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Hegel on Reflection and Reflective Judgement

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Abstract

I examine the relation between logic and nature in terms of 'reflection', the word that Hegel uses at the end of the *Encyclopaedia Logic* to describe the self-sundering or externalization of the idea into nature. Although nominally the term 'reflection' seems to denote a uniquely mental process and is often used so by Hegel in his early critique of *Reflexionsphilosophie*, in his later writings it also has an irreducibly ontological significance. Hegel describes logic's opening-out to nature as a movement of 'reflection' [*Widerschein*] and he follows Kant in describing the shift from the finite to the infinite in the relation between nature and thought as one of reflective judgement. Although Hegel generally considers reflection to be uniquely concerned with finite cognition and the constitution of finite things, I argue that in his embrace of reflective judgement he sees a key role for reflection in the relation of logic, nature and spirit.

I. Introduction

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* Hegel presents readers with the unforgettable image of non-human animals who, recognizing fully in their own way the 'nothingness' of sensuous nature, immediately fall to and eat it up [*in der völligen Gewißheit ihrer Nichtigkeit langen sie ohne weiteres zu und zehren sie auf*] (*PhG:* §109, 65).[1] In his transition from the logic to the philosophy of nature, however, Hegel describes nature as the 'absolute liberation' of the idea, the 'absolute unity of the pure concept and its reality' (*SL*: 752/573), giving it a much more elevated status than mere nothingness. I will argue in this paper that we can best understand the relation between logic and nature if we attend to the concept of 'reflection' that Hegel uses to describe the self-sundering of the idea into the externalization of nature. Although nominally the term 'reflection' seems to denote a uniquely mental process and is often used so by Hegel in his early critique of *Reflexionsphilosophie*, in Hegel's later writings it also has an irreducibly ontological significance.[2]

Hegel describes the movement from logic to nature in the *Encyclopaedia* as one of 'reflection' [*Widerschein*], and follows Kant in describing the movement from the

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finite to the infinite (in the relation between nature and thought) as one of reflective judgement. Although Hegel is generally critical of the philosophy of reflection, which he considers to be uniquely concerned with finite cognition and the constitution of finite things, I argue that in his embrace of reflective judgement Hegel posits a constitutive role for reflection in the movement both from logic to nature and from nature to spirit. Ultimately, for Hegel the reflective judgement is not 'merely' reflective, i.e., subjectively posited, but a real feature of any object in so far as it is dynamically self-unfolding, like an organism.

While Hegel criticized Kant's reflective use of purposiveness as merely a way to patch up the fundamental shortcomings of the transcendental standpoint, Hegel nonetheless found it essential in developing an account of the dialectical movement toward a rational-speculative system that accounted for the unity of thought, nature and spirit. Closer examination of Hegel's use of the language of reflection and reflective judgement, two terms that, while etymologically linked, refer to complementary bookends of the relationship between logic and nature, will shed light on their dialectical interaction.

In particular, I will argue that Hegel, influenced by Kant's *Critique of Judgement*, adopted a philosophy focused on the rational systematicity of nature in its unity with thought, in analogy to the dynamic structure of an organism. While it is given empirically, an organism cannot be fully explained or understood through the analytical process of reflection alone, and I argue that it was the concept of reflective judgement that Kant introduced in the 'Critique of Teleological Judgement' that inspired Hegel's transformation of the concept of reflection from a purely cognitive to an ontological phenomenon (despite the fact that Kant himself explicitly ruled out such a move). For Kant, the form of the organism provided the impetus for a special kind of reflective judgement, namely teleological judgement. Teleological judgements about nature do not posit an external end toward which nature as a whole or in its specific parts is progressing, but rather have a special heuristic role. As reflective, they make no claim to reality, but can nevertheless be used as a guide to reflection. Although it would be illegitimate to posit final causes as constitutive of things as they are in themselves, Kant argues that without positing purposiveness a priori we would have to present the causality of nature as blind mechanism.

