

Kant and the Meaning of Freedom in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*

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Abstract of the Thesis

Relying mainly on R. B. Pippin's and D. Moggach's interpretative works on Kant and Hegel, the thesis tackles the problem of the reception of Kant by Hegel. It does so by looking into the impact of Kant's first critique on the Preface, the Introduction and the first part of the section Self-consciousness of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Three Kantian conditions for there to be freedom are identified and shown to be reinterpreted by Hegel in a continuist perspective. These three conditions are spontaneity, reflectivity and negativity which propels and retains the free Kantian subject in the Hegelian becoming of reality.

Résumé de la thèse

Reposant principalement sur les travaux interprétatifs de R. B. Pippin et de D. Moggach, la thèse s'attaque au problème de la réception de Kant chez Hegel. La thèse se penche ainsi sur l'impacte de la première critique de Kant dans la préface, l'introduction et la première section de la section sur la conscience de soi de la *Phénoménologie de l'esprit*. Trois conditions pour qu'il y ait liberté sont identifiées et présentées comme étant réinterprétées par Hegel d'une façon continuiste. Ces trois conditions sont la spontanéité, la réflexivité et la négativité qui entraîne et conserve le sujet libre Kantien dans le devenir hégélien de la réalité.

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Introduction

This thesis addresses the question of the reception of Kant's theoretical philosophy and its implications for the theory of freedom in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*.¹ The present introduction to the thesis restates, in part word for word but with certain modifications and additions, the main elements outlined in the thesis proposal that preceded it. It will thus reformulate the object of study and the hypothesis of the project and it will give an account of the main concepts that will be used and that will guide the development of the argumentation. The perspective from which the primary texts will be tackled will then be underlined. From that starting point, a literature review will follow to position the thesis in the landscape of the commentators and in the constellation of the diverging interpretations of Hegel's relation to Kant. The next part of the introduction will set out the organization of the argument of the thesis by explaining the division of the chapters and the mode of demonstration. The general idea behind each chapter will briefly be highlighted to specify the itinerary of the whole thesis and will then give way to the development of the thesis itself.

Object of study

The main texts that will form the object of study and of a constant and assiduous reading will be Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. The objective will be to bring out the presence of the Kantian theory of pure apperception from the first critique in this Hegelian text, to single out the philosophical discussion that

¹ This was studied in part by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism. The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, [1989] 1999, and this thesis, from the beginning to the end, relies on and is inspired by Pippin's book.

Hegel was implicitly having with Kant in this respect, and therefore, the goal will be to assess the influential and determining theory of apperceptive subjectivity of Kant's transcendental deduction in Hegel's text² in which there is an articulation of the problematic of freedom. In order to render the project of studying Hegel's reception of Kant in the selected texts realistic, it will also be necessary to emphasize certain aspects and sections of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. However, it would be appropriate to specify from the outset the viewpoint from which Kant will be apprehended in his appearance in Hegel and how the problem of freedom first came to be in the development of Kant's own philosophical enterprise before getting into Hegel.

In his first critique Kant posed the question "What can I know?"³ to arbitrate a debate between empiricists and dogmatic metaphysicians.⁴ Kant thus turns his attention to the possibility of *a priori* synthetic judgments in mathematics⁵ and in physics⁶ in order to give them their legitimacy. The ideas of the soul, of the world and of God, that is, the problems of metaphysics, can no longer be the object of a knowledge containing *a priori* synthetic judgments according to Kant, since intuition cannot provide them with a basis for knowledge.⁷ After delving in depth the possibilities of this epistemological questioning, Kant indicates that the interrogation on what we can really know opens onto

² This is what R. B. Pippin does in R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism*.

³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated, edited, and with an Introduction by M. Weigelt, based on the translation by M. Müller, London, Penguin Books, 2007, p. 635 (B833-A805), the bold letters of this translation will not be used in this thesis.

⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 5-8 (Avii-Axiv), see also p. 28 (Bxxxv, xxxvi): "Thus, and thus alone, can one cut off at the very root materialism, fatalism, atheism, free-thinking disbelief, fanaticism and superstition [...] and finally also idealism and skepticism", also p. 48 (B20).

⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 45-47 (B14 A10-B17)

⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 48 (B18, 19)

⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 306 (B383, 384-A326, 327): "By idea I understand a necessary concept of reason to which the senses can supply no congruent object", p. 313 (B395, 396 –A338, footnote): "metaphysics has only got three ideas, namely, God, freedom and immortality", p. 614 (B800-A772): "The concepts of reason, as was said before, are mere ideas, and it is true that they have no object corresponding to them in experience; [...] They are thought only problematically", p. 55 (B30-A16): "there are two stems of human knowledge, namely sensibility and understanding", p. 17 (Bxv).

a second question⁸: “What ought I to do?”⁹. It is from the failure of theoretical pure reason in metaphysics that Kant introduces his second question which is actually a problem relative to morality.¹⁰

D. Folscheid signals that this characteristic mark of Kantian thought is condensed in a famous formula at the beginning of the first critique¹¹: “I had to suspend knowledge in order to make room for belief¹²”. This “belief” that Kant evokes refers to practical reason and therefore to the moral domain of the life of reasonable beings.¹³ There is therefore in Kantian philosophy a “transition¹⁴” from theoretical philosophy on the foundations of knowledge to moral philosophy on duty, and thus, one can say that with Kant’s critical enterprise, the old theoretical usage of reason falls into abeyance insofar as the ideas of God, the world and the soul take a practical signification.¹⁵ This passage or “transition” from theoretical to moral philosophy was described by Folscheid as the « plus prodigieux coup de théâtre de l’histoire de la philosophie ¹⁶».

It is precisely in this « coup de théâtre » that contains the problem of human reason, at once for practical and theoretical life, that Kant will try to solve in terms of freedom: “the concept of freedom, insofar as its reality is proved by an apodictic law of practical

⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 308 (B386, 387-A330): “these transcendental concepts of reason may perhaps render possible a transition from concepts of nature to practical concepts”.

⁹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 635 (B833-A805).

¹⁰ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 632 (B828,829-A800-801): concerning the three ideas of pure reason, “If, therefore, these three cardinal propositions are of no use to us, as far as knowledge is concerned, and are yet so strongly recommended to us by our reason, their true value, properly regarded, will concern only the practical”.

¹¹ D. Folscheid, *Kant*, in D. Folscheid (edited by), *La philosophie allemande de Kant à Heidegger*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1993, p. 27-28.

¹² I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 25 (Bxxxix, xxx).

¹³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 25 (Bxxxix, xxx).

¹⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 308 (B386, 387-A330)

¹⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, translated and edited by M. Gregor, with an introduction by A. Reath, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, [1997] 2010, p. 5 (5:5): “we must take up these weapons again in order to seek in the moral use of reason and to base on it the concepts of *God*, *freedom*, and *immortality*, for the *possibility* of which speculation does not find sufficient guarantee”.

¹⁶ D. Folscheid, *Ibid.*, p. 27.

reason, constitutes the *keystone* of the whole structure of a system of pure reason, even of speculative reason¹⁷”. Kant will try to argue in the second critique that this freedom, thus stated in a way that it is raised at the level of a cardinal principle, has to be explained from the point of view of human “*autonomy*”¹⁸.

This idea of human autonomy understood as freedom will spring up manifestly in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, since it is, following Moggach, « une histoire de la raison pratique »¹⁹. However, this will occur in a way that will broaden the idea of freedom itself by starting, not only from what Kant called pure reason in theoretical and practical usage, but from the problems underscored by Kant in the transcendental deduction about the human understanding in the process of human knowledge.²⁰ The widening of the problematic of freedom and autonomy that Hegel will propose has a clear root in how Kant theorizes the way the human subject can know reality by means of the legislating understanding and in how this apperceptive subject is epistemologically configured.²¹ Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to demonstrate how Hegel interprets Kant’s theory of the transcendental apperception to show that the Kantian autonomy of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, where Kant unfolded his « coup de théâtre » about

¹⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 3 (5:3), italics in the text.

¹⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 30 (5:33), italics in the text.

¹⁹ D. Moggach, *Idéalisme allemand et modernité, ou la liberté réfléchie*, publié en traduction portugaise : D. Moggach, *Hegelianismo, Republicanismo, e Modernidade*, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil, p. 19, pages indicated according to a the manuscript of a French translation, by E. Bernier according to the French manuscript (p. 26), and bibliographical information indicated according to the course syllabus of Professor Moggach, POL7570 Origine et nature de la pensée politique moderne donné à l’hiver 2010, p. 1.

²⁰ For the importance of the Kantian transcendental apperception in Hegel, see R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism*; for the broadening of Kantian freedom by Hegel in general, see for example M. Greene, *Cognition as an Act of Freedom*, in L. S. Stepelevich and D. Lamb (edited by), *Hegel’s Philosophy of Action*, Atlantic Highlands, Humanities Press, 1983, p. 199-200: “Since freedom for Hegel concerns the subjectivity as totality, there is no Kantian gap between cognition and action, the theoretical “I think” and the practical “I will””; see also D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 12: « Hegel, suivant Fichte, demande ce qui est impliqué dans l’activité d’un soi, non pas seulement dans l’expérience cognitive, mais dans l’action ».

²¹ For instance, R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 9, who says that in Hegel there is an association of the “pure concepts” and “Hegel’s “autonomous thought.””, which is thus free.

freedom initiated in the first critique, was on Hegel's reading already being revealed in the transcendental deduction of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. For this reason, the thesis will focus exclusively on Hegel's interpretation of the Kantian apperceptive subject in the *Critique of Pure Reason* as a basis for his own conception of freedom, as this already poses a problem that cannot leave enough space in one study to treat the reception of Kant's moral philosophy.

Hypothesis: Hegel's theory of freedom rooted in Kant's knowing subject?

The reception of Kant's transcendental apperception in Hegel's conception of freedom will be addressed under the angle of the problem of the continuity between Hegel and Kant, starting from Pippin's *Hegel's Idealism*. Thus, the question at stake will be to know if Hegel preserves the type of freedom expressed in Kant's theory of apperceptive subjectivity. If J.-F. Deranty is right in saying that « L'idéalisme allemande peut être caractérisé rapidement comme la double réaction de la pensée allemande aux deux événements extraordinaires que sont, dans le spéculatif, la révolution kantienne, et dans le politique la révolution française ²²», the working hypothesis will consist in reformulating the allusion to Kant that Deranty makes in the light of Hegel as a representative of German Idealism in selected sections of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Since Deranty's statement seems to imply that it is possible to interpret German Idealism from what Kant had initiated in history, from the fact that Kant was not a precursor amongst others but the one who stands out the most prominently, it is plausible to continue this idea by testing its validity in a targeted text from Hegel, in the

²² J.-P. Deranty, « Lectures politiques et spéculatives des *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* », in *Archives de Philosophie*, vol. 65, 2002-2003, p. 441.

Phenomenology of Spirit, and to ask how Kant's theory of the apperceptive subject is being used and deepened by Hegel in his understanding of freedom.

The notion of revolution associated with Kant in Deranty's statement can thus be directly explained from "Kant's Copernican revolution"²³ Hegel was fully subscribing to: Kant invokes the Copernican discoveries about astronomy which introduced a new scientific approach in "making the spectator revolve and leaving the stars at rest"²⁴, and Kant will follow this idea by focusing, as Copernicus, on the action of the subject in knowledge and by discovering thereby that the "understanding has its rules which I must presuppose as existing within me even before objects are given to me, and hence *a priori*"²⁵. It is this specific centrality of the concepts or rules grounded in the intellectual subject in knowledge, an approach which was inspired by Copernicus's revolution, that Kant will show in his theory of the transcendental apperception that these concepts rooted in the understanding are "freed from all adhering empirical conditions"²⁶. Within this context of the crucial importance attributed to the subject's conceptual basis now being "freed" in knowledge according to Kant's philosophical revolution, this thesis will try to explain how there is in Hegel an "extensive replacement of Kant's deduction of the objectivity of these concepts by his *Phenomenology of Spirit*"²⁷, and how this Kantian and Hegelian emphasis on intellectual subjectivity implies a series of consequences for Hegel's theory of freedom or "freed" subjectivity.

Amongst the commentators who position themselves in the debate of the reception of Kant in Hegel, there are those who insist on the continuity between Kant and Hegel,

²³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 16.

²⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 18 (Bxvi, xvii).

²⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 19 (Bxiii, xix), italics in the text.

²⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 95, (B91-A66)

²⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 9, italics in the text.

those who put the accent on the discontinuity with regards to certain points, and those who take into account the two facets of the relation between the two German authors. To demonstrate the importance of Kant in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, as already mentioned, this thesis intends to fall within the scope of the continuist readings of Kant and Hegel. This way of reading Hegel's text was defended in different ways, amongst others, according to R. B. Pippin, D. Moggach, J. Hyppolite, J. McDowell and W. Marx.

Pippin dissects Hegel's text to detect a philosophical thought that has an "enormous debt to Kant"²⁸. His study of the relation between Kant and Hegel is guided by the idea of the title of his book itself, that is, that he is proposing an interpretation of Hegel, in which the *Phenomenology of Spirit* plays an important role, that follows the "Kant-Hegel-idealism theme"²⁹. To realize this objective, Pippin exploits the fact that in many respects of Hegel's philosophy "what was primarily influential was Kant's understanding of [...] the "transcendental unity of apperception,"³⁰". Pippin's exploration of this connection between Kant and Hegel will form the first main anchorage point of the present thesis. However, given that the problem of freedom is too often implicitly explained in Pippin's study, Moggach's text on German Idealism and freedom will be the second principal point of departure for this thesis on freedom.

Moggach underlines that it is possible to insist, when reading Hegel, on the left Hegelian influenced idea of « les elements kantians de sa pensée ³¹» and on the important notion of « spontanéité ³²» for German Idealism's project of accounting for a « liberté

²⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 11.

²⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 11.

³⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 17.

³¹ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 23.

³² D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 26.

réfléchie³³», and this idea of defining German Idealism according to the idea of freedom will form the second main anchorage point of the present thesis. Moggach's text is principally, but not only, centered on the reception of Kant's practical and political philosophy in Hegel and German Idealism, but this emphasis on Kant's practical philosophy will not be part of the present thesis.³⁴ Instead, Pippin's thesis about the transcendental apperception theory will be complemented by the idea of freedom according to the general orientation of Moggach's interpretation of German Idealism. What will be abandoned in the use of Pippin's study will be the focus on idealism and for Moggach it will be the moral and political aspect that will be put aside, not because these issues are not important, they are actually central, but because when Moggach starts his account of freedom in German Idealism, where he addresses what he calls the German Idealists' « plus amples développements de la liberté réfléchie³⁵», he starts first of all by singling out the importance of Kant's transcendental deduction for Hegel's theory of freedom.³⁶ This thesis interprets this insistence by Moggach as the importance of starting from Kant's theory of apperception to understand Hegel's theory of freedom.

Other authors like Hyppolite also argue for a continuity between Kant and Hegel by asserting that “in some respects the *Phenomenology* clearly marks a return to the point of view of Kant and Fichte³⁷”, an idea which is similarly defended by McDowell³⁸ and W.

³³ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³⁴ For Moggach's treatment of Kant's theoretical philosophy, see for instance D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³⁵ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³⁶ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³⁷ J. Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by S. Cherniak and J. Heckman, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 1974, p. 5-6.

³⁸ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self. Towards a Heterodox Reading of "Lordship and Bondage" in Hegel's Phenomenology*, in K. Deligiorgi (edited by), *Hegel: New Directions*, Chesham, Acumen, 2006, p. 33-48; J. McDowell, *Hegel's Idealism as Radicalization of Kant*, in J. McDowell, *Having the World in View. Essays on Kant, Hegel, and Sellars*, Cambridge-London, Harvard University Press, 2009, p. 69-89.

Marx³⁹ as far as Kant is concerned. On the other hand, there are certain interpreters of Hegel like Taylor who recognize the reception of “Kant’s transcendental deduction⁴⁰” but interpret it through a non Kantian “cosmic spirit⁴¹”, so that the continuity between Kant and Hegel is not fully articulated. Contrary to Pippin, Yovel argues that “The post-Kantian reading denies, or plays down, Hegel’s interest in ontology⁴²”. He nevertheless identifies a continuity between Kant and Hegel but he adds a point of view that does not fully incorporate Kantian freedom of apperception as a crucial theme.⁴³ Schacht’s text on the “Preface to Hegel’s ‘Phenomenology of Spirit’” does not insist on the presence and continuity of Kant in the Hegelian text.⁴⁴ Neuhouser only mentions the “contrast⁴⁵” between Kant and Hegel without deepening enough the problem of freedom in Hegel according to the Kantian roots of apperception.⁴⁶ Philonenko’s commentary highlights many continuities but certain analyses are implicitly and clearly oriented towards a discontinuity, e.g. the place of theological speculations in Hegel.⁴⁷

The hypothesis of the thesis will try to defend the continuist theses against the theses that insinuate a rupture between Kant and Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. It

³⁹ W. Marx, *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit. Its Point and Purpose – A Commentary on the Preface and Introduction*, translated by P. Heath, New York, Harper & Row, 1975.

⁴⁰ C. Taylor, *Hegel*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, [1975] 2005, p. 89.

⁴¹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. p. 89.

⁴² Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, in Y. Yovel, *Hegel’s Preface to the Phenomenology of Spirit*, Translation and Running Commentary by Y. Yovel, Princeton-Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2005, p. 50.

⁴³ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 50-62, although there is a very quick allusion to freedom on p. 57, but without developments.

⁴⁴ R. Schacht, “A Commentary on the Preface to Hegel’s ‘Phenomenology of Spirit’”, in *Philosophical Studies: An international Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition*, vol. 23, no. 1/2, Feb. 1972, p. 1-31.

⁴⁵ F. Neuhouser, *Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord*, in K. R. Wesphal (edited by), *The Blackwell Guide to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2009, p. 39.

⁴⁶ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 37-54; for the critique of Neuhouser, see R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness. Desire and Death in the Phenomenology of Spirit*, Princeton-Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2011, p. 15-16, note 13.

⁴⁷ A. Philonenko, *Lecture de la Phénoménologie de Hegel. Préface-Introduction*, Paris, Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 2004, p. 40.

therefore attempts to propose a synthesis between Pippin's stress on the transcendental apperception and Moggach's accentuation of the problematic of freedom. Taylor, Neuhouser, Philonenko, Yovel and Schacht will be criticized where their commentaries of Hegel underestimate the impact of the transcendental apperception elaborated by Kant in the first critique and where they fail to explain that freedom appears as a focal point in Hegel's understanding of the Kantian theory of transcendental apperception.

Texts of Kant and Hegel

As for the corpus of primary documents, it is appropriate to reiterate that the thesis will try to situate the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the wake of the Kantian understanding of the process of knowledge through the reception of the *Critique of Pure Reason* and its relation to the problematic of freedom, following Pippin's and Moggach's interpretive work on Hegel and German Idealism. The section of the *Critique of Pure Reason* that will be the main object of attention will be the transcendental deduction, even if the other sections of the critique will also be used as necessary to refer to the general context of Kant's philosophical project elaborated in the first critique; this will be done only if it is relevant for shedding light on the transcendental deduction. Concerning Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, only the preface, the introduction and the first section of the chapter on self-consciousness will be studied. However, occasional references to other sections will occur but only inasmuch as they directly relate to the main thread of the argumentation of the thesis. Looking into the whole *Phenomenology of Spirit* would have entailed an enterprise that would have been too far-reaching to remain realistic, and the same thing can be said of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. The objective of the thesis will therefore be to propose a reflection on the reception of Kant's transcendental

deduction in the preface, the introduction and the first section on self-consciousness of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in order to single out the Hegelian conception of freedom in relation to Kant's apperceptive subject.

The reason why the preface of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* was selected is that it is in this preface that Hegel formulates in a concise manner the cardinal elements of his book.⁴⁸ If it is possible to demonstrate the inevitable place of Kant in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, this has to be done first in the preface because the preface represents the privileged entrance door to Hegel's thought and therefore to his reception of Kant, given that Schacht writes: "the Preface to the *Phenomenology* is the most important part of it"⁴⁹. What motivated the choice of the introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* for the investigation concerning Kant and Hegel is the fact that it is in this section of Hegel's book that the reader starts to be more and more faced with a « texte éminemment spéculatif »⁵⁰, an element that Philonenko says he does not see in the preface.⁵¹ In addition to this philosophical weight attributed to it, the introduction is justified since Kant is a reference that remains manifest and inescapable: « le texte de cette introduction comprend-il encore des allusions (surtout contre Kant et Fichte) et, au demeurant, on voit mal comment Hegel aurait pu s'en dispenser »⁵². The section of the chapter on self-consciousness was taken into account because the theme itself is a fundamental source of Hegel's thought and conception of the free subject: Pippin writes about this section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that "the topic of the chapter, self-

⁴⁸ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁴⁹ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁵⁰ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁵¹ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 107; the debate amongst the commentators about the status of the different sections of Hegel's book will not be addressed.

