration of these modalities in the philosophical sciences of nature and of spirit.” Although we agree that Hegel’s mature views on time are not fully

knowing being, which is later consummated in the mediated self-knowledge of Spirit, by Spirit, as is accomplished in the *Phenomenology*.⁴⁴⁷

Hegel's understanding of intuition from the 1805-1806 lectures makes it clear that intuition is not a purely formal epistemological concept, but an ontological way of conceiving being, which we argue is fulfilled in being's self-knowledge as thought in Hegel's philosophical science. Therefore, the appearance of time as an empty intuition refers to the knowledge of being, i.e., both form and content, as in the *Geistesphilosophie*, and here in the *Phenomenology* this knowledge of being is consummated in the self-knowledge of the subject as substance, or the true grasped as subject. To put the matter simply, Spirit is *in* time because Spirit *is* time, so the intuitive form is not different from the content of Spirit itself.⁴⁴⁸ If, as we have argued, the being of time is becoming, then Spirit knows itself as time because it is consummated in the being of the concept, which is the truth of the whole and self-develops and self-determines itself *ahistorically*. As we have already stated, while there is no history of the concept, there is only a history of Spirit, and between the two are both notions of becoming.

Consequently, the annulment of time is not the end of time, its closure, and the completion of all of history. Rather, 'the annulment of time' is the fact that in absolute knowing,

developed in the *Phenomenology*, they are consistent with it. And by referring to an early version of the *Geistesphilosophie* on intuition, we can make certain claims about the ontological conceptualization of time, as it emerges in the *Phenomenology*. See Joseph C. Flay, "Time in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1991), 273.

⁴⁴⁷ "Dies ist unmittelbar das Wesen der Anschauung; Wissen eines Seienden. Aber der Geist ist dieses mit sich Vermittelnde, er ist nur als aufhebend das, was er unmittelbar ist, davon zurücktretend; oder es ist die Bewegung in ihm zu betrachten, wie das Seiende zum Allgemeinen für ihn wird, oder wie er es dazu macht, es als das setzt, was es ist – Sein ist Form der Unmittelbarkeit, es soll aber in seiner Wahrheit gesetzt werden." G.W.F. Hegel, *Jenaer Systementwürfe III: Naturphilosophie und Philosophie des Geistes* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1987), 171

⁴⁴⁸ Following from the thesis that Spirit is time, Michael Murray has stated, "What is annulled, then, is merely the deficient being-in-view of Time. The change entailed by the event of comprehension is that Spirit is no longer thought as intuited out there 'in' Time, but rather gets conceptually grasped as identical with Time 'as' Time." Michael Murray, "Time in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*," *The Review of Metaphysics* 34, no. 4 (1981), 701-702. Murray follows closely in line with the interpretations of time from Hegel's Jena period presented by Hyppolite and Koyré, who all identify Spirit with time, largely through the notion of infinity. However, Murray holds, as arguably both Hyppolite and Koyré do as well, that Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is his central text for locating his philosophy of time. This is a view we reject.

or philosophy more generally, Spirit overcomes the finitude of its appearance as inadequate forms of knowing for philosophy. “It is not the *outer*, intuited pure Self which is *not grasped* by the Self, the merely intuited Concept; when this latter grasps itself it sets aside its Time-form, comprehends this intuiting, and is a comprehended and comprehending intuiting. Time, therefore, appears as the destiny and necessity of Spirit that is not yet complete within itself.”⁴⁴⁹ Time as finite temporality is the destiny of incomplete Spirit, and this point is obscured if it is not accepted that time, for Hegel, is both finite, temporal becoming, and the other couplet of becoming, which is non-finite and ahistorical. Consequently, the annulment of time refers to how Spirit appears in time as its own finite manifestation, a manifestation whose being as *Dasein* is clearly now not only one of language, but of time as well.⁴⁵⁰

Along with the ‘annulment of time’, the ontological self-relation of Spirit’s self-knowing in absolute knowing completes the work of the *Phenomenology* as comprehended history:

The *goal*, Absolute Knowing, or Spirit that knows itself as Spirit, has for its path the recollection of the Spirits as they are in themselves and as they accomplish the organization of their realm. Their preservation, regarded from the side of their free existence [*Dasein*] appearing in the form of contingency, is History; but regarded from the side of their [philosophically] comprehended organization, it is the Science of Knowing in the sphere of appearance.⁴⁵¹

The two of these together constitute comprehended history [*die begriffene Geschichte*], which is both the fulfillment of the project of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the justification of science and the philosophical standpoint, i.e., the finite forms of knowing have been overcome in the

⁴⁴⁹ PS, 487 (translation modified); W3, 584-585.