In the case of organisms, Kant says, this is simply impossible, because, were natural entities' structures truly utterly contingent, humans would have no possibility of finding a basis for their unity, and would be forced to look beyond nature for this unity (*KU*: 360). Assuming the unity a priori solves this problem. The two requirements for calling something a natural purpose are 1) that the possibility of the parts of the entity must depend on their relation to the whole, and 2) that the parts of the entity combine into the unity of a whole *because* they are reciprocally cause and effect of their form. All of the parts of an organism produce each other

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and produce the form of the whole as the causality of the body in question (*KU*: 373). This is also the shape of Life, or what Hegel calls the 'immediate idea' (*SL*: 676/470).[3] This point of departure from the nature of the organism led Hegel to a new understanding of reflection as not only a splitting into (finite) parts but also an end-driven (immanent teleological) unity. By understanding reflection and reflective judgement together, then, we can better understand Hegel's articulation of the movement from the *Logic* to the *Philosophy of Nature*.

To be clear, my argument rests on the claim that there are three distinct, yet related, meanings of the concept of 'reflection' in Hegel. 1) 'Reflection' refers to a method of understanding through 'analysis', literally speaking, from the ancient Greek *ana-* or 'up' and *luein,* 'loosen', to separate or split something into its constituent parts in order to know what it is. Correlatively, 'reflection', or splitting, refers to a metaphysical account originated by Kant, amplified by Fichte, and referred to critically by Hegel as the 'philosophy of reflection', which distinguishes between the way something is in itself (being) and how it appears to thought (thinking), where appearance becomes the target and only object of human knowledge. 2) 'Reflection' refers to a splitting in either the subject or the object that either gives rise to the subject/object distinction or accounts for the coming into being and changing of a thing. Both of these senses of reflection are present in the early philosophy that Hegel dismisses as the 'philosophy of reflection', on the grounds that it provides no satisfactory account of how thinking and being are unified.[4] With the adoption of the concept of reflective judgement from Kant, which eventually becomes what he will call 'speculation', Hegel provides, in his later philosophy—namely, the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopaedia Logic*—an account of how the two sides that split eventually come together in a third, 3) subjective/objective kind of 'reflection', one that can also be seen as the fundamental dynamic of nature.[5]

I will begin by looking at Hegel's critique of what he called the 'philosophy of reflection', particularly in Fichte. Hegel, like many of his contemporaries (including Schelling, Hölderlin, Schlegel and Novalis), criticized the philosophy of reflection for prioritizing consciousness over its object. In his early writings, Hegel associated reflection primarily with division and negation, features of analysis and of subjectivity which are exclusively concerned with the finite. Hegel's problematization of reflection still has relevance today; reflection produces highly specialized, focused and multifarious knowledge, but at the price of having no understanding of how all the pieces are united in a whole.

From here, I consider the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, where Hegel again critiques reflection, this time in the guise of a mechanical, mathematical, lifeless accretive understanding of system. Here he introduces a distinction between reflection and speculation, which are etymologically linked as 'mirroring'. Whereas 'reflection', as Hegel uses it in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, refers to a fixed, dualistic opposition, 'speculation' indicates a fluid series of antitheses,

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each of which is eventually overcome not by anything external to it but by its own immanent movement of self-reflection (see Marx 1975: 36). The third part of the paper deals with Hegel's discussion of reflection in nature from both of his *Logic*s, where reflection begins to take on not only a methodological but also a metaphysical significance as the specific activity of nature. Finally, I argue that all these moves reflect Hegel's adoption of Kant's reflective judgement as a way of overcoming the limitations of finite reflection.

II. Hegel's critique of the philosophy of reflection

In his early writings, Hegel uses the term 'reflection' to depict a mechanical, dividing, discursive, analytical process which, when used exclusively by a philosophical method, results in a dead and abstract understanding of nature. Hegel writes that the term 'reflection' is primarily used of light as it is thrown back by a mirrored surface, in this case, the mind. In such a structure there are two parts: first, something immediate that 'just is', and second, the same phenomenon now mediated or 'posited' by the surface against which it has struck (*EL*: §112Z, 176/232).