⁵² A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 107.

consciousness, together with another to which it is deeply linked, freedom, are far and away the most important topics in what we call German Idealism⁵³”. This choice can be defended moreover in that Kant’s theory of reflective apperception occupies a place in this chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that cannot, according to Pippin, be neglected.⁵⁴ However, in the context of the present thesis, only the section before the master-slave dialectic will be considered: a study of the whole chapter on self-consciousness would have extended the research well beyond the limits of what is reasonable to complete in one study such as this one.

As for the translated texts of Hegel and Kant, A. V. Miller’s translation of Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* will be used⁵⁵ as well as M. Weigelt’s translation of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*.⁵⁶ The primary texts of Kant and Hegel were first read in the French translations⁵⁷ but they are quoted according to the English translations in this thesis.

Plan for the demonstration of the thesis

The hypothesis of the continuity between Kant and Hegel in Hegel’s conception of the freedom the apperceptive subject will be demonstrated through a thematic reading of Hegel’s and Kant’s texts. The argumentation will proceed by identifying three conditions for freedom that Hegel exploits through the philosophical development of the

⁵³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 5.

⁵⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 5, see also the first part of the following chapter of Pippin’s book.

⁵⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, translated by A. V. Miller with Analysis of the Text and Foreword by J. N. Findlay, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977.

⁵⁶ As already quoted above: I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, translated, edited, and with an Introduction by M. Weigelt, based on the translation by M. Müller, London, Penguin Books, 2007.

⁵⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phénoménologie de l’Esprit I-II*, traduction et notes par G. Jarczyk et P.-J. Labarrière, Gallimard, 1993; E. Kant, *Critique de la raison pure*, traduction, présentation et notes par A. Renaut, index analytique établi par P. Savidan, 3^e édition corrigée, Paris, Flammarion, [1997] 2006; Kant, *Critique de la raison pratique*, traduction, introduction et notes par J.-P. Fussler, index établi par M. Foessel, Paris, Flammarion, 2003.

Phenomenology of Spirit, each condition forming the three central themes of the thesis. The first condition, pointed out by Moggach and Pippin, for Hegel's conception of freedom, and depending on Kant's account of it, is spontaneity. The first chapter of the thesis has thus the title "the spontaneity of the notional subject". The chapter will try to show that Hegel's explanation of the subject as free reinterprets Kant's heritage from the point of view of the spontaneous apperceptive subject. The second condition for Hegel's theory of the freedom of the apperceptive subject is reflectivity, illuminated in an incomparable way by Pippin. The title of the chapter will thus simply be "reflectivity" and it will show the elements that are lacking in a conception of freedom only based on spontaneity. The aim of the chapter will thus be to explain how it is the specifically Kantian conception of reflectivity in apperception that influenced Hegel's theory of a free subjectivity. The third condition for the Hegelian explication of the possibility of human freedom will be found in the notion of negativity, which will be the title of the third chapter. This chapter will put forward the theoretical elements acquired in the two first chapters in order to see how the notion of negativity is what enables Hegel to bring light on how the free subject is already involved in the becoming of reality.

The mode of argumentation will present the main position defended on the continuity between Kant and Hegel and will, in the course of the development, criticize the authors who address the same elements of the Hegelian text but who do not acknowledge the Kantian origin of Hegel's articulation of the problem of freedom. The texts of the commentators will therefore be quoted regularly to support the arguments. The thesis will in this sense be presented in a dialogical way that stages a discussion between the commentators, their disagreements and agreements. Many debates amongst the

interpreters of Hegel and Kant will not be addressed because of the limitations of space and time imposed on the present thesis. It would also be relevant to mention that Kant's texts will be used regularly in order to make the parallel between Hegel and Kant prominent.

Chapter 1: The spontaneity of the notional subject

Introduction

This chapter looks into the notion of spontaneity in Kant and Hegel. It intends to explain how this notion is at the basis of Hegel's understanding of freedom and how Hegel endorses the idea of spontaneity in a way that invokes the Kantian heritage. The first part of the chapter starts by clarifying the meaning of the Kantian notion of spontaneity and by highlighting the way the notion appears in Kant's transcendental deduction and theory of apperception. The context in which the notion arose will thus be briefly explicated, and the relation between the notional or conceptuality of the Kantian apperceptive subject and the spontaneity of this same subject will form the heart of the account given in the chapter. It is therefore the faculty of understanding in Kant's perspective that will be the object of attention, and the concepts or notions, two expressions that will be used as synonyms, will be explained in their relation to the question of the possibility for the subject to be spontaneous.

The notion of spontaneity will be defined from the point of view of the importance of the activity of the subject in knowledge according to Kant; how this unveils the independence of the subject in its relation to the world and how this recurs in Hegel in his theory of the free subject. The possibility of an absolute character that can be ascribed to the Kantian apperceptive subject will be related to the Hegelian idea of the absolute

subject. Based on texts by Pippin, this chapter will formulate a critique of the interpretation of Hegel which classifies him amongst the advocates of metaphysics and which associates the Hegelian absolute as distancing Hegel from Kant. This position will be defended by means of the notion of spontaneity itself as being distinguished from the tradition of metaphysics and as being the mark of the continuity between Hegel and Kant and of Hegel's own conception of the free subject in apperception. The subsection and second chapter of the thesis will go deeper in the critique of Taylor and will raise other problems engendered by his reading of Hegel. The commentators that will be used to support this critical position are mainly Pippin and Moggach.

The subsection of this chapter on spontaneity sets out the problem posed by Hegel about what he calls skepticism. The skeptical approach is associated with Kant and this will be the opportunity to show that Hegel also criticizes Kant from the point of view of the connection between the subject and the object. It will thus also be the occasion to reformulate the question of spontaneity which it implies for the subject. The critical relation that exists between Kant and Hegel will be revealed as being fully consistent with the idea of a continuity between Kant and Hegel. It is through a critique that Hegel's conception of freedom undertakes to develop further the Kantian idea that the subject's notional character expresses the spontaneity of its relation to objects.

Development

One of the major motivations for the elaboration of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* can be found in the problem engendered by the theory of knowledge of empiricism.⁵⁸ The empiricists thought that the only way to produce knowledge was to rely on experience

⁵⁸ J. R. Fisette, *The Last Beatitude of Self: Spontaneity's "Place" in the Objectivity of the World*, in P. Muchnik (edited by), *Rethinking Kant. Volume I*, Newcastle upon Tyne, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008, p. 50.

and this basis for knowledge has, according to them, no objectivity and only relativity.⁵⁹ Kant's reaction to this empiricist epistemology was to show that there is something in the process of knowledge that does not depend on experience and thus that intervenes independently of what is given in empirical reality.⁶⁰ As the empiricists would also say, there has to be a receptive intuition of something in experience if there is to be knowledge, but Kant insists on the fact that there also has to be a conceptual element that has to be "possible *a priori*"⁶¹, even if some concepts remain empirical, whereas the empiricists would claim that knowledge does not imply any concepts that do not take their origin in experience, or that are not *a posteriori*.⁶²

Kant explains that intuitions from experience and concepts from the understanding are the two conditions for there to be knowledge since they are the⁶³ "two fundamental sources of our mind"⁶⁴. But, unlike the empiricists, for Kant, these concepts were explained as spontaneous activity in knowledge, as for Kant the notional element in thought is the⁶⁵ "spontaneity of concepts"⁶⁶, and this spontaneity is understood as opposed to the receptivity of sensibility,⁶⁷ which is the only source of knowledge for the empiricists. Kant's theory of the understanding differs from the empiricists' theory in that for Kant the understanding corresponds to the spontaneous capacity of thinking by using concepts and producing them, because, as Kant writes, "Concepts are based [...] on

⁵⁹ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁶⁰ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 49-50.

⁶¹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 85.

⁶² J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁶³ Passage by Kant signaled by J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 49-50.

⁶⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 85.

⁶⁵ Passage by Kant signaled by J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 49-50.

⁶⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 85.

⁶⁷ R. B. Pippin, "Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind", in *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 17, no. 2, June 1987, p. 452-453.

the spontaneity of thought⁶⁸” and consequently on the understanding,⁶⁹ which again, marks the distinction between the receptive sensibility and the spontaneous understanding. Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* therefore attempts to demonstrate the conceptuality or notionality of the human subject in knowledge, and tries to show how there is a spontaneity at work in the knowing subject in addition to the receptivity of sensibility in experience.⁷⁰

However, when Kant uses the expression “spontaneity” to describe the conceptual functioning of the human mind, he does not thematize the question to develop further this aspect of his theory of the subject.⁷¹ As Pippin writes, “Kant leaves unexplained the meaning of such phrases as [...] concepts being ‘based on’ spontaneity⁷²”. But what is possible to assert about this issue is that Kant’s claim about spontaneity is an explanation of the understanding as introducing a form of act, as opposed to passivity, in knowledge.⁷³ Kant thus writes that “receptivity can make knowledge possible when combined with spontaneity⁷⁴”, and that⁷⁵ “the understanding [...] is our faculty of producing representations by ourselves, or the spontaneity of knowledge⁷⁶”. There is therefore, according to Kant, something that only depends on the subject in knowledge

⁶⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 97, also p. 86.

⁶⁹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 97.

⁷⁰ See about this and the transcendental deduction, J. R. Fiset, *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁷¹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 452.

⁷² R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 453, it will not be possible in this thesis to get into the details of the issues raised by Pippin and the other commentators he mentions about Kant’s text, as the goal is to study the reception of Kant in Hegel.

⁷³ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 453.

⁷⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124-125.

⁷⁵ Passage by Kant signaled by R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 452.

⁷⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 86.

and this is the spontaneity that is being described as an action of the mind which does not come from external experience but that is activated “by ourselves”⁷⁷.⁷⁸

At the beginning of Kant’s transcendental deduction, Kant explains concerning the “pure a priori concepts”⁷⁹ independent of experience and therefore spontaneously active in knowledge, that these concepts or notions “must [...] all be a priori conditions of a possible experience”⁸⁰. The goal of Kant’s transcendental deduction will be to show that these spontaneous concepts as “subjective conditions of thought can have objective validity”⁸¹. In order to prove this objectivity about the conceptuality or notionality of subjectivity, Kant will have to look at “the spontaneity of the understanding”⁸² and thus to develop his idea of the transcendental apperception. If knowledge is defined as the penetration of a conceptual element of spontaneous thought into an intuitive data from the receptive sensibility or from experience, Kant explains that there has to be a⁸³ “unity of consciousness which precedes all data of intuitions”⁸⁴. This “unity” of the subject conceived as pure or transcendental by Kant is what he presents as the “transcendental apperception”⁸⁵. Thus, the objectivity of the pure concepts of the understanding will be justified by the fact that, given that pure apperception is a “transcendental unity”⁸⁶, and that this⁸⁷ “original unity alone is valid objectively”⁸⁸.

⁷⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 86.

⁷⁸ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 453; see also J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁷⁹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 122.

⁸⁰ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 122.

⁸¹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 116.

⁸² J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁸³ Passage by Kant signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 18.

⁸⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 139.

⁸⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 139.

⁸⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 134.

⁸⁷ Passage by Kant signaled by J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁸⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 135.

This transcendental apperception corresponds to the “I think⁸⁹” and is thus equated with the “pure apperception, in order to distinguish it from empirical apperception⁹⁰”. It is that which provides the possibility for the subject of producing knowledge from possible experience by keeping the identity of its own self and therefore by being cognitively free from external and empirical determination.⁹¹ In this sense, Kant says about the transcendental apperception that⁹² “the I think [...] is an act of spontaneity⁹³”. This possibility underscored by Kant about “an act of spontaneity” “is by far the most important Kantian notion picked up and greatly expanded by later German Idealists⁹⁴”, which includes Hegel.⁹⁵

Pippin’s way of explaining the Kantian idea of spontaneity refers directly to human freedom in the transcendental unity of the subject: in Kant, Pippin considers “the problem of apperception as [...] fundamental to the issue of spontaneity, and so freedom⁹⁶”. The spontaneity of the transcendental apperception is the non sensible condition for knowledge, what is not taken from experience, and this necessary element of the thinking subject is the⁹⁷ “I think [...] which must be capable of accompanying all other representations, and which is one and the same in all consciousness⁹⁸”, and which in this sense expresses the possibility of spontaneously or freely not depending on experience by remaining formally “identical⁹⁹”.

⁸⁹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

⁹⁰ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

⁹¹ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁹² Passage signaled by R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 459.

⁹³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

⁹⁴ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 451.

⁹⁵ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 451.

⁹⁶ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464, note 23.

⁹⁷ Passage by Kant signaled by R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 459.

⁹⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 125.

⁹⁹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 459.

Thus, Hegel's understanding of the Kantian transcendental apperception and of its spontaneity, of its freedom, in the "I think" of consciousness can be explained as a way of interpreting "the "freedom" of consciousness itself¹⁰⁰". Freedom is involved in the Hegelian assimilation of Kant's notion of spontaneity because the most crucial point in his philosophical project is to give a full account and explanation of the free relation that human beings have with reality: « L'enjeu fondamental de l'idéalisme allemand n'est pas de polémiquer avec l'évidence du monde extérieur, mais de demander comment on peut rationnellement et librement s'y rapporter ¹⁰¹», explains Moggach.

Pippin singles out how the Kantian spontaneity manifesting itself as a condition of experience reappears in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* under the problematic of freedom since for Hegel this idea of an unconditioned subject means that the human subject reaches a freedom based on the independence of thought, which has in Hegel's Kantian perspective an "autonomous" "self-determining" and "infinite" nature¹⁰²". This is where Hegel will relocate in part the Kantian idea of human "autonomy"¹⁰³". M. Greene also explains that "Hegel roots thinking in freedom in such a way that cognition as such is an act of freedom¹⁰⁴". The root of thinking is freedom because Hegel retains the Kantian idea that thinking is fundamentally spontaneous. This spontaneity expresses the independence of the subject from experience and therefore thought is freed from any kind of mechanism and can be said to be "autonomous"¹⁰⁵".

¹⁰⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 7.

¹⁰¹ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 2, Moggach continues by explaining that this is basically an « idéalisme pratique », which will not be the main focus of this section of this thesis.

¹⁰² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 287, note 4.

¹⁰³ I. Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 30 (5:33), italics in the text.

¹⁰⁴ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁰⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 145.

Even if a type of freedom is being expressed here, Kant would not use this vocabulary, since in Kant “it makes little sense to talk about cognition as an act of freedom¹⁰⁶”. Kant’s distinction between faith and knowledge had led him to conclusions that seem to be divergent: “I had to suspend knowledge in order to make room for belief¹⁰⁷”, writes Kant by alluding to the question of freedom from the point of view of faith and not cognition.¹⁰⁸ However, Kant’s position cannot be reduced to this well known statement from the *Preface* of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Greene explains that “In Kant, cognition becomes in a certain formal sense an activity of freedom¹⁰⁹” and this is what Hegel will develop in another direction in his own theory of the subject in order to make sense of this Kantian heritage in the Hegelian realm of freedom.¹¹⁰ With more precision, it can be said that this Kantian theory of pure apperception as a “free activity¹¹¹”, i.e. freed from natural determinism, “is a precursor [...] to what figures in Hegel as the free self-development of the “Notion”¹¹²”. This notion is also based on the Kantian notional subject because the Hegelian notion revealing this movement of freedom “takes its paradigm from Kant’s “I think.”¹¹³”.

If Hegel is using Kant to show that there is a ““freedom” of consciousness itself¹¹⁴”, it is because the notional element at the foundation of the subject corresponds to an activation of freedom as the spontaneity of the notion.¹¹⁵ Thereby, in Hegel, « Toute

¹⁰⁶ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 25.

¹⁰⁸ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁰⁹ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 193.

¹¹⁰ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹¹¹ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 34.

¹¹² J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 34.

¹¹³ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 17.

¹¹⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 7.

¹¹⁵ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 152.

conscience est la libre opération du concept¹¹⁶», explains Philonenko. And given that the Kantian apperceptive subject is what provides the possibility of the Hegelian notion,¹¹⁷ Hegel refers to the unconditioned character of the subject, to its freedom, that is, to the “absolute spontaneity in apperception¹¹⁸”.

It is from this perspective that, in a strikingly parallel way to Kant, Hegel’s philosophical project had been to consider fully the place of concepts as “nonempirical¹¹⁹” in a conception of human subjectivity.¹²⁰ Hegel was worried about how concepts that pretend to be pure are involved in the movement that brings into being the reality of the subject,¹²¹ and for Hegel, the subject or “the I is the pure Notion itself¹²²”. The Hegelian emphasis on the conceptuality of reality inseparable from subjectivity will be formulated by Hegel with the expression of ““the Notion” (*der Begriff*)¹²³”, which is exactly the term Kant uses when he stresses the “Spontaneität der Begriffe¹²⁴”. Pippin explains about the importance of the notional character of reality and the subject according to Hegel: “the Notion originally determines the possibility and character of human experience¹²⁵”, which is Hegel’s renewed version of the Kantian idea that “pure a priori concepts [...] must [...] all be a priori conditions of a possible experience¹²⁶”. Hegel’s Kantian preoccupation concerning the way the notion and experience are connected is expressed by Hegel when he says from a Kantian viewpoint

¹¹⁶ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 152.

¹¹⁷ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 17.

¹¹⁸ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466.

¹¹⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 91.

¹²⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 91.

¹²¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 91.

¹²² Hegel quoted by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 17, italics in the text.

¹²³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 91, italics in the text.

¹²⁴ I. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, nach der ersten und zweiten Originalausgabe herausgegeben von J. Timmermann, mit einer Bibliographie von H. Klemme, Hamburg, Felix Meiner Verlag, 1998, p. 129.

¹²⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 91.

¹²⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 122.

in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* that the notional subject or¹²⁷ “Consciousness knows and comprehends only what falls within its experience¹²⁸”.

Hegel’s argument about the possibility of experience is thus established by the accentuation of the inevitability of the notional element in this same experience and in its inseparability from the subject. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* appears to have a very similar ambition to the *Critique of Pure Reason* by projecting to reveal the legitimacy of the concept in experience.¹²⁹ This spontaneity of the notional subject springing up in Kant and Hegel is pointing in the direction of freedom because this Kantian theory of the subject as notionally spontaneous and freed from empirical determinism, that is, this “I¹³⁰” as “pure Notion¹³¹”, is the reason why “Cognition and freedom are for Hegel intrinsically connected in the concept of subjectivity as Notion¹³²”. The equivalence between the I or subject and the notion is inextricably linked with freedom since in the systematic organization of his thought « Hegel ne cesse de répéter que « le concept est ce qui est libre »¹³³».

However, the difference between Kant’s idea of the notional subject and Hegel’s perspective is that according to Kant, the objective reality of the world depends on the synthesizing function of the categories of the human understanding, whereas Hegel identifies the notion itself with the apperceptive subject’s notional formation of objective reality.¹³⁴ Hegel goes beyond Kant’s idea that the notion represents only a

¹²⁷ Passage by Hegel signaled by W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 50.

¹²⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21.

¹²⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 9; J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 33.

¹³⁰ Hegel quoted by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 17.

¹³¹ Hegel quoted by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 17.

¹³² M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 194.

¹³³ B. Bourgeois, *Dialectique et structure dans la philosophie de Hegel*, in B. Bourgeois, *Études hégéliennes. Raison et décision*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1992, p.122, italics in the text.

¹³⁴ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. xx.

function of the human mind and fuses it with subjectivity itself which represents the objective world's inescapable condition: "For Hegel the unifying, apperceiving activity of the self is nothing other than the "concept."¹³⁵". According to this idea, there is consequently in Hegel's theory of freedom a more thorough fusion between the Kantian "Spontaneität der Begriffe"¹³⁶ and the Kantian transcendental apperception as "an act of spontaneity"¹³⁷. It is in this sense that the origin of the project of theorizing freedom in German Idealism culminating in Hegel can be traced in Kant's idea of a free and spontaneous subject in knowledge: "Kant [...] was responsible [...] through his transcendental philosophy, for opening the road to the idealist position, insofar as he had freed subjectivity, as the logical principle of a "pure" I, from the given"¹³⁸.