⁴⁵⁰ “The self-knowing Spirit knows not only itself but also the negative of itself, or its limit: to know one’s limit is to know how to sacrifice oneself. This sacrifice is the externalization in which Spirit displays the process of its becoming Spirit in the which Spirit displays the process of its becoming Spirit in the form of *free contingent happening*, intuiting its pure Self as Time outside of it, and equally its Being as Space.” PS, 492; W3, 590.

⁴⁵¹ PS, 493; W3, 591.

infinitude of an absolute knowing where thought and being are no longer disjunctive, and philosophy can begin.⁴⁵²

From the perspective of a conceptualization of time, absolute knowing and the standpoint of comprehended history are not themselves historical, since this would challenge their completeness and the inclusion of the finite in the infinite. “Whereas in the phenomenology of Spirit each moment is the difference of knowledge and Truth, and is the movement in which that difference is cancelled, Science on the other hand does not contain this difference and the cancelling of it.”⁴⁵³ Hence, a different notion of time is needed, one which does not usurp the ontological validity of temporality, finitude, and history, but one which is equally adequate to the truth of science. As we have already suggested, this is time as ahistorical becoming, the type of time proper to thinking as such, as manifested in the speculative sentence, or what Reid calls Hegel’s ontology of judgment.⁴⁵⁴

4.3.4. Becoming and the Ontology of Subjectivity as Language

As we have argued, Hegel’s account of subjectivity in the *Science of Logic* focuses on forms of thinking like concepts as such, judgments, and syllogistic inferences, which are all fundamentally linguistic in nature. In addition to universality, particularity, singularity, subject, and predicate, what is essential to illuminating the truly infinite, ahistorical conception of time in

⁴⁵² According to Stephen Houlgate, “Absolute knowing is thus nothing but thought thinking itself,” which is precisely the way of characterizing the *Logic*, where, as we have already indicated, thought thinks itself thinking about being. See Stephen Houlgate, “Absolute Knowing Revisited”, *The Owl of Minerva* 30 (1998), 57.

⁴⁵³ PS, 491; W3, 589.

⁴⁵⁴ One way of engaging with this issue is to contrast eternity to time, and to attempt to situate the eternal in time, which follows the interpretation of Karl Löwith, as addressed in the first chapter. Here, it is well represented by H.S. Harris. In volume one of *Hegel’s Ladder*, Harris conceives of the project of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as unified thusly: “It is the logic of time—the explanation of how there can be (as there evidently is) an ‘eternal’ (i.e. logical) standpoint within time... Instead of simply taking it for granted that eternity comprehends time, just as ‘possibility’ comprehends ‘actuality,’ we must start from the other end and ask *how time comprehends eternity*” (H.S. Harris, *Hegel’s Ladder I: The Pilgrimage of Reason* [Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1997], 14). In volume two, Harris returns to this theme, writing, “If we are to ‘comprehend’ time we must comprehend the recollection of the understandable past in the present. Then we shall be able to grasp how the negative, vanishing Now, and the positive, eternal Now are comprehended each in the other.” *Hegel’s Ladder II*, 731.

his treatment of subjectivity is the copula (rather than *solely* the predicative subject of ‘S is P’). As the site of *being*, the copula is where the subject becomes the predicate and the predicate becomes the subject in judgments. Reid attributes the roots of this insight to Hölderlin’s fragment *Judgment and Being* through an emphasis on the importance of the identity and identity and difference. This reading of the linguistic significance of the copula is both foundational and central to our contention that the linguistic nature of subjectivity is ontologically and objectively coupled with a temporal one.⁴⁵⁵ Also, we follow Reid’s argument that when the copula is grasped as the place of both being and movement, then the logical move from judgment to syllogistic inference takes place.⁴⁵⁶

The judgment does not posit and identity between the subject and the predicate. Rather, it posits distinction as a *becoming-distinct*, or the self-distinction and self-determination of the subject, as etymologically implied in *ur-teil* as original division. This becoming, this differentiation, which is clearly the core conception of Hegel’s ontology of judgment, is what we take as the premier instance of subjectivity conceived as both language and time, and where the latter is explicitly not a finite notion of becoming. Crucial to this reading is the emphasis on the