Reflection as the object of Hegel's critique has several dimensions, the first of which is epistemological and critical in the sense of establishing limits. When we reflect on an object or think about it, we also mediate it. When in reflection we say that all things have an essence, what we mean by this is that they are not truly as they immediately appear to be, and that knowledge is either of appearances alone or is not empirical (*EL*: §112Z, 176/232). Hegel considered reflection to be a necessary mental process; over-emphasis upon reflection, however, is problematic, in that it separates out essence and appearance as two incommensurate logical categories, only one of which gives rise to knowledge of the world.

Second, reflection has a methodological critical significance. Hegel faulted Kant's philosophy for positing an unbridgeable divide between the knowing subject and the realm of nature. Knowledge of phenomenal nature, as shaped by the a priori forms of intuition and the categories of the understanding, is certainly possible for Kant, and moreover necessary and consistent across humans, but such knowledge is governed by the understanding, and as such limited to appearances, not things as they are in themselves. Kant defined transcendental reflection as the process by which one can associate a particular cognitive power with any given representation. In such a process, reflection 'examines and distinguishes the faculties of cognition with which conceptions of objects originate, and which determine whether a given conception belongs to pure understanding or sensuous intuition' (Gasché 1986: 18).[6] As such, transcendental reflection is very different from ordinary empirical reflection, in which intuitions are subsumed under concepts. In an 'investigation', thinking evaluates a judgement with reference to its grounding in

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truth, but in 'reflection', judgements are considered merely according to the cognitive power to which they belong (*KrV*: A261/B317). For Hegel, such a process is overly abstract and severed from the object itself.

Third, reflection is metaphysical. As Hegel notes, 'reflection' in Kant also refers to the split between the realm of appearances and the realm of things as they are in themselves. Hegel intends his critique to target reflection as a stipulated distinction between appearances and reality whose opposition in principle cannot be overcome. The activity of reflection also characterizes the specific activity of nature when it is considered only mechanistically and not also as a living system. In an essay of 1800 entitled 'Fragment of a System', of which only two manuscript pages survive, Hegel discusses the 'activity of nature' as depicted in the philosophy of reflection as a 'positing of life' where:

> Reflection has applied to life its concepts of relation and separation, of the self-subsistent particular (something restricted) and the unifying universal (something un-restricted), and by positing these has turned life into nature. (*SF*: 310/420)

How to understand the distinction between life and nature, and the activity of reflection that turns life into nature? The activity of reflection leads to nature being illuminated by the finite human understanding, which Hegel critiques in the *Differenzschrift* and in the 1802 *Faith and Knowledge*. Reflection posits a separation of the finite and infinite within nature, so that as a result 'nature is not itself life, but is only a life crystallized by reflection' (*SF*: 311/421). Life properly speaking, by contrast, is infinite, a 'life of spirit' (*SF*: 311/421). 'Nature', then, here refers to life de-vivified, dissected, labelled, understood, and dead.

The reflective understanding, historically speaking, failed to find a stable footing in the living realm of infinite connections where everything appears to be relative. Hegel argues that philosophies of reflection limit themselves to finite objects of cognition while merely postulating or positing an unknowable infinite without determination, resulting in a metaphysical duality, one side of which is only accessible through faith. Nature, then, appears to be either nothing but mechanical and dead matter or, at best, animated only in being mediated by subjectivity.