Pippin comments Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* by arguing that human subjectivity is being traversed by the absolute because the absolute cannot avoid its correspondence with the notion which takes root in the subject.¹³⁹ Pippin asserts: "'the Absolute" [...] is "the Notion," and [...] such Notionality must be understood as the "logic" of a "self-determining" subjectivity"¹⁴⁰". The fact that there is something absolute in human subjectivity was also expressed by Kant when he was elaborating his transcendental deduction because for Kant there is "a non relative or absolute spontaneity in apperception"¹⁴¹. Hegel draws on this Kantian idea of an absolute starting point in the subject to build his own theory of subjectivity and to take it on the terrain of becoming because he endorses the Kantian vocabulary about the absolute and subjectivity and says

¹³⁵ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. xx.

¹³⁶ I. Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, p. 129.

¹³⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

¹³⁸ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 37.

¹³⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 92.

¹⁴⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 92, italics in the text.

¹⁴¹ R. B. Pippin, "Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind", p. 466.

that this¹⁴² “unconditioned nature of the ‘I’¹⁴³”, that is, the absolute character of the Kantian apperception, has to be explained in terms of how¹⁴⁴ “pure thoughts become *Notions*¹⁴⁵”.

However, it should be noted that the Kantian “unconditioned I” in Hegel’s text can refer to two different aspects of theoretical subjectivity. If the Kantian subject can only apply its pure intellectual notions to the world of experience and not beyond it, the understanding has a certain level of dependence in respect of the empirical world.¹⁴⁶ Kant writes: “the categories admit of no other use for the knowledge of things, except insofar as these things are taken as objects of possible experience¹⁴⁷”. The pure notions of the thinking I or self according to Kant could not pretend to produce knowledge without experience, which substracts them from a full independence in knowledge.¹⁴⁸ The same idea has to be defended with the spontaneous character of the I of the understanding since it is in relation to the world of experience that the pure functions of the understanding accomplish their intellectual activity: « L’emprise de la spontanéité sur la réceptivité demeure imparfaite, l’enracinement de l’*a priori* dans l’*a posteriori* n’est guère inconditionné¹⁴⁹ », explains M. Vetö.

Kant’s theory of subjectivity will find in the faculty of reason the possibility of lifting up the subject or the I to the level of the “unconditioned¹⁵⁰”. Kant’s conception of reason will lead him to explain the functioning of reason from the point of view of its

¹⁴² Passage by Hegel signaled by Y. Yovel, *Running commentary*, p. 132.

¹⁴³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁴⁴ Passage by Hegel signaled by Y. Yovel, *Running commentary*, p. 132.

¹⁴⁵ G. W. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20, italics in the text.

¹⁴⁶ J. McDowell, *Hegel’s Idealism as...*, p. 82.

¹⁴⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 144.

¹⁴⁸ J. McDowell, *Hegel’s Idealism as...*, p. 82.

¹⁴⁹ M. Vetö, « La synthèse a priori kantienne comme l’essence commune de la liberté et du temps », in *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 84^e année, no. 1, Janv.-Mars 1979, p. 89-90.

¹⁵⁰ J. McDowell, *Hegel’s Idealism as...*, p. 82.

independence from any empirical data and this is why in Kant “Reason in its theoretical employment requires absolute spontaneity¹⁵¹”. Kant writes that reason is different than understanding because reason “is entirely distinguished from all empirically conditioned powers, because it considers its objects merely according to ideas, and in accordance with them determines the understanding, which then makes an empirical use of its own (similarly pure) concepts¹⁵²”. If there is on the one hand in Kant’s idea of a theoretical subject the presence of an absolute from the point of view of reason, Pippin still argues on the other hand that the fact that Kant’s theory of transcendental apperception does not result from a causality in the subject that would precede it still grants an absolute attribute to the unified transcendental apperceptive subject.¹⁵³ Thus, given that, following Pippin, there is also an absolute element in the apperceptive subject, it is possible to assert that the absolute and the subject come closer to one another in modernity from the Kantian moment: “at the onset of the “new spirit,” made explicit for Hegel in idealist philosophy since Kant, philosophy began to see the absolute, no longer in substance, but [...] in the subject¹⁵⁴”.

The qualifier “absolute” remains legitimate when it comes to describe the transcendental apperception that Kant called¹⁵⁵ “the supreme principle of all human knowledge¹⁵⁶”. When Pippin recapitulates the idea of a spontaneous apperceptive subject, he uses the expression “non relative or absolute¹⁵⁷”. This also recalls the universal and necessary and thus non relative character of the *a priori*, which also

¹⁵¹ M. Kosch, *Kant’s Account of Freedom*, in M. Kosch, *Freedom and Reason in Kant, Schelling, and Kierkegaard*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 30.

¹⁵² I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 472.

¹⁵³ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466-467.

¹⁵⁴ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 44.

¹⁵⁵ Passage alluded by R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 467.

¹⁵⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 128.

¹⁵⁷ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466.

characterizes the pure unity of apperception.¹⁵⁸ This *a priori* non relative element in the production of knowledge, a knowledge including in Kant empirical data, still contains an aspect of unconditionality in the understanding and this, in addition to the unconditionality of reason, is what comes back in Hegel's Kantian idea of the absolute or "unconditioned nature of the 'I'¹⁵⁹",¹⁶⁰ which recalls moreover the fact that Kant's theory of the subject conceives the understanding in such a way that it is being separated from reason, an opposition Hegel reconciles in rational and spontaneous subjectivity by keeping the notion of unconditionality in empirical reality.¹⁶¹

In the *Preface* of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel equates the absolute and the subject¹⁶²: "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 itself¹⁶³". In Pippin's opinion, Kant is at the heart of this problem posed by the Hegelian conception of human subjectivity.¹⁶⁴ Yovel also interprets the Hegelian equivalence of subject and absolute as "following Kant¹⁶⁵". Hegel asserts that the nature of the "absolute" is "to be actual, subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself¹⁶⁶", and in Hegel the accentuation of the subject in a conception of the absolute presents itself as an embodiment of the Kantian foundational character of subjectivity in the explanation of the world.¹⁶⁷ The subjectivity Hegel conceives as

¹⁵⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 38-39, 124-125.

¹⁵⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁶⁰ See about the relation absolute-unconditionality Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 132.

¹⁶¹ J. McDowell, *Hegel's Idealism as...*, p. 82.

¹⁶² Passage signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 92.

¹⁶³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

¹⁶⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 92.

¹⁶⁵ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 95.

¹⁶⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

¹⁶⁷ J. Hyppolite, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

including the absolute is specifically the “I¹⁶⁸”, and this I is in Hegel’s perspective essentially absolute or “unconditioned¹⁶⁹”.

This statement by Hegel about the subject being absolute is also a claim about spontaneity, as Miller’s translation insinuates.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, as Pippin notes,¹⁷¹ Miller’s translation on this point represents an interpretation more than a translation, since when it is written “subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself¹⁷²” in the translated text, the adjective “spontaneous” is “not in the German¹⁷³”. The German text only says “Subject, oder sich selbst Werden¹⁷⁴” without the “spontaneous¹⁷⁵”. But when Miller associates the Hegelian subject with spontaneity, Pippin still says that it is consistent with Hegel’s thought by asserting “I agree with the sentiment¹⁷⁶”. This agreement given by Pippin is justified because Hegel himself conceives the subject or the I as “unconditioned¹⁷⁷”, which is clearly an invocation of Kant’s subject,¹⁷⁸ Kant’s subject being fundamentally spontaneous or free in an way that is absolute,¹⁷⁹ or “unconditioned¹⁸⁰”.

The important difference between Hegel’s absolute subject and the absolute element in Kant’s spontaneous subject is that Hegel’s absolute understood from the point of view of the subject is conceived as resulting from a process: “the Absolute [...] is essentially a

¹⁶⁸ J. Hyppolite, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁶⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁷⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

¹⁷¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 278, note 3.

¹⁷² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

¹⁷³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 278, note 3.

¹⁷⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, herausgegeben von W. Bonsiepen und R. Heede, Hamburg, Felix Meiner Verlag, 1980, p. 19.

¹⁷⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

¹⁷⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 278, note 3.

¹⁷⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁷⁸ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 132.

¹⁷⁹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466

¹⁸⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

*result*¹⁸¹”, writes Hegel. This notion of a “result” realized in a subject conceived as the absolute also refers back to the idea of becoming, whereas in Kant the absolute element in the spontaneity of the subject is still tied to a reference to something outside becoming, that is, to “the permanent and unchanging I (of pure apperception)¹⁸²”, writes Kant. When Hegel was presenting the I as “unconditioned¹⁸³”, he also underlined the Kantian notional subject by restating the Kantian idea according to which the I or the subject possesses what Hegel called a “fixity¹⁸⁴”,¹⁸⁵ which is Kant’s “permanent and unchanging I¹⁸⁶”. Therefore, given that Hegel preserves Kant’s apperceptive I or subject containing an “absolute spontaneity¹⁸⁷”, Hegel brings this unconditionality or absolute character of the subject into the domain of becoming because he describes the subject as engaged in the “becoming of itself¹⁸⁸”, and following Miller’s interpretive addition to the text, in a way that preserves the Kantian heritage since it is a becoming that is “spontaneous¹⁸⁹”.

Hegel also explains that this “pure ‘I’¹⁹⁰” corresponds to “a separate freedom¹⁹¹”. If Hegel’s subject is rooted in the Kantian subject in that the subject expresses “spontaneity, and so freedom¹⁹²”, this Hegelian idea of a spontaneous and free subjectivity cannot remain “separate” from the becoming anymore because the absolute situation of the subject is participating in the movement of reality and it is this becoming that exhibits the

¹⁸¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

¹⁸² I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 162.

¹⁸³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁸⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁸⁵ See about this, Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 132.

¹⁸⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 162.

¹⁸⁷ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466.

¹⁸⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

¹⁸⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

¹⁹⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

¹⁹¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

¹⁹² R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464, note 23.

absolute as result.¹⁹³ Hegel thus intends to describe that freedom is not only what Kant thought it was when he explained the spontaneity of the apperceptive subject or I in terms of “fixity¹⁹⁴”, that is to say: freedom involved in the spontaneity of the human subject is also for Hegel “the free movement of the Notion¹⁹⁵”, or of the I.¹⁹⁶ Since Hegel can reinterpret the unconditionality of the Kantian spontaneous subject and thus can explain anew the absolute element that Kant was able to articulate in relation to subjectivity, by showing its implication for freedom as becoming, Hegel can say that the absolute which also expresses freedom or spontaneity is “actual¹⁹⁷”.

When Yovel comments on this continuity between Kant’s theory of subjectivity and Hegel’s conception of the absolute, he also mentions the influence of Spinoza.¹⁹⁸ He interprets Hegel as wanting to demonstrate that there is a possible “union between Kant and Spinoza¹⁹⁹”. The idea that Hegel’s theory of the absolute shares with Spinoza is, according to Yovel, the importance of substantiality to explain ““actuality,”²⁰⁰”, which could be associated with the absolute that Hegel considered as equivalent with the “actual²⁰¹”. However, even if Spinoza represents an influential figure for Hegel’s philosophy, the problem with this interpretation defended by Yovel is that, between subjectivity and substantiality in Hegel, as Yovel himself writes, “the concept of subject is the higher one²⁰²”. This places Kant in a position of pre-eminence in the dialogical

¹⁹³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

¹⁹⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

¹⁹⁵ J. McDowell, *Hegel’s Idealism as...*, p. 88.

¹⁹⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 17, Pippin quotes Hegel: “the I is the pure Notion itself”, italics in the text.

¹⁹⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

¹⁹⁸ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 16-17.

¹⁹⁹ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 16-17.

²⁰⁰ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 17.

²⁰¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

²⁰² Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 95.

relation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* with other authors. Thus, what Yovel omits to say when he mentions the “union between Kant and Spinoza²⁰³” is that, if there is to be such a union, there is no equivalence between Kantianism and Spinozism.

The explanation provided by Yovel about the relation between the subject and the absolute in Hegel does not pay enough attention to the ways in which Kant was the main impact in Hegel’s conception and thereby undervalues the whole problematic of freedom based in both Hegel and Kant on the notion of spontaneity,²⁰⁴ or of “absolute spontaneity²⁰⁵”. Yovel refers to freedom in “an ontological sense²⁰⁶”, which is Yovel’s metaphysical vocabulary to explain Hegel and which is linked to the problem of subjectivity and the absolute, but the problem of the spontaneous subject is still lacking in his account,²⁰⁷ whereas Hegel’s text suggests, in Miller’s interpretative translation and in Pippin’s opinion,²⁰⁸ a direct contact between the absolute and spontaneity active in subjectivity, or between “the Absolute²⁰⁹” and the “subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself²¹⁰”.

In addition, many commentators have judged that the Kantian subject represents what Hegel is trying to depart from when he associates the subject to the absolute.²¹¹ This way of explaining the Hegelian text can make the Hegelian spirit a form of metaphysical synthesis of identity and otherness.²¹² Hegel would belong to the group of thinkers who

²⁰³ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 16-17.

²⁰⁴ See Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 16-31.

²⁰⁵ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466.

²⁰⁶ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 24.

²⁰⁷ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 24.

²⁰⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 278, note 3.

²⁰⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

²¹⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

²¹¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 92.

²¹² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 92.

defend a monist conception of reality based on the notion of spirit,²¹³ a perspective in which “Hegel is a speculative metaphysician²¹⁴”. Pippin situates Taylor’s interpretation of Hegel in this trend by stressing “Taylor’s influential “cosmic spirit” reading²¹⁵”.

Taylor’s way of understanding the *Phenomenology of Spirit* really focuses, as Pippin stipulates, on the notion of Geist or Spirit: “The *PhG* intends to start with our ordinary consciousness of things (das nat rliches Bewu tsein), and to take us from there to the true perspective of *Geist*²¹⁶”. The reference to the notion of *Geist* or spirit is very significant for Taylor since his interpretation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* reposes on this notion: the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is “a struggle by Hegel to wrench his own conception of *Geist* out of those of his contemporaries²¹⁷”. The attention that Taylor pays to the Hegelian notion of spirit leads to a different way of reading the Hegelian absolute as subject, since the subject becomes linked to spirit in such a way that Hegel is not writing in the wake of Kant, but is proposing a new monist interpretation of the world in which the subject absorbs the absolute.²¹⁸

In Taylor there is a clear absence of the importance of Kant in this dialectic of the subject and the object that reappears constantly in the Hegelian text.²¹⁹ Hegel’s theory of the subject pertains to the idea that there is a “free activity of bringing cognitions to the unity of apperception²²⁰”, which grounds the Hegelian conception of freedom in Kant’s transcendental apperceptive subject and which at the same time “excludes²²¹” the

²¹³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 92.

²¹⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 4.

²¹⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 262, note 8.

²¹⁶ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 128, italics in the text.

²¹⁷ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 124.

²¹⁸ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 214.

²¹⁹ See for instance C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 214-221.

²²⁰ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 34.

²²¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18.

“metaphysical ground²²²” of the “Spirit’s hidden hand²²³” stressed and clearly stated by Taylor when he talks about “the self [...] as the vehicle of *Geist*²²⁴”, as if there were in this vehicle or subject a “hidden hand²²⁵”. The reason why it excludes metaphysics is that the thinkers of German idealism, including Hegel, based themselves on the fact that their endorsement of Kantian spontaneity is not compatible with traditional metaphysics that recurs in Taylor’s interpretation, because the spontaneous independence or freedom of the Kantian subject does not allow a “hidden hand²²⁶” which impedes this independence, and because “it was Kant’s characterization of the subject as ‘spontaneously’ apperceptive that, more than anything else, convinced them that Kant had not simply destroyed the classical metaphysical tradition, but had begun a new kind of ‘philosophy of subjectivity,’²²⁷”, explains Pippin.²²⁸

a) Skepticism and the stake of continuity for a conception of freedom

It would also be possible to see how Pippin gets into the examination of a specific problem that arises in Hegel: there is skepticism which represents a point of disagreement between Kant and Hegel and, unlike Taylor, Pippin uses this debate to decipher the continuity between Kant and Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.²²⁹ One of the problems that Hegel targets in Kantian critical philosophy is his scission that he imposes between the subject and the object, between the noumenon and the phenomenon.²³⁰ Kant’s transcendental deduction about the way the subject knows the objects by applying

²²² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18.

²²³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18.

²²⁴ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 214.

²²⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18.

²²⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18.

²²⁷ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 451-452.

²²⁸ The critique of Taylor will be further developed in the other chapters of this thesis.

²²⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 92.

²³⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 92.

the subjective conditions of knowledge to reality does not step into the realm of the knowledge of the absolute, since only a divine understanding can have access to the totality of the world through knowledge.²³¹ A boundary is being traced by Kant to stop the human mind from speculating on the absolute,²³² but the transcendental deduction has another function with regards to how the epistemological condition of the subject is related to the object.²³³

If Kant will confine knowledge in the application of the categories of the human understanding to the objects of experience that gives sensible intuitions, it is noteworthy that Kant's transcendental deduction wants to prove that these categories which are part of the subject are still objectively valid and not subjectively and empirically conditioned: "If, therefore, there exist any pure a priori concepts, they cannot indeed contain anything empirical; they must, nevertheless, all be a priori conditions of a possible experience, for on this ground alone can their objective reality rest²³⁴", writes Kant. This task of the transcendental deduction is explained in juridical terms by Kant, since the deduction refers to a "question of right (*quid juris*)²³⁵", to the problem of clarifying how the categories of the human subject can legitimately "refer to objects²³⁶".

Pippin attempts to argue that Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a new formulation of this problem that Kant tackles.²³⁷ The *Logic* would provide elements for interpreting the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as an exploration of how the subject and the object interact and how the notion, in the sense of the German *Begriff*, in this relation intervenes as

²³¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 92-93.

²³² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 93.

²³³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason...*, p. 112-113.

²³⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 122.

²³⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 112, italics in the text.

²³⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 113.

²³⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 94.

foundational and justified.²³⁸ Kant's deduction fell into skepticism since the distinction between the subject and the object remained without a full reconciliation, whereas Hegel's deduction tries to go beyond this boundary that distances the knowing subject and its object.²³⁹ Hegel sees in Kant « un abîme entre nous et la connaissance ²⁴⁰ ». In this sense, it is, according to Pippin, appropriate to talk about the “deductive” intention of the *PhG*²⁴¹, in which the philosophical enterprise will prevent knowledge from stopping at the level where Kant left the whole issue, which tied him to the “*skeptics*”²⁴².

Hegel explains in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* ²⁴³: “The road can therefore be regarded as the pathway of *doubt*, or more precisely as the way of despair. [...] this path is the conscious insight into the untruth of phenomenal knowledge, for which the supreme reality is what is in truth only the unrealized Notion²⁴⁴”. Hegel continues by describing this path as “thoroughgoing scepticism²⁴⁵” which maintains, in the transcendental deduction, that the notions of the human understanding “are external to reality and injected into it (or imposed on it) by humans self-consciousness²⁴⁶”.

However, both Hegel and Kant agree for saying that reality is being known through the subject's notional activity.²⁴⁷ Hegel writes in a Kantian way²⁴⁸: “knowing is the activity of the *universal self*²⁴⁹”, which “is the self of transcendental philosophy²⁵⁰”.

When Kant explains how the human subject knows the objects, he shows that the subject

²³⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 94.

²³⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 94.

²⁴⁰ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 118.

²⁴¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 279, note 9, italics in the text.

²⁴² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 92, italics in the text.

²⁴³ Passage signaled in part by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 94-95.

²⁴⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 49-50, italics in the text.

²⁴⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 50.

²⁴⁶ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 33.

²⁴⁷ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 125.

²⁴⁸ Passage by Hegel signaled by Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 125.

²⁴⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 18, italics in the text.

²⁵⁰ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 17.

possesses the capacity to synthesize what is manifesting itself in experience and to elevate this empirical reality up to the unity of a notion, which makes it an object,²⁵¹ and which is also by definition universal and expresses the universality of the active self Hegel was referring to. Kant's theory of the transcendental apperception asserts that this "Synthesis is an act of spontaneity"²⁵². This spontaneous synthesis, even if it is for Kant objective and universal, that is, "*a priori* necessary"²⁵³, is for Kant still located in the realm of the subject.²⁵⁴ The synthesis of apperception pertains to a "*synthesizing subject*"²⁵⁵ because, in Kant's words, what is "synthetic"²⁵⁶ is the "unity of the manifold in one subject"²⁵⁷. From this point of view, spontaneity or freedom remains closer to the subject than being part of reality, as for Kant "the spontaneous 'I think' is not in the world"²⁵⁸, and this represents for Hegel a skeptical view of notional spontaneity.