⁴⁵⁵ “The expression ‘middle term’ indicates that an analysis of the act of predication or judgment alone is not sufficient to grasp Hegel’s concept of scientifically objective discourse; to do so, one must look beyond the proposition to the syllogism, and consider it as a grammatical extension of the act of predication. Failure to do so leads one to concentrate on the relationship between language and thought rather than on the more fundamental relation between being and thought. Failing to grasp language as the objective middle term embodying the two extremes leaves it external to both thought and being. As such, it can do no more than reflect either thought or being, but never actually *be* them. It is only by doing so that language can be considered scientifically objective.” Reid (2014), 57

⁴⁵⁶ “On closer examination, the positive factor in this result which is responsible for the transition of the judgment into another form is that, as we have just seen, the subject and predicate are in the apodictic judgment each the whole concept. – The unity of the concept, as the determinateness constituting the copula that connects them, is at the same time distinct from them. At first, it stands only on the other side of the subject as the latter’s immediate constitution. But since its essence is to connect, it is not only that immediate constitution but the universal that runs through the subject and predicate. – While subject and predicate have the same content, it is the form of their connection that is instead posited through the determinateness of the copula, the determinateness as a universal or the particularity. – Thus it contains in itself both the form determinations of the extremes and is the determinate connection of the subject and predicate: the accomplished copula of the judgment, the copula replete of content, the unity of the concept that re-emerges from the judgment wherein it was lost in the extremes. – By virtue of this repletion of the copula, the judgment has become syllogism.” SL, 587; W6, 350-351.

copula, which is strongly substantiated through Reid's research and connects Hegel's ontology of judgment to Hölderlin's critique of Fichte's 'I am I'. This figuration of the propositional form of 'S is P' asserts an identity, rather than an original speculative difference as the ground for the becoming of the subject as such. Ultimately, subjectivity supplies its own mediating ground and self-determines itself, i.e., resolves itself as objective. In other words, subjectivity determines itself as objectivity because subjectivity becomes objectivity, and in the linguistic form of the speculative sentence or judgment this determination is demonstrably ontological because subjectivity is not merely determined, but determined *to be*.

The structure of the dynamic ontology of subjectivity, as we have demonstrated it to be determined, is isomorphically determined by the true, wholistic structure of the concept as such. By the concept Hegel is at once referring to several things. It is freedom and the structure of the whole dynamical self-relation of what there is (and our thinking about it). It is the tripartite universal, particular, singular relation of the concept as such along with the differentiation of the concept as judgment and its resolution in the syllogism. Lastly, the concept is being as the becoming of subjectivity as the ahistorical coming-to-be and ceasing-to-be of the grammatico-psychical subject, as particularly evident in the ontology of judgment. Yet, with that said, the concept as such, the judgment, and the syllogism are all mediating structures that are themselves both self-mediating and the self-mediated, since the concept is both the form and content of itself and totality.

Hegel's account of judgment is ontological, or, more specifically, it is an ontology of subjectivity. We say subjectivity, rather than subject, because the Hegelian notion of the subject is not that of an inert transcendental self or *prius*, as it is, for example, for Fichte. We claim the copula to be the 'is' of becoming because, as well evidenced in Hegel's account of judgment, the

copula is the site of both the 'S is P' and the 'S is not P'. In other words, the copula is both the 'is' and the 'is not', as the unity of thinking both being and nothing, which inaugurates the opening of Logic and defines its subsequent dialectical exposition. It was toward that end that we suggested reading the Subjective Concept as the dynamic anatomy of truth, and suggest refining the idea of 'anatomy' to be more like the vivisection of a fluidic entity, rather than the dissection of an inert corpse. Put differently, the Subjective Logic affords us the vivisection of truth, not its dissection. Ultimately, with this metaphor we aim to emphasize the active, living, dynamic becoming of being and thinking together through an ontological structure of subjectivity as both time and language.

Conclusion

The historical significance of the conceptualization of subjectivity has held a dominant place in the course of the development of Western thought. The focal point of the subject largely begins with Descartes' meditation on the nature of thinking substance, which Kant then later raised to its explicitly transcendental status in his critical idealism. From there the philosophical dedication to the importance of subjectivity became explicit in the age of German Idealism in its three most recognized philosophical personae: Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.