In particular, Hegel criticizes the philosophy of reflection in Kant and Fichte, and even in Schelling. For Fichte, reflection is the activity of the I's becoming aware of its own activity, an awareness that results in self-limitation. The I's activity is infinite, but it becomes self-conscious only in having something against which to posit itself, that is, the finite not-I. Hegel complains of Fichte's theory that the subjective 'I' of self-determination is posited as the ideal, leaving the finite object (nature) to be the real. Unlike Hegel's own eventual system, in Fichte's the real and the ideal hold together merely in the fact that they *ought* to be the same, rather than being truly united (*D*: 132–33/68). Hegel argues that such a

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conception defines nature as determined in its opposition to freedom and therefore 'dead' (*D*: 139–40/76–77). What Fichte does is merely formally suspend the dichotomy by 'nullifying one of the opposites and exalting the other into something infinite' (*D*: 155/94), resulting in a reductive picture of nature and a privileging of consciousness where the stark opposition remains. Reflection as a methodology separates the two in an 'absolute' manner, not allowing for any synthesis of finite and infinite (*D*: 159/99). From the point of view of the *Differenzschrift*, then, the standpoint of reflection's rigid opposition between freedom and nature, and the abstraction of pure form from a manifold of empirical consciousness, render nature both mechanical and lifeless, despite the connection to the 'I'. For Fichte, nature is determined by and for intelligence, becoming thereby nothing but resistance, a mechanical activity of pure opposition (*D*: 143/80). Any unity that it brings about is merely formal (*D*: 159/99).

With regard to overcoming this antinomic structure, Kant's philosophy surpasses Fichte's in that nature in Kant is not absolutely determined by human understanding [*Verstand*], and therefore must be thought of as determined by *another* understanding. Hegel expresses disappointment, however, that purposiveness in Kant is 'to be taken merely as a maxim of our reflective judgement', and that 'nothing is asserted about the actual existence of this other understanding' (*D*: 143/81). Hegel eventually developed this notion of another, spontaneous, understanding that, unlike human discursive understanding, proceeds from whole to parts, understanding the organism first as a 'notion', not a 'lifeless' sum of its parts.

In *Faith and Knowledge* Hegel writes that reflection conceives nature like the 'Iron King' of the fairy tale, that is, a figure animated by self-consciousness, 'whom a human self-consciousness permeates with the veins of objectivity so that he can stand erect' (*GW*: 77/332). The weakness of this understanding of nature arises when these veins are 'sucked out of the king by formal transcendental idealism', upon which the king slumps into 'something in between form and lump, repulsive to look at' (*GW*: 77/332). We can imagine the activity of reflection described here as a network of self-conscious activity animating a robotic, lifeless nature, which collapses into a heap of mechanical parts when the power is turned off (*GW*: 77/332). This is 'the world assessed and … explained from the standpoint of the subject' (*GW*: 154/388).

Schelling, by contrast, articulates a new understanding of the relation between mind and nature as an

> immanent ideality just as intelligence is an immanent reality. The two poles of cognition and being are present in each … but in one system the ideal pole prevails, in the other the real pole. (*D*: 166/71)

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'Ordinary reflection' sees only the contradiction between nature and mind, whereas reason sees that each exists only in and through the other (*D*: 174/77). Even Schelling's talk of opposing poles and potencies of nature remains abstract and lifeless, however, and Hegel ultimately rejects it, most notably in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (*PhG*: §§51, 53). The 'electricity' of nature, which is what Hegel calls its reflection, can, despite the efforts of the reflective philosophers, never be turned off; it perpetuates itself through splitting into negative and positive poles and coming back together, a unified natural process of expansion and contraction, externalization and recollection, also found in the growth and development of organisms, including plants and animals.

III. Reflection in the preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*

In the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel most sharply contrasts his own view of reflection to that of Kant, Fichte, Schelling or the German Romantics. Although on the surface nature seems to figure only in analogy to mind here, a more direct account of it is present in muted form. Verene (2007) characterizes the entire Preface as Hegel's critical account of reflection, to be replaced with speculation, while Marx (1975) argues that in the *Phenomenology* Hegel no longer uses the term 'reflection' in the sense that he employed it in the *Differenzschrift*, where it referred both to the philosophy he attacked but also to a 'true speculation'.