But given that reality always already gives itself to us, Hegel contends that Kant's epistemological dichotomy coming from doubt, involving a subject-object separation, should seize the movement of reality in which the notion of the subject is not outside the object.²⁵⁹ The activity of the subject according to Kant has to be recognized as including what happens in the objectivity of reality itself.²⁶⁰ Therefore, Hegel wants to incorporate the Kantian spontaneity in the development of phenomenal manifestations: "The Hegelian line is that we can at once be thoroughly in the world *and* preserve Kant's

²⁵¹ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 53.

²⁵² J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 53.

²⁵³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 153.

²⁵⁴ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 53, 56.

²⁵⁵ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 53, italics in the text.

²⁵⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 152.

²⁵⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 152.

²⁵⁸ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 56.

²⁵⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 98: Pippin notes that in Hegel there is an "absolute objectivity of the Notion".

²⁶⁰ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 64.

decisive thought that knowledge requires a human contribution to sensibility²⁶¹”. The intervention of the notional subject in reality cannot stay withdrawn and disunited from this same reality which already contains the subject, that is to say, “philosophy must not study mere concepts, but concepts *in* their “actuality,” and that means in the *Phenomenology* their historical actuality²⁶²”. The spontaneity and freedom that Kant is advocating cannot be detached from the becoming that characterizes the objective reality in which human beings live concretely in time, that is, in “the movement of the historical a priori²⁶³”. As Hegel writes, reality or²⁶⁴ “Being is [...] absolutely mediated [...], it is self-like or the Notion²⁶⁵”, which means that the notion is not less in the object, reality or “being” than in the subject.²⁶⁶

However, Hegel still places the moment of doubt, represented in part by Kant, in the process that the notion accomplishes in reality and that is part of the way spirit visits its own domain: “Hegel thinks he can show that the only legitimate basis for such doubts is what he calls “Spirit’s experience of itself,” an experience always determined *by* the “developing Notion.”²⁶⁷”. And this specific “developing notion” cannot be detached from the manifestation of freedom because this development is freely being accomplished, as “there is nothing outside the free unfolding of “the Notion”²⁶⁸”. The attention that Hegel draws to the presence of the notion in the object enables him to think freedom not only subjectively, but with a more thorough account of objectivity of the notion than implied in the Kantian subject, because for Hegel “The point of expanding

²⁶¹ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 64, italics in the text.

²⁶² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 2.

²⁶³ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 64.

²⁶⁴ Passage by Hegel signaled by Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 136-137.

²⁶⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21

²⁶⁶ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 137.

²⁶⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 98, italics in the text.

²⁶⁸ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 36.

the scope of intellectual freedom is to achieve a genuine balance between subjective and objective, in which neither is prior to the other²⁶⁹”, as in what McDowell presents as an “equipoise²⁷⁰”.

When Taylor addresses the relation between Hegel and Kant’s transcendental deduction, he does not explicate Hegel’s thought in a particular section of Hegel’s text but only in general.²⁷¹ Nevertheless, Taylor still tries to show that the Kantian dichotomy that was implied in the subject’s transcendental relation to the object in experience and that resulted from the transcendental deduction is considered by Hegel.²⁷² Kant’s conception of consciousness as having a relation to the object and to itself recurs in Hegel, as Taylor acknowledges.²⁷³ However, he ends up persisting with the idea that Hegel would use the notion of “cosmic spirit²⁷⁴” to explain the Kantian subject, characterized by its finitude.²⁷⁵ The subject of the transcendental deduction, cut off from the absolute, would be justified by the fact that it expresses the consistency of the “cosmic spirit”’s definition as being in a position of self-awareness in the other: “The notion of a cosmic spirit which would be aware of itself directly, without the opposition to an object which is the predicament of finite subjects, is incoherent. [...] *Geist* is thus necessarily embodied in finite spirits²⁷⁶”. Moreover, according to Taylor, the movement that the subject and the object go through in the dialectical process of reality asserts the presence of spirit, explained by Taylor in a ‘cosmic’ description of spirit as developed in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*: there are “oppositions which philosophy must overcome,

²⁶⁹ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 36-37.

²⁷⁰ J. McDowell, *Hegel’s Idealism as...*, p. 75.

²⁷¹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

²⁷² C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

²⁷³ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

²⁷⁴ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

²⁷⁵ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89-90.

²⁷⁶ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89-90.

between the knowing subject and his world²⁷⁷”, or between the subject and the object, where there is a “separation of subject and nature²⁷⁸”, and Taylor explains that the solution to this problem has to be found in Hegel’s “notion of *Geist*, or cosmic spirit²⁷⁹”.

This is the “hidden hand²⁸⁰” of the cosmic spirit that contradicts the presence of Hegel’s assimilation of Kant’s “new ‘philosophy of subjectivity,’²⁸¹”, and therefore, Taylor’s cosmic spirit cannot be Hegel’s solution to the problem of Kantian skepticism in the transcendental deduction as incomplete freedom or spontaneity,²⁸² and Hegel’s reaction to Kant cannot be either, as Taylor writes in another context, a “profound²⁸³” “break with Kant²⁸⁴”.

Pippin takes care to mention that Hegel’s interpretation of the skeptical moment of this process, in which Kant plays a major role, does not express a philosophical exclusion: “Hegel’s skeptic is co-opted into the idealist program, not simply “refuted”²⁸⁵”. Therefore, when Hegel associates Kant with skepticism and formulates objections to his theory of subjectivity, he retains crucial elements to create an extension starting from Kant himself.²⁸⁶ Hegel writes clearly²⁸⁷: “If the refutation is thorough, it is derived and developed from the principle itself [...]. The refutation would, therefore, properly consist in the further development of the principle, and in thus remedying the

²⁷⁷ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²⁷⁸ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 79.

²⁷⁹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 80.

²⁸⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18.

²⁸¹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 452.

²⁸² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 39, 98: Pippin talks about skepticism as the “Notion’s own incompleteness”, and, as J. R. Fissett, *Ibid.*, p. 49 points out in a passage of Kant, Kant mentions in I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 85, the “spontaneity of concepts”, that is, according to R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464, note 23: “spontaneity, and so freedom”.

²⁸³ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 169.

²⁸⁴ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 169.

²⁸⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 98.

²⁸⁶ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 111.

²⁸⁷ Passage signaled by Y. Yovel, *Running commentary*, p. 110-111.

defectiveness²⁸⁸. If there is a continuity between Hegel's conception of freedom and Kant on the same question and spontaneity,²⁸⁹ it would be consequently possible to assert that it is Hegel's own mode of thinking that enables him to exploit a conceptual potential in philosophers' work, "to draw the nucleus of truth latent in their thoughts"²⁹⁰. The problem of Kant's skeptical view thus still represents a crucial moment for the development of consciousness since the Kantian phase which stresses the spontaneous subject in knowledge, and therefore the autonomously free thought, cannot according to Hegel remain in this position and has to recognize how it cannot be disunited from the primacy of intuitive sensibility.²⁹¹

Chapter 2: Reflectivity

Introduction

This chapter examines the notion of reflectivity in Kant and Hegel in order to show that the notion of spontaneity alone cannot account for Hegel's theory of freedom. Spontaneity has to be understood from the specific point of view of human reflectivity. The chapter thus begins by recalling the Kantian idea of self-consciousness understood as the relation that consciousness has with itself in the process of knowledge and transcendental apperception. The relevance of the Kantian conception of reflectivity that Hegel assimilates in the development of his thought will be shown to be inextricably connected to the problematic of freedom. The possibility for the subject to free itself from natural causality in knowledge and in its apperceptive configuration will be explained as directly depending on the reflective character of consciousness endorsed by

²⁸⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 13.

²⁸⁹ R. B. Pippin, "Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind", p. 451-452, 464 note 23.

²⁹⁰ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 139.

²⁹¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 146, see also p. 287, note 4: "Hegel's account of the "autonomous" "self-determining" and "infinite" nature of thought".

both Kant and Hegel. The problem of Taylor's interpretation of the notion of reflectivity will then be tackled. Taylor's account of reflectivity ends up making Hegel a metaphysician who conceives the reflectivity of human consciousness in terms of the theological cosmic spirit. This element of Taylor's interpretation of Hegel is what poses the problem of heteronomy, a problem that insinuates a strong rupture between Kant and Hegel.

This chapter also includes a reading of the section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit's* chapter on self-consciousness, which will be based on Pippin's book dedicated to this specific section of Hegel's text. Hegel's theory of self-consciousness will be explained according to the notion of desire that Hegel introduces in this chapter. There is in Hegel the idea that there is something essentially practical or "desiderative" in the way the reflectivity of consciousness realizes itself. The debate between Neuhouser and Pippin on this point will be set out in the development to show that Hegel's text in this section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* relies more importantly on Kant's theory of the apperception of self-consciousness than Neuhouser admits. It is this emphasis on the Kantian apperceptive and reflective subject that is the perspective from which Hegel develops his conception of the freedom of the human subject.

Development

The basis of Pippin's reading of Hegel as a Kantian philosopher can be located in the Hegelian endorsement of the philosophical potential in Kant's transcendental deduction which develops the epistemological condition of knowledge as what Kant calls "the transcendental unity of self-consciousness"²⁹². As Kant is observing, consciousness in the process of knowing something from the world of experience has a reflective aspect,

²⁹² I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 125.

since consciousness is also “self-consciousness²⁹³”. Kant develops the idea that consciousness is related to the phenomenal world inasmuch as consciousness is able to see simultaneously that this subjective relation of spontaneity to the object pertains to itself and to its own activity, and for Kant, this reflective move of consciousness can be unconsciously done.²⁹⁴ Kant writes²⁹⁵: “as my representations (even though I am not conscious of them as that), they must conform to the condition under which alone they can stand together in one universal consciousness, because otherwise they would not belong to me²⁹⁶”.

This reflectivity of consciousness represents for Kant the principle that renders experience possible since if experience is possible for consciousness, the subject has to remain in its own identity by also bringing this act of self-sameness within the scope of its own consciousness, by saying that its apperceptively unified representations “belong to me²⁹⁷”, and thus by reflectively separating itself from the object of experience.²⁹⁸ It is in this sense that in Kant’s theory of the transcendental apperception, “experience is “implicitly” reflective²⁹⁹” because “consciousness must be inherently *reflective* or *apperceptive*³⁰⁰”. For Kant, this conception of the reflectivity of consciousness reveals that the empirical world does not determine the subject’s intellectual activity.³⁰¹ The way in which the act of apperception is being accomplished is reflective and this reflective act

²⁹³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 125.

²⁹⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 21.

²⁹⁵ Passage by Kant signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 20.

²⁹⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 125

²⁹⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 125

²⁹⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 21.

²⁹⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 21.

³⁰⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 8, italics in the text.

³⁰¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 23.

does not depend on anything else but on the pure understanding of the subject independent of the empirical reality.³⁰²

Hegel relies on Kant's conception of consciousness to describe the way consciousness reflectively goes through its own experience, how "it can be said to experience itself"³⁰³. In this sense, the proximity between Kant and Hegel manifests itself when Hegel writes³⁰⁴: "For consciousness is, on the one hand, consciousness of the object, and on the other, consciousness of itself"³⁰⁵. This passage from the *Introduction* of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* can be understood as a reaffirmation of the heritage of the discoveries of the Kantian idea of the reflective behavior of consciousness when it legislates in the field of knowledge.³⁰⁶ The continuity between Kant and Hegel in this Hegelian formulation even seems to allude to the Kantian idea that, in the relation to the object, consciousness is "en même temps (*zugleich* – pour parler comme Kant)³⁰⁷" self-consciousness.³⁰⁸

If "consciousness is [...] consciousness of the object, and [...] consciousness of itself"³⁰⁹, this means that what is given in sensibility is that through which the reflectivity of consciousness can take place because it is in relation to the external world that consciousness raises itself to a reflective stance, it is in relation to the objective reality that it asserts its own act of separating itself from the outside by doubling itself, by becoming self-consciously itself.³¹⁰ The reflective subject can only emerge in the context

³⁰² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 23.

³⁰³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 103.

³⁰⁴ Passage by Hegel signaled in part by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 103.

³⁰⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 54.

³⁰⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 103.

³⁰⁷ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 167, italics in the text.

³⁰⁸ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 166-167.

³⁰⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 54.

³¹⁰ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

of a link to the existence of an objective world: “Reflection thus proves to be likewise a movement on the side of the object, resulting in an opposition between the determinations of selfsameness and otherness³¹¹”. Given that Kant had conceived the subject as spontaneous and free from the point of view of subjective reflectivity and identity,³¹² Hegel clearly retains the element of the identical subject being such reflectively,³¹³ and as noted, the moment of spontaneity in such a reflective act is an expression of human “freedom³¹⁴”. It is in this sense that it is possible to say that “for Hegel, the self is nothing else but the transcendental apperception of Kant³¹⁵”, the Kantian subject being equivalently “*reflective or apperceptive*³¹⁶”. The reflectivity of the transcendental apperception in Kant thus becomes in Hegel the subject as free or ““autonomous”³¹⁷”.

Hegel takes up again this principle of consciousness’s reflectivity later in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and writes³¹⁸: “self-consciousness is in the form of *consciousness*, and the whole expanse of the sensuous world is preserved for it, but at the same time only as connected with the second moment, the unity of self-consciousness with itself³¹⁹”. Here, the Kantian “en même temps (*zugleich*)³²⁰” clearly appears, but by keeping the Kantian transcendental subject, Hegel does not cut the subject from sensibility, from the “sensuous world³²¹”.³²² What appears to be other than the subject, that is to say, the reality given in sensibility as opposed to the subject, is destined to be

³¹¹ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

³¹² R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 459.

³¹³ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

³¹⁴ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 459, 464 note 23.

³¹⁵ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³¹⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 8, italics in the text.

³¹⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 145.

³¹⁸ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 145.

³¹⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105, italics in the text.

³²⁰ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 167, italics in the text.

³²¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105.

³²² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 145.

brought back into the identical and self-conscious subject.³²³ The intimate unity between the subject and the object that retains the Kantian spontaneity is at the same time what Hegel calls³²⁴ “reflection in otherness within itself³²⁵”.

This process of keeping the external reality within the self-relation of subjectivity gives the characteristic to the objects of the world of not being estranged from the reflective subject.³²⁶ The freedom that is attached to the Kantian self-consciousness is no longer what Hegel called “a separate freedom³²⁷”, but now, in this “reflection in otherness within itself³²⁸”, it is the freedom of subjectivity described by Kant, i.e. what Hegel also calls “the abstract³²⁹”, that “returns to itself from this alienation³³⁰”. From that reflective “return”, the objective world is where the free self-conscious subject meets its own identity and freedom based on its spontaneous notionality and including the external world: the subject’s “complete rediscovery of its subjectivity in all objectivity is precisely what constitutes the conceptual nature of self-consciousness³³¹”. And what is essentially preserved in this becoming of self-consciousness in relation to the world is spontaneity: to describe the relation of the reflective subject to the world, Hegel uses the word “activity³³²” to characterize it, which evokes the spontaneous and free self-relation of the subject in its preservation of the world within its own reflective subjectivity. This reflective “activity”, spontaneity or freedom corresponds to the fact that it is being

³²³ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

³²⁴ Passage by Hegel signaled by W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

³²⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

³²⁶ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

³²⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

³²⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

³²⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21.

³³⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21.

³³¹ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³³² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21.

accomplished in the world itself because “reflection is also at work on the side of [...] the object, or objectivity³³³”.

Therefore, what is at stake in this argumentation on reflectivity defended by Hegel is a conception of freedom which uses Kant’s explanation of consciousness’s relation to itself in knowledge, since it is possible to say in general that in Hegel “Freedom is essentially a self-relation³³⁴” at work without “only mechanism³³⁵”, which is an extension of Kant’s self-relational consciousness being an empirically unconditioned “spontaneity³³⁶”. It is therefore this movement of the human subject as what Hegel calls the³³⁷ “reflectedness-into-self³³⁸” of self-consciousness, that is, the reflectivity of the subject, that enables a manifestation of freedom understood as the subject’s self-conscious retreat from natural causality.³³⁹ And this freed condition of the reflective subjectivity with regards to external impositions contains the presence of otherness within the reflective identity of the subject; and otherness participates in the free reflective activity of the subject without being foreign to it: “reflection [...] finds itself, *qua* cognitive relation, in the other, but in such a way that, in and with this relation, the other is at the same time brought into the self, so that this self thereby proves itself a principle which possesses itself in total freedom from any determinacy on the part of “nature,”³⁴⁰”.

The idea that the actuality of otherness in the subject’s relation to its own actual self as what defines Hegel’s conception of the free condition of man was also summarized by Bourgeois when commenting other works by Hegel in these terms: « pour Hegel, la

³³³ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 45.

³³⁴ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 208.

³³⁵ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 208.

³³⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

³³⁷ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 141.

³³⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 102.

³³⁹ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 208.

³⁴⁰ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 38, italics in the text.

liberté [...] est [...] l'absolue réflexion en soi de cette totalité objective immédiate, alors dépassée dans le Soi concret de la subjectivité ou personnalité ³⁴¹».

From another perspective, if in Kant the “I think” is fundamentally characterized by its reflectivity,³⁴² Hegel’s association of the “I³⁴³” that thinks with “the pure Notion itself³⁴⁴” will make him formulate his account of the notion in terms of reflectivity. Hegel also writes³⁴⁵: “Since the Notion is the object’s own self, [...] it is [...] the self-moving Notion which takes its determinations back into itself³⁴⁶”. There is therefore a movement of the notion which is not only a “movement” but a “self-movement”, that is, a movement engaged in its own notional reflectivity. And the reflective motion of the notion retains in its own self-relation to the object itself since the reflectivity of the notional subject always pertains to an objective reality that it embraces, and what characterizes this objective reality is brought, in the becoming of reflectivity, “back into itself³⁴⁷”. If this notion is not actualized in reality, in the world of objects, if it is “unrealized³⁴⁸”, there cannot be the manifestation of freedom as the fully “free self-development of the “Notion”³⁴⁹”. The presence of the object in the notional reflectivity of subjectivity exhibits freedom in the objectivity of the notion or the subject because in Hegel “the very idea of objectivity is to be understood in terms of the freely self-

³⁴¹ B. Bourgeois, *Dialectique et structure*..., p. 122, italics in the text.

³⁴² I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 125.

³⁴³ Hegel quoted by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism*..., p. 17.

³⁴⁴ Hegel quoted by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism*..., p. 17.

³⁴⁵ Passage by Hegel signaled by Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 178-179.

³⁴⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 37.

³⁴⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 37.

³⁴⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 49-50, italics in the text.

³⁴⁹ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self*..., p. 34.

determining operations of a self-conscious intelligence³⁵⁰, or of the notion in its reflectivity.

The *Phenomenology of Spirit* is also developing the idea that what renders the objects possibly knowable can be found in the movement of spirit which comes to know itself, that is, reflectively.³⁵¹ This philosophical proposition put forward by Hegel has been associated by many commentators with the Western tradition of metaphysics that seeks to synthesize reality in a monist theory of being.³⁵² The monist interpretation of Hegel can be said to have here an element to feed its arguments,³⁵³ but by doing so, it loses the Kantian way in which Hegel understands freedom as based on reflectivity “as ‘spontaneously’ apperceptive³⁵⁴”. There is a passage in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* where Hegel writes³⁵⁵: “The Spirit that, so developed, knows itself as Spirit, is *Science*; Science is its actuality and the realm which it builds for itself in its own element³⁵⁶”. Since Hegel seems to insinuate that there is nothing outside spirit’s reflective self-relation, knowledge’s access to the absolute also seems to be entrenched in an ontological monism, which would be the only justification of Hegel’s “self-knowing Spirit³⁵⁷”.³⁵⁸ However, this overvaluation of spirit in a metaphysically monist sense blurs the inheritance of Kant’s specifically human subjectivity from which Hegel derives freedom³⁵⁹ as a reflective “self-relation³⁶⁰”.

³⁵⁰ J. McDowell, *Hegel’s Idealism as...*, p. 72.

³⁵¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 99.

³⁵² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 99.

³⁵³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 99.

³⁵⁴ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 451-452; R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

³⁵⁵ Passage signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 14.

³⁵⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 14.

³⁵⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 491.

³⁵⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 100.

³⁵⁹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 451-452, 464 note 23.

³⁶⁰ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 208.