In the beginning, the transcendental idealisms of Fichte and the early Schelling tended to privilege the subject or self as the 'I' in terms of its ultimate priority. And, without altogether breaking with Kant, early German Idealism favored the representation of reality, rather than a sense, whether conceptual or not, of reality *as it is in itself*. With the eventual post-1800 marginalization of Fichte came the individuation of the brilliance of the young Schelling, who reoriented the post-Kantian philosophical landscape into philosophies of transcendental idealism and of nature, thereby still in pursuit of reconciling freedom and necessity, which neither Kant nor Fichte were ultimately able to accomplish. Schelling's contribution was thus to establish the objectivity of the subject and the subjectivity of the object in accordance with an absolutely first principle. However, his twofold division of philosophy is disjunctive and left a chasm in the heart of philosophy; it is precisely the notion of a philosophy divided against itself that Hegel's philosophy overcomes.

What is decisive in Hegel's contribution to this brief historical portrait, particularly insofar as it concerns the philosophical significance of the conceptualization subjectivity, is Hegel's rejection of a traditional reliance on first principles, which has been present since Descartes. For Hegel, philosophy still pursues the truth, but truth is neither something with

which we begin nor something that we discover ready-made. Rather, truth is a mediated process of self-determination and self-development, and this emphasis on the becoming of truth is intimately connected with an account of subjectivity. For Hegel, we do not uncover the ultimate nature of reality through our representations of it, specifically because a representation of something is not the same as something is in itself or as such. Therefore, taking seriously the comprehension of things as such along with the importance of the comprehensive thought that defines what it means to be a subject, Hegel's philosophy approaches the becoming of truth through an intimate connection between being and thought.

It is in that vein that each of the chapters of this thesis approached the concept of being differently, but not so as to establish disparate modalities. Rather, each approach to being is a differing form of conceiving a monistic being, which is the whole, as defined by the movement of the concept, the rational structure (i.e., both the form and content) of thought.

In the first chapter we argued both that being is becoming and that this being that becomes is Nature. This means that the meaningfulness of Nature, which is intuited as time, is fulfilled with our apprehension of subjectivity in Nature; it is the recognition of what is essential to what it means to be *us* in what is presumed to be *not us*, namely Nature. By demonstrating how Hegel both appropriates and distances himself from important historical contributions to comprehending time, we sought to show that what there is, is meaningful for *us* because it is rational and, therefore, like *us*. Hence, by exploring the concept of time, we learned that time is the spiritualized and conceptual meaningfulness of being that becomes. Moreover, this being that becomes is distinctive for what it means to be a subject, which defines the ontology of subjectivity that Hegel's *Naturphilosophie* offers, and particularly so with respect to his concept of time.

In the second chapter, we argued for the systematic place of the idea that ‘being is time’ within a way of comprehending the being of subjectivity, i.e., *qua* its becoming, and showed how language emerges from such a dialectic. Motivated by the need to grasp the sense in which Hegel described time as a specifically ‘intuited’ becoming, this chapter advanced the inference that ‘the being that becomes is Nature’ onward to its conclusion that Hegelian *Geist* or Spirit is the being that becomes, or that which Nature becomes. This third element of the system is central to furnishing us with a full account of a Hegelian ontology of subjectivity because it deals with the manifold ways in which to understand what a subject is, what it means to be one, and what it is to *know* one. Thus, the connection between time and subjectivity, as pronounced in the *Naturphilosophie*, is developed in the *Geistesphilosophie* in the idea that time is at once proper to our cognitive apprehension of what there is *and* the structure of being itself insofar as all being is becoming. Furthermore, not only does this establish that an ontology of subjectivity expresses itself through the fundamental importance of Hegel’s concept of time, but it is equally the essential ground for expression itself as language. Our exploration and elaboration of Hegel’s account of intuition, as the grounds for an ontological connection between subjectivity and time necessarily led to raising the question of language, as the medium for the rational expression, communication, and comprehension of all being whatsoever. Consequently, we have aimed to impart that subjectivity is that whose being is time and rationally articulated linguistically and whereby this linguistic counterpart is itself to be understood in terms of time.