In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel has indeed replaced the word 'true reflection' with 'speculation', and he underlines their distinction by couching reflection in mechanistic and speculation in organic terms respectively; nevertheless, reflection continues to carry a double sense. From the outset of the Preface, Hegel uses the metaphor of the plant to illustrate the absurdity of getting fixated on the antitheses of truth and falsity, of appearance and thing in itself. Conventional opinion tends either to fully accept or resoundingly reject a given philosophical system, rather than seeing it as a part of the 'progressive unfolding of truth'. To consider the development of a differing philosophical system to be a refutation of the ones that preceded it is like saying that a flower's bud is 'refuted' by its blossom (*PhG*: §2, 2/12).

This amputated organic metaphor for a misguided form of reflection, which designates the aim of philosophical investigation as nothing more than a 'lifeless universal' lacking any actual existence, results in a 'corpse which has left the guiding tendency behind it' (*PhG*: §3, 2–3). The introduction to the *Phenomenology* is full of figures of death and dissection, and they always refer to a reflective philosophical stance that fixes difference rather than seeing it as part of the 'rich and concrete abundance' of a dynamic and constantly evolving 'life in its concrete richness' (*PhG*: §4, 3/14). Hegel sarcastically describes how reflection should *not* be

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conceived as a "'report clear as noonday" on the universe as an organism',[7] which strips this living being of flesh and blood, and covers it with identifying labels 'like a skeleton with scraps of paper stuck all over it', leaving the living entity 'boxed up' and 'dead' (*PhG*: §51, 31/50–51).

Such frequent recourse to metaphors of organic mutilation indicates that Hegel is referring not just to spiritual but also natural life. In calling reason a 'purposive activity' and explicitly alluding to Aristotle's definition of nature, Hegel aligns the development of the concept with a nature imbued with immanent purposiveness, denying any external teleology. He writes that 'purpose is what is immediate and *at rest*, the unmoved which is also *self-moving*' and which as such is not passive, but active (*PhG*: §22, 12/26). This designation will become important in the discussion of reflective judgement, where Hegel calls purposive nature 'subject' in addition to 'substance'. As subject, nature is not in opposition to consciousness, as natural consciousness would have it. It is the task of science not only to overcome the standpoint of natural consciousness, which knows objects only in their antithesis to itself, but also to demonstrate that spirit is not merely an inward *in-itself,* but is also united with an actual dimension, its externalization in the world (*PhG*: §26, 15/31).

Hegel aligns reflection with *analysis* or breaking an idea up, the 'activity of dissolution' that is the 'power and work of the Understanding [*die Kraft und Arbeit des Verstandes*]', a kind of 'non-actuality', existing on its own as 'the tremendous power of the negative'. However, as the famous passage continues, 'the life of spirit is not the life that shrinks from death and keeps itself untouched by devastation, but rather the life that endures it and maintains itself in it', finding itself even in its dismemberment (*PhG*: §32, 18–19/36). Making fixed thoughts fluid again is the task of speculative thought, a process that can even be observed in sensuous existence [*sinnliche Dasein*], where we can see that the shedding of the flower's petals or the severing of the tail of the lizard does not necessarily result in the death of the organism, and can even cause it to regenerate itself or metamorphose. As Hegel writes, 'the inner emergence or becoming of substance [*das innere Entstehen oder das Werden der Substanz*] is an unbroken transition into externality … and conversely, the becoming of existence is the return back into essence' (*PhG*: §42, 24/43).

In contrast to the organic metaphors, Hegel uses mathematical, mechanical or lifeless language to describe reflection in Descartes or Kant, where dismemberment is not part of a natural process of becoming and therefore insight is an activity external to the thing (*PhG*: §43, 25/43). In such a picture, nature 'cannot cope with the sheer unrest of life' and the self-moving is reduced to 'mere material' (§46, 27/46). Mathematics deals with 'material dead space and the equally lifeless numerical unit' (§48, 28/47) and thus cannot be the basis for an investigation of nature, since it would result in nature's 'being flayed' and having 'its skin wrapped around a lifeless knowledge' (§52, 31/51). Such a method, which abstracts from the immanent

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life of the thing, results in a 'reflection into itself away from the content'. Instead, Hegel argues that the content of substance is 'its own reflection into itself' (§53, 33/52). We see here that Hegel uses the same term, 'reflection', for both the lifeless, analytical or mathematical approach to nature *and* for the living concept.