Taylor went far in this direction and, as Pippin has already noted, his way of comprehending Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* has to do with Taylor's monistic explanation of Hegel's "preoccupation with certain Romantic positions"³⁶¹. Taylor does not make the Kantian legacy in Hegel stand out in Pippin's way, which leads him to define the Hegelian "self-knowing Spirit"³⁶² in terms of "cosmic spirit"³⁶³. Taylor therefore asserts, to deepen this interpretation, that in Hegel spirit or "*Geist* or God cannot exist separately from the universe which he sustains and in which he manifests himself"³⁶⁴. Where Hegel identifies spirit to God in a cosmic sense which is being incarnated or "expressed", to refer to Taylor's association of Hegel with romantic expressivism,³⁶⁵ in the subject as a vehicle, a vehicle which renders the spirit reflective as "self-knowing", it is clear in the following passage that for Taylor Hegel sides with the monist metaphysicians: as a "self-thinking thought"³⁶⁶, i.e. as reflective, "Hegel's God is the lineal descendant of the God of the *Metaphysics*, but extended now to incorporate everything"³⁶⁷. This is an interpretation also defended by Yovel.³⁶⁸

Again, Hegel's reflective "self-knowing Spirit"³⁶⁹ is for Taylor, but unlike other commentators like Pippin, a metaphysical "self-knowing cosmic *Geist*"³⁷⁰, "*Geist* or God"³⁷¹, which dismisses the possibility of Hegelian freedom rooted in Kant's

³⁶¹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 140.

³⁶² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 491.

³⁶³ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 80.

³⁶⁴ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 87, italics in the text.

³⁶⁵ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 81: while explaining the notion of spirit, Taylor writes: "Hegel's conception builds on the expressivist theory, which was developed by Herder and others".

³⁶⁶ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 108, note 2.

³⁶⁷ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 108, note 2, italics in the text.

³⁶⁸ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 18.

³⁶⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 491.

³⁷⁰ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 213, italics in the text.

³⁷¹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 87, italics in the text.

transcendental and thus non-divine apperceptive “reflectedness-into-self”³⁷².³⁷³ The Kantian project in the first trial was to prevent the human mind from crossing “the limits of possible experience”³⁷⁴ in its pretensions to know the world and thus it is « dans l’univers du sujet humain »³⁷⁵ that we find the « terrain de prédilection de la réflexion critique »³⁷⁶. It is this viewpoint that Hegel also assimilates in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and not necessarily the idea of a reflective « processus cosmique »³⁷⁷.

And if the reflectivity of the subject in Hegel is a subject conceived in a renewed Kantian transcendentalism in apperception as free or ““autonomous””³⁷⁸, the “Spirit’s hidden hand”³⁷⁹ of Taylor’s interpretation entails the opposite of freedom, that is, heteronomy. However, it is worth noting here the distinction highlighted by Moggach between « l’autonomie [...] et [...] la spontanéité »³⁸⁰, since for instance, according to Kant’s practical philosophy, « Nous demeurons spontanés même lorsque nous agissons de manière hétéronome »³⁸¹. But on the other hand, Taylor’s cosmic spirit, if it contains the idea of a spontaneity, is still not primarily rooted in the specifically human subject since the qualifier “cosmic” refers mainly to something external to the human autonomous subject, and thus, as Kant would put it in the realm of his political philosophy, there is here the intervention of a « frein à la spontanéité »³⁸².

³⁷² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 102.

³⁷³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18, 141.

³⁷⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 20.

³⁷⁵ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 78.

³⁷⁶ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 78.

³⁷⁷ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³⁷⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 145.

³⁷⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 281, note 18.

³⁸⁰ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁸¹ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁸² D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Moreover, the preservation of Kant's apperceptive subject in Hegel gives no room for the omnipresence of Aristotle's God since for Kant, apperception as a transcendental synthesis between the pure subject and experience is of a different nature from the purely *a priori* reasoning of the Aristotelian divinity: « La pensée sur la pensée chez le Stagirite n'est pas un acte synthétique mais purement analytique ³⁸³», which does not express the relation between the transcendental and the empirical self Kant asserted in his theory of apperception,³⁸⁴ that is, this Kantian theory on which Hegel relies for his own conception of subjectivity.³⁸⁵

Pippin's view about this issue is that according to him Hegel "is not committed to a philosophically problematic theological metaphysics³⁸⁶". Rather than focusing on Hegel's so-called attempt to accomplish a "synthesis³⁸⁷" dedicated "to expressive unity and to radical autonomy³⁸⁸" emerging in the course of modernity as Taylor supposes in his metaphysical expressivist interpretation, Pippin emphasizes Hegel's theory of knowledge as being rooted in "idealism"³⁸⁹, and resolves itself into the fundamental impulse of German idealism to find spirit maintaining Kant's reflective or "self-relational³⁹⁰" subject as "spontaneity, apperception, freedom³⁹¹". Some would say that this Hegelian interpretation of Kant can still be an interpretation that "transforms the Kantian transcendental subject into an Absolute Subject or Divine Mind³⁹²", or that, according to Philonenko, ends up affirming that « le but ultime de Hegel est de restaurer

³⁸³ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 77-78.

³⁸⁴ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 77-78.

³⁸⁵ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁸⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 5.

³⁸⁷ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁸⁸ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁸⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 6.

³⁹⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 104.

³⁹¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 7.

³⁹² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 6.

la théologie ³⁹³», and would consequently defend a position close Taylor's position, but it is possible to assert that Hegel is not "sliding into precritical claims about cosmic mind³⁹⁴", because it is Kant's reflective apperception that becomes renewed in Hegel's "theory of *self-conscious subjectivity*³⁹⁵".

The theoretical anchorage of Kant's first critique appears in the return of Kant's examination of self-consciousness in Hegel's text, and this starting point is moreover being extended by Hegel to the Kantian problem of the judging subject in the production of knowledge.³⁹⁶ From this point of view, when Kant writes that "the unity of consciousness³⁹⁷" and the transcendental apperception of the knowing and judging subject cannot intervene without a relation to consciousness's own self, i.e. that "In original apperception everything must be necessarily subject to the conditions of the thoroughgoing unity of self-consciousness³⁹⁸", he also writes that "a judgement is nothing but a way of bringing given items of knowledge to the objective unity of apperception³⁹⁹".

Hegel's conception of the human subject summarizes this Kantian standpoint when he presents consciousness as interceding in the process of knowledge by discerning by judgment its position reflectively and the way the object's position is involved in a relation with consciousness.⁴⁰⁰ Pippin brings into special evidence the fact that Hegel articulates this comportment of consciousness taken in Kant's transcendental deduction

³⁹³ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³⁹⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 10.

³⁹⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 39.

³⁹⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 104.

³⁹⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 131.

³⁹⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 145.

³⁹⁹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 137.

⁴⁰⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 104.

with the problematic of judgment and reflectivity, as Hegel writes in the *Introduction*⁴⁰¹: “Consciousness simultaneously *distinguishes* itself from something, and at the same time *relates* itself to it, or, as it is said, this something exists *for* consciousness; and the determinate aspect of this *relating*, or of the *being* of something for a consciousness, is *knowing*”⁴⁰².

It is possible to read in this passage a Hegelian insistence on consciousness that implies the transcendental apperception⁴⁰³ from Kant’s transcendental deduction where Kant, like Hegel, binds inextricably the “distinguishing” or “judgmental” act of consciousness and “the thoroughgoing unity of self-consciousness”⁴⁰⁴ in relation to an object⁴⁰⁵, which invokes Hegel’s affirmation that consciousness is not only related to objects but, in a reflective perspective, “*relates itself* to objects”⁴⁰⁶. This process through which consciousness moves asserts the presence of freedom since in Hegel “freedom can only be concrete in and through [...] the moment of self-distinguishing”⁴⁰⁷. By being conscious of making a judging distinction between its own self-conscious stance and the other, by becoming self-consciousness, the self sees freedom as increasing its actualization because this movement of reflectivity reveals that it is not natural causality that determines the activity of the subject, but it its own reflective self that is the author of this determination.⁴⁰⁸

According to Pippin, Hegel condenses this philosophical acquisition in the development of his theory of the subject in a formula that also utters the particularity of

⁴⁰¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

⁴⁰² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 52, italics in the text.

⁴⁰³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

⁴⁰⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 145.

⁴⁰⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 131.

⁴⁰⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104, italics in the text.

⁴⁰⁷ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁴⁰⁸ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 199.

the type of idealism that Hegel is advocating:⁴⁰⁹ “everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as *Substance*, but equally as *Subject*⁴¹⁰”, writes Hegel. In Pippin’s view, the fact that Hegel explains just after this passage that the subject he refers to “is the movement of positing itself, or is the mediation of its self-othering with itself⁴¹¹”, it is possible to see in this passage that follows Hegel’s affirmation about the substance as subject a specifically Hegelian project of reincorporating Kant’s understanding of self-consciousness.⁴¹² Pippin writes: “I suggest that the reference to self-positing is Hegel’s way of expressing the necessary role of apperceptive judging in the possibility of experience⁴¹³”. The reflectivity of the subject as including the object or the substance is being explained from the point of view of judgment in both Kant and Hegel,⁴¹⁴ and since this movement towards self-consciousness in Hegel grounded in Kant’s transcendental apperception, it is also grounded in Kantian “spontaneity, and so freedom⁴¹⁵”.

When Taylor comments the same passage from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*,⁴¹⁶ he associates Hegel’s idea that “substance must become subject⁴¹⁷” with a metaphysical conception of spirit explained again as “cosmic spirit⁴¹⁸” or “cosmic subject⁴¹⁹”. According to Taylor, Hegel would center his substantial subject on his conception of the

⁴⁰⁹ Passage signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

⁴¹⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10, italics in the text.

⁴¹¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

⁴¹² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

⁴¹³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

⁴¹⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

⁴¹⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 464, note 23.

⁴¹⁶ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁴¹⁷ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 214.

⁴¹⁸ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁴¹⁹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 104.

absolute spirit, since “the absolute [...] is *Geist*, or subject⁴²⁰”. Hegel’s theory of the subject would bring the world as otherness in its own sameness and also keep it as foreign, as having the mark of alterity.⁴²¹ The subject conceived as the absolute or cosmic substance would be related to the world in a reciprocal dependency in such a way that the substantial subject would seek to reconcile the world as its contrary in its own self.⁴²² Taylor thus interprets Hegel’s statement about the double manner of becoming of the subject, that is, Hegel’s description of the subject’s activity as “positing itself⁴²³” and “self-othering with itself⁴²⁴”, as the exposition of a path that contains the step which situates the position of the self and the other step which incorporates the contrary position of otherness thus situated, by the subject’s self position, in “identity⁴²⁵”. In the relevant passage from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel would, according to Taylor who also uses the Hegelian passage about the absolute as a result, establish the source of spirit’s becoming in the perspective of its cosmic signification or meaning: “*Geist* is something which essentially comes to be out of a process of self-loss and return. But *Geist* is at the root of everything, and hence mediation becomes a cosmic principle⁴²⁶”.

This is Taylor’s way of overlooking the importance of Kant, while it is possible to read these Hegelian passages as those in which Hegel relies on “the apperception of self-consciousness theme, the one Hegel point to as the key to his relation to Kant⁴²⁷”. Contrary to Taylor, Pippin stipulates that Hegel does not elaborate a “world-creating metaphysics, or a theory of self-awareness and identity, but a continuation of the properly

⁴²⁰ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 104, italics in the text.

⁴²¹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁴²² C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁴²³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

⁴²⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

⁴²⁵ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁴²⁶ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 104, italics in the text.

⁴²⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 7.

crucial theme of *transcendental* apperception in Kant⁴²⁸”. Pippin’s allusion to the notion of “self-awareness” seems to make clear a sign in the direction of Taylor’s interpretation: Taylor argues that Hegel’s inclusion of modern expressivist thought implied that “self-awareness” of the subject was the destination of the development of spirit.⁴²⁹

Hegel would therefore elaborate a way of understanding the subject which would share the philosophical approach interwoven with romanticism and which would lead Hegel to share the philosophical idea that “the essence of subjectivity is *rational* self-awareness⁴³⁰”. In addition, Taylor’s reliance on the “expressivist theory of the subject⁴³¹” leads him to link Hegel’s subject, not to the first trial Kant had erected about the conditions of human knowledge, but to the romantic notion of the collective life of human beings expressed in what Taylor calls “identity⁴³²”, which indicates again the other reference Pippin makes when he differentiates his interpretation of Hegel from those who propose not only a “theory of self-awareness⁴³³” but also of “identity⁴³⁴”.

Pippin implicitly opposes this reading from Taylor by stressing the Kantian heritage of the transcendental self-consciousness of apperception which emerges in Hegel’s text when he says that “consciousness is [...] consciousness of the object, and [...] consciousness of itself⁴³⁵”,⁴³⁶ and by specifying that this does not lead to what Taylor would name a non Kantian “self-awareness⁴³⁷”. Without textual evidence, Taylor describes Hegel’s understanding and assimilation of the transcendental deduction in such

⁴²⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 14, italics in the text.

⁴²⁹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁴³⁰ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89, italics in the text.

⁴³¹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴³² C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴³³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 14, italics in the text.

⁴³⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 14, italics in the text.

⁴³⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 54.

⁴³⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 103.

⁴³⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

a way that Hegel would take the Kantian scission that takes the subject away from the object with regards to what he calls a “rational awareness⁴³⁸”. This form of awareness has for Taylor a reflective feature since Hegel would, according to Taylor, present the “cosmic spirit⁴³⁹” as “aware of itself⁴⁴⁰”. However, the specificity of the consciousness Hegel integrates in the movement of his thought corresponds to Kant’s transcendental apperception which includes a relation of consciousness in experience to its own self, without the vocabulary that Taylor uses about “awareness”, since this vocabulary is grounded in Taylor’s exploitation of the “expressivist theory⁴⁴¹”, which does not have much to do with Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* and its theory of transcendental apperception. Thus, since there is no expressivist vocabulary in the passage that Pippin draws on to interpret Hegel but only Kantian philosophical concepts, Pippin holds in a more convincing way about Hegel’s account of the experience of consciousness and its relation to its self: “this self-relational component of experience is not being treated as some species of self-awareness⁴⁴²”.

According to Pippin, the chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* which tackles the problem of self-consciousness itself as reflectivity starts by recalling the Kantian point of departure for thinking freedom in Hegel’s perspective, which is the transcendental subject of the transcendental deduction in Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*.⁴⁴³ The Kantian reflective transcendental apperception is manifestly mentioned by Hegel when he says that⁴⁴⁴ “With self-consciousness, then, we have [...] entered the native realm of truth⁴⁴⁵”.

⁴³⁸ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁴³⁹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁴⁴⁰ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁴⁴¹ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁴⁴² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 104.

⁴⁴³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 165.

⁴⁴⁴ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 143

This exemplifies in an incomparable way the importance of the Kantian legacy in Hegel, who completely retains the Kantian reflective subject as the locus of “apperceptive spontaneity⁴⁴⁶”, which corresponds in Hegel to that without which freedom could not be thought.⁴⁴⁷

Hegel will link this characteristic of self-consciousness in its acting aspect to the question of desire.⁴⁴⁸ In clarifying this point, Hegel underscores once again the Kantian heritage of the transcendental unity of apperception which defines self-consciousness when he states about “the unity of self-consciousness⁴⁴⁹” that “this unity must become essential to self-consciousness, i.e. self-consciousness is *Desire* in general⁴⁵⁰”. Thus, the intertwining of this self-conscious subject with the given world cannot be confined to the point of view of its “theoretical⁴⁵¹” role but it implies the practices of the subject who also desires concretely in the process of knowledge.⁴⁵² Hyppolite explains that human actions in the world ensuing from the act of desiring now characterize self-consciousness: “in the *Phenomenology* self-consciousness appears [...] as active consciousness⁴⁵³” and “this activity will at first be envisaged in its most humble form, as desire⁴⁵⁴”.

The experience that self-consciousness goes through also has to consider, according to Hegel, the actions in which human subjectivity is involved,⁴⁵⁵ since the subject’s capacities are not limited to knowledge but things can be changed by this subject who

⁴⁴⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 104.

⁴⁴⁶ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 37.

⁴⁴⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 165: “For Hegel, the emerging Kantian discovery of freedom and spontaneity of subjectivity”, etc. ; also R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464, note 23.

⁴⁴⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 149.

⁴⁴⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105.

⁴⁵⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105, italics in the text.

⁴⁵¹ T. Pinkard, *Hegel’s Phenomenology. The Sociality of Reason*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, [1994] 1996, p. 49.

⁴⁵² T. Pinkard, *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁴⁵³ J. Hyppolite, *Ibid.*, p. 146, italics in the text.

⁴⁵⁴ J. Hyppolite, *Ibid.*, p. 146.

⁴⁵⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 148.

acts.⁴⁵⁶ The interactive implications of the reflective subject express the reality of human ends and intentions in their enterprises, which unveils the “purposive nature of a self-conscious subject⁴⁵⁷”. Hegel finds in self-consciousness this element that Kant seemed to have turned away from in the first critique, and this element is the possibility for self-consciousness of setting an objective destined to be reached.⁴⁵⁸ The finality that can be projected by self-consciousness translates the possibility to accomplish something in practice: “Hegel sees a self-conscious subject as characterized by a *goal* [...] and the subject’s drive to realize this goal accounts for its practical nature⁴⁵⁹”, explains Neuhouser.

Nevertheless, the idea that there is something practical involved in self-consciousness because of its desiring condition has been interpreted in different ways: the place that Kant occupies in Hegel’s development varies in the interpretations.⁴⁶⁰ Neuhouser argues that since Hegel presents the project of the desiring self-consciousness as the project of “overcoming the opposition between itself and its other⁴⁶¹”, then it is also possible that self-consciousness’s desiring situation is after an affirmation of its own identity and place in the world.⁴⁶² The human practices can be interpreted as what Neuhouser calls “a self-conception⁴⁶³”, which “conveys who or what a subject aspires to be, and so self-conceptions have practical implications for the subject who holds them⁴⁶⁴”. The desires

⁴⁵⁶ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴⁵⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 37.

⁴⁵⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 148.

⁴⁵⁸ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁵⁹ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38, italics in the text.

⁴⁶⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 6-16.

⁴⁶¹ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁶² F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁶³ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁶⁴ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

at the basis of self-consciousness would thus push the subject to define the person he is in terms of freedom realized practically.⁴⁶⁵

Pippin summarizes this position articulated by Neuhouser as a shift from the “subject from apperception to a practical self-conception and self-evaluation⁴⁶⁶”. Even if Neuhouser does not interpret Hegel as rejecting Kant’s apperceptive subject by saying that it is this Kantian conception of subjectivity which also, in spite of Kant, “includes” this “self-conception⁴⁶⁷”, Neuhouser, as Pippin remarks, does not read Hegel as correcting the results of the transcendental deduction from the Kantian transcendental deduction itself or as such.⁴⁶⁸ The problem with Neuhouser’s reading is that when Hegel equates self-consciousness with desire or its practical implications, he also uses the Kantian expression “unity of self-consciousness with itself⁴⁶⁹” to say that “this unity must become essential to self-consciousness⁴⁷⁰”, and this is the reason why Pippin stipulates that Hegel leads his development on self-consciousness from within the problem posed by the transcendental deduction.⁴⁷¹ The starting point for Hegel is not, then, located outside Kant, as Neuhouser affirms, but it assimilates and criticizes the contribution to the understanding of the human subject elaborated in the first critique, as for Pippin, “Hegel’s presentation is motivated by the internal inadequacies of the Kantian notion of apperception *in general*⁴⁷²”.

Pippin’s emphasis on the apperception of the Kantian subject in Hegel’s conception of self-consciousness is based on the idea that in Hegel and Kant the subject participates in

⁴⁶⁵ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁶⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 16, note 13.

⁴⁶⁷ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁶⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 16, note 13.

⁴⁶⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105.

⁴⁷⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105.

⁴⁷¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 16, note 13.

⁴⁷² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 16, note 13, italics in the text.

the rules that belong to itself in its legislative activity and does not rely on something external.⁴⁷³ These rules correspond in this context to Kant's notions contained in the apperceptive subject, as Kant explains that "a concept is always, with regard to its form, something that is general and that can serve as a rule"⁴⁷⁴. The way this self-relation to the rules is being accomplished in self-consciousness describes, in a specifically Kantian way, that by depending on its own notional self-consciousness also accompanies this modality of self-determined subjectivity.⁴⁷⁵ Hegel writes⁴⁷⁶: "Consciousness [...] is explicitly the *Notion* of itself. Hence it is something that goes beyond limits, and since these limits are its own, it is something that goes beyond itself"⁴⁷⁷. The autonomy of the self that was expressed in Kant's transcendental apperception recurs in this formula by Hegel, who says that the "notion" or rule pertains to its own "self", the notion is "of itself", of consciousness' self, and this, without being always aware of the process.⁴⁷⁸ And Hegel, by saying "beyond itself" expresses the idea that there is something in consciousness that is not only determined by contingency, because there is, as in Kant's transcendental apperception, "norms for attentiveness, discrimination, unification, exclusion, and conceptual organization that do not function like physiological laws"⁴⁷⁹.

Instead of insisting on this continuity between Kant and Hegel, Neuhauser's argumentation about what he interprets as the self-conceived subject of the Hegelian self-consciousness is based on the idea that self-consciousness builds its own self by its

⁴⁷³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 21-22.