The third chapter takes up the first of two concluding practical engagements and applications of the theoretically articulated relation of language and time from the previous two chapters. If time can be at once understood as historical and ahistorical, then how do we reconcile language as the philosophical medium for unchanging truth and as that which has

demonstrated evident transformation in human history? Not only is this in and of itself an important philosophical question, but it provides a substantial contribution to Hegel's ontology of subjectivity. To that end, through the temporality and actuality of being as the ontology of Spirit in the constitutions of historical nations, we demonstrated that the written articulation of a people in an existent, written, political constitution defines what it means for subjectivity to be in history *as* history. From this historical consideration of the being of subjectivity, as it becomes historical in constitutions, we noted the place of freedom and grounded it in the movement of Hegel's primal concept, thereby showing that history is not at odds with the self-determining truth of philosophical discourse.

Lastly, in the fourth, final chapter, we established how the self-determination and development of subjectivity in language has being as ahistorical becoming. This was emphasized through Hegel's treatise on Logic and the categories of thought thinking itself thinking being. By means of Hegel's self-determining concept, the sense in which subjectivity becomes is realized in language through the speculative sentence and as time *qua* a non-finite becoming. Therefore, the sense in which subjectivity becomes as both language and time is crucial to the status of philosophy as such as a discourse about truth that is capable of rationally interpreting and expressing that which is meaningful for us.

In sum, what emerges for our presentation of Hegel's ontology of subjectivity are specific questions that are pertinent to reflecting upon the nature of philosophy and that lead us to ponder the deeply shared relation shared among subjectivity, language, and time. In introducing his course on the history of philosophy, Hegel characterizes the forthcoming undertaking as both the development of who we are and what we know. Hence, the becoming of philosophy, which the history of the development of philosophy expounds, is the becoming of both ourselves and our

knowledge, as meaningful objects of a systematic science whose subject is at once *us*.

Compacted within this sketch of philosophy are a number of important insights. We will limit ourselves to three, since they explicitly lend to framing what is central to Hegel and our interpretation of him and his views on the relation of language and time in his ontology of subjectivity.

First, the type of becoming that ought to characterize philosophy is immediately different from another notion of activity or movement, namely the spatio-temporal motion of objects belonging to *Naturwissenschaften*. Philosophy ought to be able to account for Nature, and the objects of a variety of particular sciences, but it ought not to be exhausted in an account of the total sum of physical objects, the finitude to measurable change, or mathematical formulae. This is because philosophy is concerned with the truth, which is fundamentally something that is necessary, does not change, and is the proper *telos* of philosophy up to and including Hegel. Thus, while the becoming of philosophy cannot be that of finite sequences, neither can it be wholly antagonistic to it either, since then the ability to provide a notion of history and of Nature would be compromised. Hence, we claim that the upshot of Hegel's philosophy in particular is due to its attentive mediation between the idea of time as temporal, finite change and the ahistorical enduring time of truth, classically conceived.

Second, how should philosophy proceed with its elaboration of who we are, what we know, and how we interpret what we know about ourselves? Simply stated, the answer is *language*, as rational, philosophical discourse. Hegel is a proponent of the view that all thoughts are linguistic, which means that the rational development of the thoughts we have about what there is and what we know are all capable of discursive expression. Hence, language has an important methodological place within the development of any philosophy, but one irreducible to

the more recent thesis that all philosophical problems are really problems regarding language and its use; this is not properly Hegel's comprehension of the ultimate nature of philosophy.

Language has a yet another important role with respect to the twofold notion of time. If philosophy is the elaboration of the truth, or the self-development of truth, then given the historical variety of language and language use, how is the reliance on language not undermining to the enterprise of philosophical discourse and its success? Hegel was well aware of this problem and addressed it directly, especially with respect to the connection between language and thought, and language and his notion of Logic. Consequently, as a medium for the exposition of philosophy's deep connection between being and thought, language is at once a historical vehicle for subjective expression and the traditional discursive element for the elaboration of ahistorical truth.

Third, and in conclusion, despite being apprehensive to, and antagonistic of, subjective, transcendental idealisms and the reduction of reality and representation to some notion of the absoluteness of the subject, Hegel's philosophical project is fundamentally concerned with *us*, i.e., with self-knowledge, self-interpretation, and being that is meaningful *for us*. Therefore, framed in that way, Hegel's philosophy is a robust meditation on the meaning of subjectivity, and specifically how subjectivity becomes through language. What there is has not been episodically exhausted because the essential nature of time as becoming implies a future for further self-interpretation; this future is established in Hegel's writings and realized through our continual interpretation of them and his unique philosophy.

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