In Hegel's methodological commitment 'to determine substance as subject,' reflection as a process of analysis plays an important role (Henrich 1978: 95). However, the analytical approach in science on its own is, at its extreme, contentless; nothing more than the pure activity of the subject. Hegel urges 'restraint' on the observer, a willingness to give up some of the freedom of arbitrary movement and to 'sink this freedom into the content, letting it move spontaneously of its own nature' (*PhG*: §58, 36/56).[8] Thus although initially Hegel associated reflection with 'dead nature', he subsequently found a place for it in his account of the self-regulating cycle of life, namely, in the metamorphosis that characterizes organic development.

Hegel came to this conclusion by way of Kant's discussion of reflective judgement in the *Critique of Judgement*. For Hegel, the order of nature is both material and rational, indivisibly body and mind. Nature and mind are so completely intertwined that to think of them separately renders nature an aggregate and mind an abstraction. Both can be thought of as possessing a reflective activity and a speculative one, as I will elaborate below. The fact that reflective judgement in Kant takes two main forms, the judgement of beauty and the judgement of the purposive organization of nature, manifests Kant's discontent, too, with the conclusion that the activity of the two realms is completely disparate (*GW*: 76–77/332).

IV. Reflection in Hegel's logics and philosophy of nature

In the *Science of Logic,* reflection denotes a splitting of an existent into an essence (a thing-in-itself) and its *Schein,* into its causal ground and its phenomenal manifestation. As Jaeschke has shown, the concept of reflection undergoes a significant change here from the way it is discussed in Hegel's early Jena writings, from a conception bound to consciousness and the infinite 'I', to a speculative account in the *Logic* of the transition from subject to substance (Jaeschke 1978: 96). Reflection is introduced in the 'Doctrine of Essence' when the account of Being as immediacy at the outset of the logic is demonstrated to be illusory, and thus negated. The account of reflection thus begins with essence's definition as negation or 'sublated Being', and moves from here to a distinction between essence and appearance, where essence as traditionally conceived is contrasted with appearance. Hegel demonstrates that essence is not simply to be understood as what lies beneath appearances as an unchanging substrate or inner nature, but that it itself, through reflection, just *is* what appears and changes; therefore, reflection is negativity and

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mediation (*SL*: 342/20).[9] The possible points of view that reflection encompasses thus never exhaust the object's own nature, since they include all the ways in which it is related to something else (*EL*: §174Z, 252/326). Hegel defines existence as the unity of inward reflection and reflection-into another, that is, as a multiplicity of existents, each of which is self-enclosed and self-referential, but which, when taken as a unity, are also interdependent and infinitely connected. The reflective understanding pursues the connection of every event to a ground, linking each phenomenon as 1) conditioned by something else, and in turn 2) the condition of other things. The domain of the reflective understanding is thus the buzzing blooming world of causal connections and explanations, and it follows the pure activity of reflection in nature. While reflection's activity is fundamentally division or self-sundering, it also connects, through reflective judgement. Hegel writes:

> Existence is … the indeterminate multitude of existents as inwardly reflected, which are at the same time, and just as much, shining-into-another, or relational; and they form a world of interdependence and of an infinite connectedness of grounds with what is grounded. (*EL*: §123, 192/253)

In other words, 'there is no pre-relational individual. Rather, individuals are solely constituted in and through relations' (Abazari 2017: 255).