⁴⁷⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 137.

⁴⁷⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 22.

⁴⁷⁶ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 21.

⁴⁷⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 51, italics in the text.

⁴⁷⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 22-23.

⁴⁷⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 25 and 22.

practices in the realm of its objectives and accomplishments.⁴⁸⁰ This is, according to Neuhouser, self-consciousness's quest for independence in human reality but Neuhouser, by singling out the ambitions of a personalized subject, evacuates the Kantian preconditions of Hegel's text by saying that "what Hegel treats under the name 'self-consciousness' is quite different from what Kant means by the term"⁴⁸¹. Even if there are indeed differences between Kant and Hegel on this point, the problem with Neuhouser's view is that Hegel would be adding elements of practice in his theory of self-consciousness that draw on what Neuhouser calls the "practical nature"⁴⁸² of self-consciousness, and that have not been initially inaugurated by Kant, since Neuhouser draws no attention to Kantian concerns.⁴⁸³

Pippin's interpretation targets textual evidence that gives a divergent meaning to Hegel's description of the reality of the desiring self-consciousness by showing that Hegel is presenting self-consciousness not as having a "practical nature" as in Neuhouser, but as being itself a "practical *achievement* of some sort"⁴⁸⁴. This achievement in the practical becoming of self-consciousness that Pippin highlights appears in Hegel's text in a Kantian manner: Hegel describes the phases in which self-consciousness passes from a multiplicity to a unity that characterizes the apperception in Kant's sense, and that is a kind of passage as having been carried out.⁴⁸⁵ Thus, Hegel affirms about self-consciousness that⁴⁸⁶ "otherness is for it in the form of a *being*, or as a *distinct moment*;

⁴⁸⁰ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁸¹ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁸² F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁸³ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁸⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 15, italics in the text.

⁴⁸⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28.

⁴⁸⁶ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28.

but there is also for consciousness the unity of itself with this difference as a *second moment*⁴⁸⁷.”

This “otherness” is the given objects or multiplicity and the “second moment” is directly associated to the “unity” of self-consciousness, which recalls the process of transcendental apperception in Kant.⁴⁸⁸ Kant says that the relation between the subject and the object can be explained by the fact that the intellectual subject can⁴⁸⁹ “bring the manifold of given representations under the unity of apperception⁴⁹⁰”. What Kant describes as “bringing” the manifold to unity is the verb that Hegel translates into the first and the second “moment”, the manifold and the unity, being together what Pippin calls the unity of self-consciousness understood as an “*achievement*”⁴⁹¹. When commenting this same principle of apperception in Kant, Fisette also uses the word “*achievement*”⁴⁹² to explain the process of this unity which is manifestly the instance of spontaneity.⁴⁹³ It is the practical aspect of self-consciousness expressed by Hegel with the notion of desire that is thus already implicitly present in Kant’s text, and Hegel wants to shed light on this achievement of apperceptive unity from its practical viewpoint that was left unexploited or unrevealed by Kant.⁴⁹⁴

Neuhouser shares the idea that Hegel conceives self-consciousness as practical and this is being entailed by the subject-object as being opposed.⁴⁹⁵ He relies on the passage

⁴⁸⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105, italics in the text.

⁴⁸⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28.

⁴⁸⁹ Idea suggested by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28.

⁴⁹⁰ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 128.

⁴⁹¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28, italics in the text.

⁴⁹² J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 53, italics in the text.

⁴⁹³ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁴⁹⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28.

⁴⁹⁵ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

where Hegel says that in self-consciousness “this antithesis is removed⁴⁹⁶”, and this removal has a practical consequence for self-consciousness.⁴⁹⁷ However, the problem with Neuhouser’s commentary is that he overlooks the statement in which Hegel had already stressed this “antithesis” as two “moments” having their root in Kant’s transcendental unity of apperception. As Pippin and Neuhouser both notice, Hegel says that this antithesis has to be “overcome⁴⁹⁸”, which has practical implications for the theory of self-consciousness which has just been associated with desire, but the quotation Pippin underlines about the two “moments” of self-consciousness shows that Hegel is primarily drawing on Kant’s transcendental deduction for his claim that the desiring self-consciousness is consequently practical, and thus Hegel cannot be drawing on an extra-Kantian theme, such as what Neuhouser calls a “*self-conception*⁴⁹⁹”.

In this sense, if Hegel is still discussing the process of freedom in self-consciousness, it is by recalling Kant’s apperceptive self-consciousness and by trying to find an improved way to understand freedom as reflectivity or “self-relation⁵⁰⁰”. Spontaneity’s role in freedom is already at work in the unity of self-consciousness Hegel refers to when associating it with desire and with its practical conditions because the starting point for his development is specifically Kant’s transcendental apperception as a free uniting act of self-conscious subjectivity. This Kantian type of freedom on which Hegel bases his theory of self-consciousness as spontaneous subjectivity does not support the idea that the subject ascribes a freedom to itself as coming from a personalized subject, from a “*self-*

⁴⁹⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105.

⁴⁹⁷ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁴⁹⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28; see also F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁴⁹⁹ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38, italics in the text.

⁵⁰⁰ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 208.

*conception*⁵⁰¹”, as Neuhouser believes. This is how Neuhouser looses the problem of spontaneity as the inevitable source of freedom in the reflective condition of the human subject according to both Kant and Hegel. As Pippin explains, what is being inferred by Hegel in these two “moments” is specifically the Kantian question of “spontaneity⁵⁰²”.

Hegel brings this problem of desire in the reflectivity of consciousness’s connection to otherness because Hegel intends to bring in the idea that initially consciousness comes to reflect on itself by realizing that life is part of its own reality.⁵⁰³ If it is through the objects that consciousness raises itself to self-consciousness, or if, in Hegel’s words, “self-consciousness is in the form of *consciousness*, and the whole expanse of the sensuous world is preserved for it⁵⁰⁴”, that is, if self-consciousness is a self-consciousness inasmuch as it is related to objects from the “sensuous world” it preserves in its reflectivity, Hegel stipulates that self-consciousness started to be such by the fact that life is being desired as an object existing in the subject who thereby realizes its reflectivity linked with the external world.⁵⁰⁵ Pippin explains that self-consciousness “must strive to stay alive, and so we have our first example of desideratum, a self-relation in relation to objects⁵⁰⁶”. In this sense, the objects or the “sensuous world” appears in a particular way at the beginning of the becoming of self-consciousness, that is to say, it appears as life that desires to avoid its own cessation.⁵⁰⁷ This is what Hegel means when, after staging Kant’s unity of apperception in self-consciousness, he writes⁵⁰⁸: “Through this reflection

⁵⁰¹ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38.

⁵⁰² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 288, note 4.

⁵⁰³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 34.

⁵⁰⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 105, italics in the text.

⁵⁰⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 35.

⁵⁰⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 35.

⁵⁰⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 35.

⁵⁰⁸ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 30.

into itself the object has become Life. [...] the object of immediate desire is a *living thing*⁵⁰⁹”.

This notion of desire in self-consciousness thus invokes the presence of “objects of desire⁵¹⁰”, and these things that can impede the obtaining of the conditions in which human beings can accomplish themselves come to be negated by this desiring and acting self-consciousness.⁵¹¹ Desire therefore explains the way self-consciousness is related to what surrounds it, to its “environment⁵¹²”. And moreover, following Pippin, the action of denying that these objects can exist by themselves, an action endorsed by the subject who desires to live, institutes a crucial feature of human desiring behavior towards the objects of the world,⁵¹³ which is the occasion for Hegel to show that one of the specificities of a living self-consciousness is that it is practically related to the world.⁵¹⁴ Desire enables the self-conscious subject to dominate the opposing objects, which also asserts a way of life⁵¹⁵ in order “to stay alive⁵¹⁶”. “*Subjects* [...] must determine how they shall live, and so must overcome in specific ways the limitations of unsatisfied desires⁵¹⁷”. The subject consciously takes control of the objects as a response to desire of domination and knows itself as considering the dominated things and valuing them as such.⁵¹⁸ The desiring self-consciousness uses the objects of the world and conceives them as subjugated to itself.⁵¹⁹

⁵⁰⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 106, italics in the text.

⁵¹⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 149.

⁵¹¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 151.

⁵¹² T. Pinkard, *Ibid.*, p. 48; see also R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 149.

⁵¹³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 151.

⁵¹⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 36.

⁵¹⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 151.

⁵¹⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 35.

⁵¹⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 151, italics in the text.

⁵¹⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 151.

⁵¹⁹ J. Hyppolite, *Ibid.*, p. 158-159.

In Neuhouser's opinion, the desiring element Hegel attributes to self-consciousness is directly related to the moving character of the subject who, instead of being simply motionlessly free, goes thorough a process of freedom, which would be in respect to Kantian philosophy, what Neuhouser stresses as a "contrast"⁵²⁰. If the process of trying to fulfill the desire is successful, self-consciousness gains its presence in the world as "independent"⁵²¹, or as free, since in this section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, the "concept of freedom is denoted by the term *Selbständigkeit*, which literally means "self-standingness," though it is often translated as "self-sufficiency" or "independence."⁵²². Thus, in Neuhouser's opinion, the aim of self-consciousness in the movement of its becoming is the blossoming and the realization of this conception of freedom as independence appearing in a gradual way from within self-consciousness and its self-relation to the world.⁵²³ It is the negation of the desiring self-consciousness that propels the movement of subjectivity towards its independence in the world, that is, towards its "sovereignty in relation to its dependent, inessential object"⁵²⁴.

However, Hegel also explains that the independence that self-consciousness is striving for has to cope with the fact that desire always follows another desire and will always see coming an additional desire.⁵²⁵ Hegel writes that⁵²⁶ "self-consciousness, by its negative relation to the object, is unable to supersede it; it is really because of that relation that it produces the object again, and the desire as well"⁵²⁷. If the desire of dominating the objects of the world is recreated over and over in the living self-consciousness, the fact of

⁵²⁰ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38-39.

⁵²¹ T. Pinkard, *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁵²² F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 39, italics in the text.

⁵²³ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁵²⁴ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁵²⁵ T. Pinkard, *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁵²⁶ Passage by Hegel signaled by T. Pinkard, *Ibid.*, p. 51, note 9 and F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁵²⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 109.

being determined by this transient desiring relation to the object brings at the heart of independence a form of dependence.⁵²⁸ According to Neuhouser, the subject requiring an object to satisfy itself, has to raise its estimation of the object and thereby to lower its estimation of its own self, which means once more that a form of dependence and inferiority is being expressed in the subject wanting to be independent, and as Neuhouser puts it, “since desire’s satisfaction is conditioned by its other, that other is essential to it; this, however, contradicts desire’s certainty that it is absolutely self-sufficient⁵²⁹”. Neuhouser sees in this problem outlined by Hegel the origin of his intention to develop a solution in a theory of inter-subjectivity.⁵³⁰

Pippin proposes another interpretation of the origin of Hegel’s project of theorizing the inter-subjective aspect of self-consciousness, since for Pippin, Hegel had already underlined the problem in a previous passage about life,⁵³¹ a passage in which it will be possible to single out the Kantian Ariadne’s thread that Hegel was following and that was underestimated by Neuhouser,⁵³² who saw Hegel’s relation to Kant in this respect as a “contrast⁵³³”. Neuhouser fails to see that the aspiration to independence intrinsic to the self-conscious subject and the anticipation of a solution to this desire was already being addressed in the discovery of reflectivity that came out of the condition of survival of the living consciousness.⁵³⁴ Hegel says that in the realm of life self-consciousness is linked to itself in such a way that the “unity⁵³⁵” of the transcendental subject analyzed by

⁵²⁸ T. Pinkard, *Ibid.*, p. 51; see also F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 43-44 and J. Hyppolite, *Ibid.*, p. 162-163.

⁵²⁹ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁵³⁰ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁵³¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 33.

⁵³² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 52, 33.

⁵³³ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 38-39.

⁵³⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 32-33.

⁵³⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 106.

Kant⁵³⁶ “sunders itself into the antithesis of self-consciousness and life⁵³⁷” and then, Hegel, continues by affirming that⁵³⁸ “this dividedness of the differenceless fluid medium is just what establishes individuality⁵³⁹”. This is the situation which calls for a solution in a philosophical development on the necessity of a relation with another “individuality”, since the individuality’s independence from life, which came back in Kant’s notion of the unity of self-consciousness, can only be fully realized if human otherness mirrors the situation.⁵⁴⁰ What distinguishes Pippin’s view and Neuhouser’s position is that Pippin shows that the origin of Hegel’s theory of inter-subjectivity is rooted in Hegel’s exploration of Kant’s transcendental deduction in terms of life, in conformity with what Hegel said about the relation of self-consciousness’s desire and life, and this retains the whole heritage of spontaneity’s function in his theory of freedom involved in human subjectivity.⁵⁴¹

Neuhouser develops a reading that does not evacuate the Kantian starting point for Hegel’s theory of a free subjectivity, but he does not explicate the relation between this Hegelian appropriation of Kant and the necessity of elaborating a theory of inter-subjectivity.⁵⁴² According to Neuhouser, Hegel relies on the Kantian heritage in German idealism to demonstrate the independent character of self-consciousness in that the spontaneity of the self-conscious subject cannot depend on anything else than itself to apply its transcendental structure to the world, and Hegel would have access to this

⁵³⁶ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 32.

⁵³⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 106.

⁵³⁸ Passage by Hegel signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 32.

⁵³⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 108.

⁵⁴⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 32-33.

⁵⁴¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 52,

⁵⁴² F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 40, 43.

viewpoint through Fichte.⁵⁴³ Neuhouser thus upholds that Hegel assimilates the Fichtean idea, inspired by Kant, that “the subject just is – is nothing more or other than – its own spontaneous substrateless activity of self-positing⁵⁴⁴”. This is what Neuhouser calls “ontological independence⁵⁴⁵”.

Nevertheless, when Neuhouser refers to the paragraph Pippin also refers to about self-consciousness and life, where Hegel mentions self-consciousness⁵⁴⁶ from the point of view of “the *unity* of what is distinguished⁵⁴⁷”, he does not decipher the problem Hegel really poses about this autonomous subject: this autonomous subject is the one whose “distinguished” unity in its living condition corresponds to “what establishes individuality⁵⁴⁸”, which is not sufficiently developed if the analysis remains in the realm of life without human otherness.⁵⁴⁹ This is the Hegelian starting point and problem that Hegel binds intimately at the beginning of his argument to Kant’s conception of apperception.⁵⁵⁰ Pippin explains that in his exploration of the relation between life and self-consciousness, Hegel has shown that individuality surfaced because it sheds light on the “human self-relation as always also a projection outward as much as a turn inward⁵⁵¹”, which is the Hegelian reinterpretation of the movement of the apperception in Kant as reflective “dividedness⁵⁵²”, and thus, “It is this reflection on Kantian spontaneity, understood by Hegel as also a self-dividing or self-alienating, that grounds the hope for

⁵⁴³ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵⁴⁴ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵⁴⁵ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁵⁴⁶ F. Neuhouser, *Ibid.*, p. 41; R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 32.

⁵⁴⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 106, italics in the text.

⁵⁴⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 108.

⁵⁴⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 32-33.

⁵⁵⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 32-33, 52-53, 28.

⁵⁵¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 52.

⁵⁵² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 108.

an effected or resultant form of reconciliation of self with other, and thereby self with self⁵⁵³”.

When Hegel equates self-consciousness with desire and thus stresses the practical aspect of the human subject, the theoretical viewpoint does not diminish in importance.⁵⁵⁴ Theory and practice become fused and this is the reflectivity of spirit that is being actualized.⁵⁵⁵ From this perspective of a united theoretical and practical self-consciousness by means of the Hegelian introduction of the notion of desire in the development of self-consciousness itself, Hegel does not intend to defend “a case for the primacy of practical reason⁵⁵⁶”. Hegel’s account of freedom is bringing together “the theoretical “I think” and the practical “I will.”⁵⁵⁷”. Cognition, ethics and freedom are not excluding one another in Hegel’s theory of subjectivity and knowledge: “Hegel obviously treats ethical issues as in some way cognitive and teleological⁵⁵⁸”, explains Pippin. Thus, Hegel fits in a tendency present in the development of German idealism, described by Vetö, to propose a new interpretation of Kantian spontaneity by this « unification du théorique et du pratique [...] que les post-kantiens ne cessèrent de célébrer et de « déduire »⁵⁵⁹».

Chapter 3: Negativity

Introduction

This chapter investigates Hegel’s notion of negativity and its relation to his conception of freedom inspired by Kant’s transcendental apperception. It tries to show how the first

⁵⁵³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness*..., p. 52-53.

⁵⁵⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism*..., p. 288, note 11.

⁵⁵⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism*..., p. 288, note 11.

⁵⁵⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism*..., p. 288, note 11.

⁵⁵⁷ M. Greene, *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁵⁵⁸ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism*..., p. 154, italics in the text.

⁵⁵⁹ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 70.

two chapters of this thesis can be brought into a theory of freedom in the becoming of reality. Hegel understands the Kantian account of the apperceptive subject as containing the idea that the human understanding judges in such a way that it negates through its apperceptive unity the empirical data. The notion of spontaneity at work in such a judgment of the pure understanding is also a way to express the negativity of the subject that Hegel assimilates. The *a priori* character of the subject in its legislating function in knowledge also entails a negation on the part of the subject which thereby expresses its freedom and spontaneity. The notionality of the Kantian subject that Hegel accepts in his own renewed way represents another way to shed light on what Hegel calls the negativity of the subject. Reflectivity and negativity cannot either be separated in the reality of subjectivity. The notion of negativity will in this sense enable Hegel to think the movement of reality since it is the negativity involved in the Kantian subject that creates the becoming that the freedom of the subject embraces objectively.

This problem of the reconciliation of the opposites that negate one another was interpreted in Taylor as a way of reasserting a form of metaphysics. Taylor will thus be the object of criticism in order to show that the freedom Hegel describes as being in the reality of the world has more fundamentally its origin in Kant's theory of apperception than in an expressivist metaphysics. The unity of the subject and the object that Hegel proposes, or of the subject and the substance, remains Kantian in too many respects to bring Hegel on the terrain of a metaphysical monism of the divine substance. Again, what is at stake in criticizing Taylor is the idea that it is the Kantian conception of the subject that has to be conceived as being the major influence on Hegel's idea of freedom in the becoming of reality.

The notion of negativity will also be examined from the point of view of what Hegel calls the determinate negative. The way this determinate negative is related dialectically to positivity and becoming will thus be highlighted and explained. Determinate negativity will be explained as a concept that enabled Hegel to embody Kant's negative apperceptive subject in a dialectic that will ameliorate the freedom Kant had envisaged for his knowing subject. The focus will thus be on the way Hegel manages to retain the heritage of Kant in his theory of freedom and on how Hegel's own text alludes sufficiently frequently to negativity in Kantian terms to assert that Kant's spontaneous, apperceptive and reflective subject is the heart of what Hegel will keep as an active element in his absolute, understood as subject, and resulting from the dialectical process of the becoming of the world.

Development

Hegel examines the way Kant conceives the subject's relation to experience and how Kant's knowing subject involves an act of negativity.⁵⁶⁰ Kant is won by the idea that there is a mediation that enables the subject to produce knowledge from experience and that expresses according to Hegel a "negation"⁵⁶¹. Pippin refers to Kant's "insistence on the self-mediated or apperceptive requirements for the possibility of experience"⁵⁶², in which Kant stipulates that the subject's transcendental condition negates "the possibility of immediacy"⁵⁶³. Indeed, Kant says that the transcendental apperception or that "the I think [...] is an act of spontaneity"⁵⁶⁴, and that thus the "unity of consciousness [...]"

⁵⁶⁰ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁵⁶¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁵⁶² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁵⁶³ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁵⁶⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

precedes all data of intuitions⁵⁶⁵”, or negates “immediacy [...] in phenomenal givenness⁵⁶⁶”.

Hegel positions himself in the wake of these conclusions of the Kantian transcendental deduction⁵⁶⁷: “Substance is, as Subject, pure, *simple negativity*, and is for this very reason the bifurcation of the simple; it is the doubling which sets up opposition, and then again the negation of this indifferent diversity and of its anti-thesis [the immediate simplicity]⁵⁶⁸”. Hegel understands Kant’s theory of subjectivity as a theory that separates the subject and the object by means of this form of negativity expressed in the spontaneous unity of apperception, i.e. a negativity being opposed to what is immediately given in experience.⁵⁶⁹ Therefore, to understand this passage by Hegel, it would be appropriate to start by explaining what is implied in Hegel’s theory of subjectivity when he proposes that there is an equation between “Subject⁵⁷⁰” and “pure, *simple negativity*⁵⁷¹”.

Kant says that⁵⁷² “a judgement is nothing but a way of bringing given items of knowledge to the objective unity of apperception⁵⁷³”. Therefore, the pure notions of the understanding are imposed upon reality by this judgment which finds its origin in the formally unified apperceptive subject.⁵⁷⁴ Given that this judgmental act comes under the apperceptive nature of subjectivity from its transcendental point of view, Kant also

⁵⁶⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 139.

⁵⁶⁶ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁵⁶⁷ Passage signaled by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁵⁶⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10, italics in the text.

⁵⁶⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁵⁷⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

⁵⁷¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10, italics in the text.

⁵⁷² See about this passage J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁵⁷³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 137.

⁵⁷⁴ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 57.

attributes spontaneity to the synthesis of experience accomplished by judgment.⁵⁷⁵

Therefore, it is the judgment of the pure apperception that shows that “we are able to break free from immediacy⁵⁷⁶” and to attend the spontaneous negation described by Hegel: « Hegel est d’accord avec Kant: le jugement est l’acte simple de la négativité ⁵⁷⁷ ».

This negativity that expresses judgment has to do with the relation realized by the transcendental consciousness when it judges: there are two different realities that meet one another in this judgment, that is to say, the pure subject and the empirical world, and it is the non-empirical subject that brings its transcendental conditions into experience.⁵⁷⁸ Negativity is inevitable with such a judgment linking two different realities, the pure and the non pure, because from this Kantian point of view, « Le respect de l’hétérogénéité est la condition *sine qua non* du caractère « événementiel » du jugement [...] ; par conséquent [...] on perpétue la domination de l’*a priori* sur l’*a posteriori* ⁵⁷⁹ », i.e. we perpetuate judgment as the negativity of the transcendental over the empirical, which is a judgmental element recognized by both Kant and Hegel.

This negative feature of judgment is a moment of the freedom or independence of the subject insofar as the subject keeps its transcendental nature independent of experience while being involved in it by negating it, since, as Vetö notes about this type of judgment that Kant calls the “synthetic a priori judgment”, « Dans ce mystère de la synthèse *a priori* le moi conserve toute son autonomie et il demeure activement présent au monde ⁵⁸⁰ ». There is thus an intimate link between freedom and the negativity of judgment

⁵⁷⁵ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁵⁷⁶ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁵⁷⁷ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 42, however, Philonenko does not explicitly mention the notion of spontaneity.

⁵⁷⁸ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁵⁷⁹ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁵⁸⁰ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 77, italics in the text.

because the transcendental judgment as spontaneity that Hegel endorses is the possibility “to engage in free cognitive activity⁵⁸¹”. The starting point in judgment comes from within the subject and this independence of the subject with regards to external reality⁵⁸² is the action of the negative as a moment in the process of freedom and its expression of spontaneity.

Judgment cannot either be separated from the concept or the notion since for Kant it is the concept that intervenes in the process of knowledge through judgment.⁵⁸³ From this angle, « Le sens de l'idéalisme kantien, c'est moins la primauté du sujet que l'identité du jugement et du concept ⁵⁸⁴». The negativity of judgment is also the negativity of the concept or notion inasmuch as the notional element of the human mind plays a role in empirical reality that makes it antithetic and inasmuch as the notions « s'opposent dans leur ensemble à la dispersion du sensible ⁵⁸⁵». And as Taylor puts it, “negativity is opposition⁵⁸⁶”, and it is specifically this « opposition ⁵⁸⁷», understood in Hegel's perspective as negativity, that presents itself as a fundamental feature of the original notions in the human mind, and this antithetic relation between the intellectual subject and its sensible condition is for Kant's perspective the subject's negativity or spontaneous “opposition entre *a priori* et *a posteriori*⁵⁸⁸”.

The negativity of the notion has also to be translated in the reality of the subject itself because it is the Kantian subject that Hegel sees as the founding moment of the notion,⁵⁸⁹

⁵⁸¹ J. McDowell, *Hegel's Idealism as...*, p. 71.

⁵⁸² J. McDowell, *Hegel's Idealism as...*, p. 71.

⁵⁸³ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁵⁸⁴ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 77.

⁵⁸⁵ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁵⁸⁶ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁵⁸⁷ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁵⁸⁸ M. Vetö, *Ibid.*, p. 89, italics in the text, see also p. 90.

⁵⁸⁹ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 17, 19.

which comes back to Hegel's quoted passage where there is an equation between "Subject"⁵⁹⁰ and "pure, *simple negativity*"⁵⁹¹. Thus, not only "Hegel's own category of the "Concept," [...] takes its paradigm form Kant's "I think."⁵⁹², but also Hegel says himself in later works, as already noted, that "the I is the pure Notion itself"⁵⁹³. According to Kant, the I of the transcendental subject's understanding is a "permanent and unchanging I"⁵⁹⁴, and given that the I represents the I of the understanding or the capacity of thinking, Hegel will directly qualify this Kantian I, which thinks by means of its capability of remaining identical to itself in apperception, to the negativity of the subject before the empirical reality it first faces.⁵⁹⁵ Hegel writes in a way that recalls Kant's "permanent and unchanging I"⁵⁹⁶ that thinks : "fixed thoughts have the 'I', the power of the negative, [...] whereas sensuous determinations have only powerless abstract immediacy"⁵⁹⁷. In a stronger statement about negativity and the transcendental subject, Hegel writes: "the tremendous power of the negative [...] is the energy of thought, of the pure 'I' "⁵⁹⁸, just before qualifying this negativity of the subject as "a separate freedom"⁵⁹⁹.

Negativity is also a manifestation of reflectivity in which consciousness asserts its presence by going through a self-differentiation.⁶⁰⁰ The positioning of subjectivity before empirical reality is the way consciousness differentiates itself reflectively from the world

⁵⁹⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

⁵⁹¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10, italics in the text.

⁵⁹² Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 17.

⁵⁹³ Hegel quoted by R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 17, italics in the text.

⁵⁹⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 162.

⁵⁹⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

⁵⁹⁶ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 162.

⁵⁹⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20.

⁵⁹⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁵⁹⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁶⁰⁰ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 46-47.

by doubling individual subjectivity's intellectual condition to self-consciousness: "This separating counter-positing is [...] reflection in the manner of the "understanding"⁶⁰¹". Kant had already defined the understanding, which is apperceptively reflective, with the fundamental notion of "spontaneity"⁶⁰². It is thus this spontaneous reflectivity of transcendental apperception that expresses the negation of the empirical reality because Kant affirms that it "is independent of all conditions of sensible intuition"⁶⁰³.

According to Pippin, Hegel is proposing a way to complete the Kantian negation by showing that another act which negates this same negation comes in the movement of the subject.⁶⁰⁴ This is Hegel's "resolution of transcendental skepticism"⁶⁰⁵, of the scission between the subject and the object, when he talks about "the doubling which sets up opposition"⁶⁰⁶. In this Hegelian perspective, this negation of the negation which engenders the reconciling movement of subject and object shows that « il ne reste qu'à assister à l'oeuvre de la négativité, c'est-à-dire au devenir ⁶⁰⁷ ». The becoming or movement is the movement of the subject and the object, fusing their opposite negativity into the reflectivity of the notional apperceptive subject who expresses thereby the movement of freedom, of the "free self-development of the "Notion"⁶⁰⁸, because this relation between freedom and the notion, i.e. the notion being rooted in the Kantian spontaneous or free subject,⁶⁰⁹ becomes in Hegel "a unity of object (substance) and

⁶⁰¹ W. Marx, *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁶⁰² I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 86.

⁶⁰³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 131.

⁶⁰⁴ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁶⁰⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁶⁰⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

⁶⁰⁷ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁶⁰⁸ J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 34.

⁶⁰⁹ Y. Yovel, *Introduction*, p. 17; R. B. Pippin, "Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind", p. 451-452, p. 464 note 23.

subject (selfhood)⁶¹⁰». Therefore, it is only in the becoming of reality activated by notional negativity that freedom can be actualized, and it is only in this way of explaining the movement or reality that it is true to assert that in Hegel the notion expresses the movement the free subject, or that in Hegel's philosophical account « Il y a identité entre concept, sujet et liberté ⁶¹¹ ».

From this point of view of the centrality of becoming for illuminating the idea of freedom in the world, Hegel praises the thinkers of antiquity for having discovered the “power of the negative⁶¹²” when they tried to explain the becoming of the things of the world but he states that subjectivity was not arrived in their understanding of this propelling force of negativity.⁶¹³ He thus writes that the “ancients [...] rightly saw the moving principle as the *negative*, though they did not as yet grasp that the negative is the self⁶¹⁴”. If Hegel was able to say that his epoch was “a birth-time and a period of transition to a new era⁶¹⁵”, it is precisely because Kant was able to synthesize the emphasis of modernity on the human subject,⁶¹⁶ i.e. on “the self⁶¹⁷” Hegel just referred to in the quoted passage, following thereby the very modern idea that « tout existe pour le sujet ⁶¹⁸ », that is to say, for the human subject now realizing that negativity is primarily rooted in its own identity and presence in the world,⁶¹⁹ and that the becoming of the world has its starting point in the configuration of the subject itself, in the “activity of the

⁶¹⁰ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 137.

⁶¹¹ G. Jarczyk and P.-J. Labarrière, *Notes*, in their translation of G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, traduction et notes par G. Jarczyk et P.-J. Labarrière, Gallimard, 1993, p. 663, note 160.

⁶¹² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 20, however, this expression is used by Hegel on page 20 when he does not talk about antiquity like on page 21, even if alluded on page 19, but the expression still applies to what he says on page 21 about antiquity.

⁶¹³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21.

⁶¹⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21, italics in the text.

⁶¹⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 6.

⁶¹⁶ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 82.

⁶¹⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21, italics in the text.

⁶¹⁸ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶¹⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21.

*universal self*⁶²⁰”, as the first negative moment of “freedom⁶²¹” in the becoming of the world.

Moreover, given that the Kantian notion of spontaneity means that the transcendental subject “cannot be considered as belonging to sensibility⁶²²”, which is also *a priori* and therefore expressing a necessity,⁶²³ and that there is in the subject a “necessary unity of self-consciousness⁶²⁴”, it can be inferred that this is what defines according to Hegel « la négativité, un terme dont on peut bien user pour signifier la synthèse de la liberté et de la nécessité ⁶²⁵», even if in this statement, and in the explanation that completes it, Philonenko fails to relate directly the relation between necessity and freedom to the impact of Kant’s transcendental apperceptive subject in Hegel’s account of negativity.⁶²⁶ In Kant, the pure element in knowledge could not be avoided because it is a foundational component of human experience itself.⁶²⁷ This is why Kant says that “Necessity is always founded on a transcendental condition⁶²⁸”. And this necessity is a form of negativity, as it is not given in experience, and that gathers the characteristics of the theoretical freedom of the Kantian self reinterpreted in the Hegelian theory of subjectivity.

Taylor’s interpretation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* on negativity gives a different account because he finds a way to place the relevant passage of Hegel about “negativity⁶²⁹” within the framework of his notion of “cosmic spirit”,⁶³⁰ again,

⁶²⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 18, italics in the text.

⁶²¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁶²² I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

⁶²³ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 39.

⁶²⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 139.

⁶²⁵ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁶²⁶ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁶²⁷ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 137-138.

⁶²⁸ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 137.

⁶²⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10.

⁶³⁰ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 110.

incompatible with the Hegelian Kantian “spontaneity, and so freedom⁶³¹”. Taylor explains that in Hegel’s thought a contrary will deny its own contrary and that the Hegelian conception of the subject implies this negativity, but without any reference to Kant.⁶³² He also articulates the dialectical dynamic of the negating subject and the process in which his contrary is being visited in order to come back to his own identity with the preservation and surpassing of what was acquired in the process.⁶³³ Just before quoting Hegel’s word asserting that “substance is ‘as subject [...] pure, simple negativity⁶³⁴’, Taylor writes: “Hegel links negativity to the subject, whose nature is to return to itself (self-consciousness) through its opposite; and in the case of the cosmic *Geist*, to posit its opposite⁶³⁵”.

Taylor and Pippin understand the same general reasoning in Hegel’s text about the negativity of the subject, but only Pippin relates it to the skeptical issue of Kant’s transcendental deduction without the “cosmic spirit”, whereas Taylor’s general explication could be applied to other non Kantian philosophers such as a Cartesian “dualism⁶³⁶” subsumed in the expressivist subject or “cosmic spirit⁶³⁷”. It would therefore be legitimate to ask ourselves if Taylor sees Hegel in this passage as being in a monologue or in a dialogue with interlocutors, and which thinker is Hegel addressing if there is one involved in the text, when Taylor hints very quickly at Spinoza further in his interpretative development.⁶³⁸ But Hegel’s interlocutor is clearly Kant, and specifically

⁶³¹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464 note 23, also p. 451-452.

⁶³² C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁶³³ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁶³⁴ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 110, Taylor’s citation is from the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

⁶³⁵ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁶³⁶ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁶³⁷ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 80-81.

⁶³⁸ C. Taylor, *Ibid.*, p. 110

the transcendental apperception theory from the first critical trial,⁶³⁹ because Hegel intends to reinterpret and give a more thorough account of “spontaneity, and so freedom⁶⁴⁰”. What Hegel preserves in his theory of the subject, and that Taylor overlooks, is the negativity of the Kantian apperceptive subject which is freely or “‘spontaneously’ apperceptive⁶⁴¹”.

The only ground for Taylor’s interpretation could seem to be that Hegel understands “Substance [...] as Subject⁶⁴²”, because it is known that Kant’s subject cannot correspond to a substance and this could seem to be a non Kantian claim.⁶⁴³ There is in Kant a “distinction between the self as *logical* subject of experience and the self as *substantive* type of being⁶⁴⁴”. The traditional metaphysics of the subject is based on the identification of the subject with a substance as an object of knowledge, which is what Kant intends to refute in his transcendental dialectic, since for Kant, even if there is a “transcendental subject [...] we have no knowledge of the subject in itself⁶⁴⁵”. However, Hegel still sides with Kant because he does not say that the subject is a substance but he asserts that the substance is subject, that is, that the substance as object already contains the work of the spontaneous, free and notional subject.⁶⁴⁶ The claim about substantiality and subjectivity is a problem of the relation between the subject and the object understood by Hegel in

⁶³⁹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁶⁴⁰ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464 note 23, also p. 451-452.

⁶⁴¹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 452.

⁶⁴² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 10, italics in the text.

⁶⁴³ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁶⁴⁴ J. R. Fisette, *Ibid.*, p. 61, italics in the text.

⁶⁴⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 350-351.

⁶⁴⁶ This idea is inspired by McDowell’s remark in J. McDowell, *The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self...*, p. 48, note 23, even if on p. 42 McDowell talks about the subject-subject relation, but the two quotations of Hegel McDowell juxtaposes on p. 42 and p. 23 (note 48) tends to associate “object” and “substance”, and also R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 105.

transcendental terms and thereby non metaphysical, because for him what is being posed is the problem of Kant's "dualisms of reflection"⁶⁴⁷.

This is validated in another passage from the *Preface* of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* where Hegel refers to the dichotomy between the subject and the object articulated in Kant's philosophy and invokes once more the negativity that it implies: "The disparity which exists in consciousness between the 'I' and the substance which is its object is the distinction between them, the *negative* in general"⁶⁴⁸. Hegel clearly says that the "substance" corresponds to the "object" of the "I" or the subject, and the meaning of the word "negative" lies in the idea of such a "distinction" between the object and the subject. And in Kant, this negative distinction between the object and the subject is being developed when the understanding of the subject is conceived as being independent of the objects that are given in experience, that is, as being "freed from all adhering empirical conditions"⁶⁴⁹.

Hegel brings this Kantian conception of the understanding in the logic of his philosophical project by saying that "the understanding is thought, the pure 'I' as such"⁶⁵⁰.⁶⁵¹ This capacity of thinking that the human subject possesses by means of the understanding is posited as the possibility to negate,⁶⁵² and moreover this understanding in Hegel amounts to⁶⁵³ "the most astonishing and mightiest of powers"⁶⁵⁴, which is also "the power of the negative"⁶⁵⁵. In this sense, negativity could not be thought without the

⁶⁴⁷ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 105.

⁶⁴⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 21, italics in the text.

⁶⁴⁹ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 95.

⁶⁵⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 8.

⁶⁵¹ See also about this Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 88.

⁶⁵² Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 127.

⁶⁵³ Passage signaled by Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 127.

⁶⁵⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 18.

⁶⁵⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of spirit*, p. 19.

understanding because “Hegel says that the origin of negation is the understanding (*intellectus, nous, Verstand*)⁶⁵⁶”. Hegel had also asserted that the negative power of the understanding is elevated to the pinnacle of what he calls “the absolute powers⁶⁵⁷”, and this reference to an absolute in the understanding is not without reminding its corresponding Kantian “absolute spontaneity in apperception⁶⁵⁸”. Therefore, if the negativity of the understanding has the absolute feature of spontaneity, and if this negatively conceived spontaneity is posed as the condition for there to be “freedom⁶⁵⁹”, then the negating intellectual self of Kant’s apperceptive subject constitutes also from this point of view the beginning of the movement of freedom in reality, or its absolute starting point or principle.

The Hegelian approach for accounting for reality includes what Hegel calls not only negativity but⁶⁶⁰ “the *determinate* negative⁶⁶¹”. Negativity is invested with this idea of being determinate when something positive is involved and comes out of it.⁶⁶² According to Hegel, there is something positive activated in the situation where two things contradict one another through their negativity.⁶⁶³ Hegel thus writes⁶⁶⁴: “the negative belongs to the content itself, and is the *positive*, both as the *immanent* movement and determination of the content, and as the whole of this process⁶⁶⁵”. The positivity of the movement of reality is thus engendered by the negative from the point of view of its

⁶⁵⁶ Y. Yovel, *Running Commentary*, p. 127.

⁶⁵⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 18.

⁶⁵⁸ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466.

⁶⁵⁹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464, note 23.

⁶⁶⁰ Passage signaled by J. Stewart, “Hegel’s Doctrine of Determinate Negation: An Example from “Sense-Certainty” and “Perception””, in *Idealistic Studies*, vol. 26, No. 1, Winter-Spring 1996, p. 62.

⁶⁶¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 36, italics in the text.

⁶⁶² J. Stewart, *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁶⁶³ J. Stewart, *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁶⁶⁴ Passage signaled by J. Stewart, *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁶⁶⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 36, italics in the text.

determinate characteristic.⁶⁶⁶ Reality appears as something positively given because that which is being negated in negation is moved in the realm of becoming by this active opposite or negativity: « la négation, étant négation *d'un contenu*, est comme telle génératrice de positivité ⁶⁶⁷».

In this sense, there is the possibility for negativity of building something in its role in reality without ruining the negative's contrary.⁶⁶⁸ Thus, from the perspective of the continuity between Kant and Hegel, what Hegel calls the “the *determinate* negative⁶⁶⁹” brings in the idea that the negativity of the notion, or the Kantian “pure ‘I’⁶⁷⁰” as the “power of the negative⁶⁷¹”, at work in the becoming contributes to it, and this “makes the conceptual movement a constructive one⁶⁷²”. When Philonenko writes that « l’oeuvre de la négativité⁶⁷³ » corresponds to the « devenir ⁶⁷⁴ », it therefore means also that the Kantian subject from the viewpoint of its notional foundation has to make the step in positive reality and to realize that its “*determinate* negativity [...] is [...] a positive content as well⁶⁷⁵”, that the “separate freedom⁶⁷⁶” it describes is at the same time actual.

The way of linking negativity and positivity that identifies one to the other presents itself as a form of reconciliation since “‘negativity’ for Hegel [...] is the opposite of ‘positivity’⁶⁷⁷”. The Hegelian notion of positivity evokes the idea of a reality that is not abstractly and formally seized and therefore that embodies a “determinate content or

⁶⁶⁶ J. Stewart, *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁶⁶⁷ G. Jarczyk and P.-J. Labarrière, *Ibid.*, p. 663, note 163, italics in the text.

⁶⁶⁸ J. Stewart, *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁶⁶⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 36, italics in the text.

⁶⁷⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁶⁷¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁶⁷² J. Stewart, *Ibid.*, p. 57, however, Stewart fails to mention the importance of Kant on this point.

⁶⁷³ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁶⁷⁴ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁶⁷⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 36, italics in the text.

⁶⁷⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁶⁷⁷ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 6.

form⁶⁷⁸”. The differentiation that Hegel saw at work between the substance and the subject can also be envisioned as the contradiction activated between what is positive and what is negative.⁶⁷⁹ On the side of substantiality, what is to be found is the positive as incorporating the “determination of the content⁶⁸⁰”, and on the side of subjectivity there is the presence of a formal self that denies through negativity its positive contrary.⁶⁸¹ The Kantian formal subject is this negativity that is not yet determinate, as for Hegel the formal subject in Kant, which is “the power of the negative [...] of the pure ‘I’⁶⁸²”, is what he calls precisely “a separate freedom⁶⁸³”. The separateness of this Kantian subject understood as free is conceived as such because it does not possess at that moment the determinacy that the “*determinate* negative⁶⁸⁴” requires to be a manifestation of positivity. This negativity of the Kantian subject as freedom is to be determinate and thus positive when the movement engendered by negativity occurs out of a negation of a specific content.

This dialectic between negativity and positivity also expresses the process of the absolute because it is through the negative subject that the absolute is being realized.⁶⁸⁵ Negativity is the driving force that separates the subject and its contrary and as a result of that the subject as negative initiates a movement,⁶⁸⁶ which at the same time is the subject Hegel already defined as “Absolute⁶⁸⁷”. On the other hand, what is being moved by this negative power consists in the content of positivity, which is the part of substantiality in

⁶⁷⁸ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁷⁹ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁸⁰ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 46.

⁶⁸¹ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁸² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁶⁸³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁶⁸⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 36, italics in the text.

⁶⁸⁵ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁸⁶ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 6-7.

⁶⁸⁷ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

the process,⁶⁸⁸ and the substance also shares the fact of being absolute.⁶⁸⁹ Substantial reality is thus being pulled in the movement of the absolute when the subject negatively asserts its presence: “The Absolute-qua-subject ‘negates’ the abstract purity of the Absolute-qua-substance, by impelling it in the direction of actualization⁶⁹⁰”, explains Schacht. It is also in this sense that Hegel upholds that “Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a *result*⁶⁹¹” and that this resulting absolute thus has “to be actual, subject, the spontaneous becoming of itself⁶⁹²”.

The result is entailed by the negative that activates the development of the absolute which arrives on the scene as something that resulted from a movement and which was exhibited “in the *end*⁶⁹³”. And given that this dialectical process of the absolute is being realized within the scope of the spontaneity of the subject, according to Miller’s translation which interprets simultaneously Hegel’s thought with his “spontaneous becoming of itself⁶⁹⁴”,⁶⁹⁵ it is this originally Kantian spontaneous subject itself, as that which makes freedom possible,⁶⁹⁶ that is being actualized as the absolute. The absolute represents the final step in the dialectical process in which negativity produces an improvement out of its original act of negation.⁶⁹⁷

What Hegel called the “determinate negative” brings the conflictual situation of the contraries onto a stage that overcomes the problem that was being posed because the content was involved in the determinate element of the negation, and was thus coming to

⁶⁸⁸ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 6-7.

⁶⁸⁹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 9-10.

⁶⁹⁰ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶⁹¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

⁶⁹² G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

⁶⁹³ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11, italics in the text.

⁶⁹⁴ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

⁶⁹⁵ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel’s Idealism...*, p. 278, note 3.

⁶⁹⁶ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464.

⁶⁹⁷ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 12-13.

be positively.⁶⁹⁸ Consequently, what ensues from this dialectical dynamic is “a higher level or mode of consciousness than the previous one, because it is a positive mode of consciousness which is not characterized by the specific inadequacies of the previous one which led to the difficulties associated with it⁶⁹⁹”. The freedom of the Kantian subject that recurs in the Hegelian subject becomes, through this dialectic of determinate negativity, reconciled with reality, with its own content, when the absolute is reached “as the result of the negation of the previous stage⁷⁰⁰”, when the absolute retaining the Kantian spontaneous and free subject articulates the becoming of reality itself.

The progress of the different steps that lead to the absolute gives birth to a form a necessity.⁷⁰¹ The phase in which the contraries conflicted negatively with one another engenders a solution that has to be built necessarily on the negativity of the conflict that came before.⁷⁰² The problem expressed in the action of the oppositions is what will determine the overcoming in the next step and thus, in the dialectic of negativity that conducts the course of the absolute, “each stage is necessarily related to that which precedes it as its inevitable and indeed ‘logical’ outcome⁷⁰³”. And if the new resolution is understood as coming to be out of the problem posed before, this problem begotten by negativity is needed for there to be a “higher level⁷⁰⁴”, which is in the end the absolute needing the Kantian subjective negativity and “separate freedom⁷⁰⁵” in order to attend to its own movement of free activity and positivity. It is thus also in this sense that in Hegel the action of the negative subject as the condition of freedom in the world, that is, the

⁶⁹⁸ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁹⁹ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁷⁰⁰ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 13, however Schacht does not mention Kant.

⁷⁰¹ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁰² R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁰³ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁰⁴ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁷⁰⁵ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

Kantian subject, has a necessary function in the movement of freedom in reality, and therefore « la négativité ⁷⁰⁶ » is « un terme dont on peut bien user pour signifier la synthèse de la liberté et de la nécessité ⁷⁰⁷ ».

Hegel will thus acknowledge the role of the transcendental negativity of the Kantian subject to bring it in the light of its own becoming, in the historical becoming of freedom, because Hegel understands that, « comme le prouve le déroulement de la *Phénoménologie de l'Esprit*, la philosophie kantienne [...] fut, en quelque sorte, une histoire du Je pense ⁷⁰⁸ », that is, from Kant's perspective, of “absolute spontaneity in apperception ⁷⁰⁹”, “and so freedom ⁷¹⁰”. The idea of a “history of the I think” raised by Philonenko is parallel to Pippin's interpretation of Hegel's conception of the transcendental apperceptive subject or the I think understood as an “*achievement* ⁷¹¹”. Pippin relies on the fact that Hegel sees the I think as something that was carried out through two different moments in the subject. ⁷¹² Therefore, the Kantian I think understood according to Hegel was already explaining how the subject came to be as an apperceptive subjectivity, and thus was giving in a latent way an account of the I think's history, as Philonenko says, or of its becoming.

And the process of the Hegelian absolute subject is a process that goes through the subject by recognizing its negative activity in this movement, and shows its realization, ⁷¹³ and in the perspective of the reception of Kant by Hegel, this means that the absolute was at work in potency in the negative position of the “I think”. When Kant explains the “I

⁷⁰⁶ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁷⁰⁷ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁷⁰⁸ A. Philonenko, *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁷⁰⁹ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 466.

⁷¹⁰ R. B. Pippin, “Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind”, p. 464, note 23.

⁷¹¹ R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28, italics in the text.

⁷¹² R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 28.

⁷¹³ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 22.

think”, he argues that “this principle of the necessary unity of apperception [...] shows [...] the necessity of a synthesis of the manifold given in an intuition, a synthesis without which it would be impossible to think the thoroughgoing identity of self-consciousness⁷¹⁴”. Kant thus affirms that there is an “identity” in the reflective subject in the process of knowledge and this identity characterizing subjectivity, inasmuch as it is also the “I think” as “an act of spontaneity⁷¹⁵”, is also a negation expressing freedom, but a free subject which Hegel understands as still “separate⁷¹⁶”.

Schacht points out a passage of Hegel that summarizes this Kantian account but Schacht does not mention the Hegelian allusion to Kant⁷¹⁷: the understanding or the “*Noûs*, simplicity, is substance. On account of its simplicity or self-identity it appears fixed and enduring. But this self-identity is no less negativity; therefore its fixed existence passes over into its dissolution⁷¹⁸”. According to Schacht, Hegel explains that the “negativity” or the “fixed existence” is what goes “into dissolution” in the sense that it is brought “into a process of becoming something actual⁷¹⁹”. What is rendered actual or realized, given the allusion to the identical Kantian self, is the free subject of Kant’s transcendental apperception because its negativity made the realization possible. Schacht adds that the actuality described in Hegel’s passage is a result, alluding thus to the absolute.⁷²⁰ Therefore, if Hegel relies on Kant in the passage, the apperceptive subject is posed as the origin of the free self-becoming of the absolute, or in Hegel’s words, of the

⁷¹⁴ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 128.

⁷¹⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, p. 124.

⁷¹⁶ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 19.

⁷¹⁷ Passage signaled by R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁷¹⁸ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 34, italics in the text.

⁷¹⁹ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁷²⁰ R. Schacht, *Ibid.*, p. 22.

absolute's reflectively "spontaneous becoming of itself"⁷²¹. This thesis thus goes back to the point where it started: freedom as absolute, spontaneous, and also reflective and negative subjectivity.

Conclusion

Summary of the argument

The main argument of the thesis can be summarized as follows. Hegel's conception of freedom in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is deeply rooted in Kant's theory of the transcendental apperception of the human subject in knowledge, and this reception of Kant by Hegel occurs in an important way in the preface, the introduction and in the first section of the chapter on self-consciousness of Hegel's book. The goal of the thesis was to show that Hegel's theory of freedom can be understood from the viewpoint of the continuity between his philosophical enterprise and Kant's influence on the development of German Idealism. The two main starting points for the thesis were Pippin's and Moggach's works on Hegel and German Idealism. Whereas Pippin emphasizes the continuity between Kant and Hegel in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* by looking into the idealist component of Hegel based on the self-conscious apperceptive subject according to Kant, that is to say, an idealism that the two German philosophers vindicate, Moggach interprets Hegel and German idealism as defending a conception of freedom that draws on Kant's practical and political philosophy. What the thesis tried to use from both Pippin and Moggach is their shared idea that Kant is the main forerunner to Hegel, that the notion of spontaneity is crucial to both Hegel and Kant in their account of subjectivity, that self-determination understood in Kantian terms is what can enable the reader of Hegel to shed light on the Hegelian theory of human freedom and that this

⁷²¹ G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, p. 11.

Kantian way of reflecting on freedom distances Hegel from the metaphysics of the tradition.

The first chapter tried to demonstrate that the subject that Kant explained from the point of view of the unity of apperception is spontaneously active in the legislation of the field of knowledge. Kant was motivated by the problem of empiricism that did not admit the possibility for the subject to act spontaneously in its relation to objects. Therefore, Kant defines spontaneity by differentiating it from the receptivity of sensibility, but he does so, as Pippin explains, by leaving this notion without a full philosophical treatment. Even if the reader of Kant would like to have more explanations about this notion of spontaneity, there is a sufficient number of elements to understand what Kant meant and how this influenced Hegel. Given that the notion of spontaneity expresses the idea that the subject depends on its own self to produce knowledge about the world, there is a form of freedom that is at work in this Kantian spontaneous subject, and this subject is pre-eminently notional and is equated by Hegel with the notion expressing freedom. Hegel will rearticulate this idea by means of the conviction that the human subject has an unconditioned character, which derives from Kant's discoveries of the spontaneity of the subject being, following Pippin, « non relative or absolute ». The Kantian subject is thus recurring in Hegel as non determined by experience and thus as containing something absolute.

The Hegelian absolute has to be understood as subject. In the becoming that Hegel associates with this absolute subject, it is possible, according to Miller's translation of Hegel's text and following Pippin's judgment on this point, to read a clear preservation of the Kantian spontaneous subject in Hegel's absolute. The absolute in Hegel's text has

therefore to express the freedom that is involved in the Kantian spontaneity of the apperceptive subject. The Hegelian absolute subject was interpreted by Taylor as an affirmation of a metaphysical cosmic spirit. If Hegel is understood as continuing Kant's idea that the subject is freely spontaneous, the notion of an external and metaphysical cosmic spirit contradicts this Kantian idea that Hegel adopts. The interpretation advocated by Taylor has the consequence of removing the Kantian idea of apperceptive freedom from Hegel's conception of subjectivity and unconditionality, in Hegel's absolute subject.

The issue about skepticism was then addressed in order to show that Hegel's critique of Kant is not a rupture but a critical assimilation that does not reject the idea of a free and spontaneous subject. The problem of the separation of the subject and the object that was present in Kant's transcendental deduction is presented by Hegel as a form of skepticism. Hegel will try to propose a conception of spontaneity and freedom that is not stuck in the subject but that is also embracing the movement of the world itself. The subjectivity of Kant's free subject in apperception is thus brought onto the territory of a more thorough objectivity without deleting the subject's spontaneity and freedom. This example of Hegel's critique of skepticism illustrates more clearly the continuity between Kant and Hegel, a continuity that thus exists by virtue of Hegel's own philosophical method and that Taylor did not fully consider with regards to the transcendental deduction of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.

The second chapter of the thesis envisioned to account for the Kantian idea of reflectivity in the unity of transcendental apperception, to explain how this heritage is preserved in Hegel, and to extend the first section on spontaneity which had to be

explained in terms of reflectivity without which Hegel's conception of freedom would not be complete. Hegel conceives freedom, according to Greene, as a « self-relation » which reproduces Kant's apperceptive and free subject in knowledge, that is, free from natural causality. This reflectivity is the expression of human freedom inasmuch as otherness is preserved in self-consciousness's reality, an essential trait of Hegelian freedom based on Kant's theory of apperceptive subjectivity. Reflectivity was nevertheless the pretext for certain authors to interpret Hegel as a metaphysician, insofar as this reflectivity is also expressed in the development of spirit. Taylor reads in Hegel's idea of a spirit which would know itself reflectively the assimilation of the reflective God of the tradition being now immanent to the world. The metaphysical meaning that Taylor gives to Hegel's text poses the problem of blurring the spontaneity of the subject, or, to use Moggach's account, of "preventing" the spontaneity from being actively and truly free in subjectivity. Taylor's interpretation of Hegel as defending the notion of a cosmic spirit does not address the problem of heteronomy that ensues from his idea of a cosmic spirit imposed on the subject, and thus, Taylor's interpretation of Hegel is in a way implicitly accepting heteronomy itself.

The chapter of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* on self-consciousness that starts by formulating strong statements about the importance of the Kantian "unity of self-consciousness" for Hegel was then addressed to continue to study the continuity between Kant and Hegel and its relation to the problem of freedom. Hegel says that self-consciousness corresponds to desire and the self-conscious subject becomes thus in Hegel a desiring subject. Hegel targets the Kantian way of explaining how the unity of the subject reaches such a unity and explains, according to Pippin, that the unity of self-

consciousness results from a practice of consciousness itself. The freedom that the human subject expresses in its spontaneity cannot be split up between one aspect that is practical and another aspect that would not depend on this practice. Self-consciousness itself is what it is according to the practical essence of consciousness itself.

Neuhouser does recognize that Kant occupies a place in Hegel's understanding of self-consciousness but he does not see the strong continuity in the development of Hegel's text as explained by Pippin. Neuhouser fails to see that Hegel, following Pippin's interpretation, starts from within Kant's transcendental deduction to provide an assessment and a correction by introducing the element of desire related to the practical aspect of self-consciousness. There is in this sense in Neuhouser's reading of this section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* an avoidance of the presence of a strong continuity between Kant and Hegel. What is lost in this interpretation by Neuhouser is the idea that Hegelian freedom takes more strongly its roots in Kant's transcendental deduction than Neuhouser admits. This will lead Neuhouser to interpret the transition to the problem of inter-subjectivity in Hegel from a point of view that is not Kantian and that denies the Hegelian theory of human otherness as being a direct extension of Kant's transcendental apperception.

The third chapter of the thesis inquired into the question of negativity in Hegel, showing how the Hegelian notion of negativity in Hegel's preface and introduction to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is directly linked to Kant's theory of the transcendental apperception, and thus, to the first two chapters of the thesis on spontaneity and reflectivity. This third chapter tried to show how Hegel brings the first two conditions for there to be human freedom, spontaneity and reflectivity, into the realm of becoming

through negativity. Kant's transcendental subject is a judging subject that judges according to its *a priori* conditions, which is a negation of the empirical reality. The spontaneity of this subject is endowed with this same negativity as it precedes what is being given in sensibility. The notionality of the subject in the Kantian sense also represents an act of negativity on the part of the subject, in addition to the fact that this pure configuration of the subject is also a negativity taking its source in the human understanding. The reflectivity of the subject is also an instance of negativity since it is what enables the subject to free itself from natural causality and thus to negate the empirical reality that is being unfolded before itself. These negative characteristics of the Kantian subject will be acknowledged and fully taken into account in Hegel's theory of human freedom since all these negative features of the Kantian subject are manifestations of freedom in the deployment of subjectivity. Hegel keeps the idea that when the subject negates external reality and frees itself cognitively from mechanism, as Kant asserts, there is a manifestation of freedom that is being unveiled.

The negativity of the Kantian subject will be in Hegel's theory of freedom the activation of the becoming of the world which is being embraced by the spontaneous, notional and thus free subject which participates in this movement. Hegel uses the concept of negativity to explain the functioning of the becoming of the world and to illuminate the freedom that is being expressed and that starts from the Kantian subject. The notion of negativity is also articulated by Hegel in terms of what he calls determinate negativity. This determinate negativity produces a solved situation that is improved with regards to the conflicting negativity of the opposites that gave birth to it, and this is associated by Hegel to positivity ensuing from negativity. Given that Hegel attributes

negativity to the Kantian subject, it is thus this Kantian conception of subjectivity as an instance of freedom that is preserved in the solved stage that negativity produced. This Hegelian dialectic of negativity and positivity is directed towards the absolute in which Hegel will retain the Kantian apperceptive subject as spontaneous and thus as expressing freedom in a non metaphysical absolute excluding heteronomy. The thesis can thus be presented as a loop that started with the problem of the absolute subject as spontaneous, that went through the reflectivity involved in this spontaneity and that ended in an explanation of how this absolute subject came to be on the path of negativity: all of which relied on Kant's transcendental apperception as a cardinal principle in Hegel's theory of freedom in the world.

Limits of the argumentation

This thesis has tried to demonstrate that the continuity between Kant and Hegel in the preface, the introduction and the first section of the chapter on self-consciousness of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Following mainly the interpretive impulse of Moggach and Pippin, this continuity was studied from the point of view of freedom and by recognizing the weight of the Kantian transcendental apperception, the spontaneity of the Kantian subject and the negativity included in Hegel's dialectic which explains the freedom of the human subject at work in the world.

However, there are many issues that were not addressed in the thesis given the limited space for development. The notion of freedom in Hegel is highly related to political and practical philosophy as argued by Moggach, who describes the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as an « histoire de la raison pratique ⁷²²», and this was not addressed and would have clearly improved the understanding of the problematic posed initially. Hegel's synthesis

⁷²² D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

of the subject of the apperception and the practical subject of the human will was only mentioned and briefly explained with the aim of keeping the main thread of argumentation on the transcendental apperception, which is another aspect that could have been more explored. This approach forced the argumentation to propose an interpretation of Hegel's theory of freedom that is circumscribed in the territory of only one section of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. This approach is therefore itself a limit to a full exposition of Hegel's conception of freedom in general in his work and in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

There are also many debates that were not staged in the thesis and that could have been relevant for the development. For instance, Pippin and Moggach both insist on the fact that the reception of Kant by Hegel depends also in many respects on Fichte as an intermediary, but this important aspect of the continuity between Kant and Hegel⁷²³ was not present in the argumentation. In addition, as Moggach points out, the notion of spontaneity as clarified by Kantian philosophy can also be traced in Leibniz, which is a question that could have improved the comprehension of the spontaneous subject in Kant and Hegel.⁷²⁴ It also would have been possible to discuss what is involved in the fact that this thesis and its critique of Taylor could be classified in a certain sense in what Bourgeois called a « hégélianisme de gauche »⁷²⁵.

Certain discussions between the commentators could not be addressed even if they were still very rich and nuanced: there is for example the point of discord between Pippin and McDowell on the reception of Kant by Hegel that Pippin discusses in one of his

⁷²³ See R. B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism...*, p. 42-59; D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 10-13

⁷²⁴ D. Moggach, *Ibid.*, p. 9-11.

⁷²⁵ B. Bourgeois, *La spéculation hégélienne*, in B. Bourgeois, *Études hégéliennes. Raison et décision*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1992, p. 102.

books on Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*.⁷²⁶ The texts of Kant himself also pose a series of problems that Pippin explores in his article on Kant and spontaneity, but these issues could not be part of the development of the thesis given that there was already too much to say about Hegel and his reception of Kant to dwell on the details of the intricacies of Kant's transcendental deduction.⁷²⁷

Even if these limitations have to be considered, amongst many other issues, Hegel's text in the preface, the introduction and the first section on self-consciousness of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, where there is a clear discussion of human freedom, would manifestly not have the "meaning" it has without the impact of Kant's philosophy in the first critique. This is why the "meaning" of freedom in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, to refer to the title of this thesis, is a "meaning" that invokes Kant's understanding of human subjectivity. This also clearly recalls the interpretive work of Moggach and Pippin about freedom and idealism.

⁷²⁶ See for instance R. B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness...*, p. 39-51.

⁷²⁷ For Pippin's treatment of Kant, see R. B. Pippin, "Kant on the Spontaneity of Mind", p. 449-475.

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