For the later Hegel, reflexivity always refers to a totality of thought and being, a genuine identity of subject and object, while the distinction between appearance and thing-in-itself is reformulated as for-consciousness and in-itself. The term 'existence' refers to a state of emergence whereby what exists or appears emerges from a unity of the self-same and what is other. Existence just *is* that which distinguishes itself from itself, which is why the logical idea cannot be said truly to exist until it is realized in nature, making nature much more than a mere 'nothing'. Neither ground nor existence can exist without the other and indeed, existence just *is* self-sublating ground (*EL*: §123Z, 193/254).

Thus in Hegel's later writings, especially in the *Encyclopaedia,* reflection is not only a logical but also a natural structure. While logic is the science of the truth (the Idea) considered abstractly in terms of thinking, the philosophy of nature concerns the same truth embodied in its otherness, and the philosophy of spirit expresses its return to itself out of its otherness (*EL*: §18, 42/64). Reflection is *both* the movement of splitting into two *and* the overcoming of this opposition (Jaeschke 1978: 101), and the concept of reflection is *both* mental ('external') *and* immanent in nature (103).

This process of reflection applies not only to the nature of existence in general, but also to the structure of any given organism. In the *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel notes that Kant had defined living existence as constituting its own end, encompassing change within the 'notion' or unity of the whole; when the body

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of the organism develops or metamorphoses, 'it is merely the otherness of the Notion that changes', without altering its essential nature (*PN*: §337: 11/339). For Kant, an organism possesses an inner *formative* force, inexplicable by mere mechanism, that organizes and propagates it (*KU*: 374). Kant acknowledged the necessity of conceiving the whole of nature in analogy to a purposive organic form, but only as a heuristic, regulative, a priori assumption that orients interrogation. For Hegel, then, an 'organism' refers to any existing organized system, as well as its structure considered in abstraction. Hegel referred to the solar system or any broader organized natural form as organisms, in addition to living beings (*PN*: §337: 11/339), indicating, however, that a living organism is superior to a merely 'logical' one. This superiority stems from the fact that, in the living organism, the purpose is immanent within it from the beginning 'in its implicitness' and orients its becoming, rather than being external to it. In the case of the living organism, the result 'is also that which precedes the result, so that the beginning is the same as the end' (*PN*: §337: 12/340). This immanent teleology also characterizes the shape of the dialectic, where the purpose, again, is not external but internal to the movement of spirit. Just as life 'constitutes its own movement, and so initiates its subjectification', making itself into its other and giving itself objective form in order to return to itself as subject, so, too, does the concept progress to Idea (*PN*: §337: 12/340). Reflection is an essential part of the *initiation* of this process, for without splitting the concept can neither constitute itself as other nor return to itself.

Reflection refers in this context to a splitting or externalization that occurs within the material being itself as it grows and changes. Hegel famously gives the example of the relationship between a plant and its seed:

> Just as the germ [*Kern*], which is the plant-in-itself, is simply the activity of self-development, so the thing generally also progresses beyond its mere in-itself (understood as abstract reflection-into-itself) to reveal itself to be also reflection-into another. (*EL*: §124Z, 194/255)

Here 'reflection-into-itself' names the natural process of contraction into bud, as well as the nature of the plant in-itself, whereas reflection-into-another refers to both the expansion into leaf or flower and the plant's relationship to other beings, including soil, water, sun and anything else it encounters.

The distinctions Hegel draws between different spheres of nature, from mineral to vegetable to animal, can also be represented in terms of types of reflection. The mineral sphere is unindividuated except through the process of an external splitting that bears a likeness to 'analysis': a piece of a stone is a shard, not an individual. A mushroom that just 'springs from the earth' has only 'general reflection' (*JSE*: 115). A plant's reflection is not fully individual because it is still bound to the earth (*JSE*: 120), so its processes of assimilation and excretion are

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continuous with the mineral realm (*JSE*: 131), unlike those of an animal which is fully reflected into itself (*JSE*: 137) and can move itself as an individuated whole (*JSE*: 158). A leaf can be understood only in relation to the plant of which it forms a part. An animal's limb or internal organ has a mutually reciprocal relationship to the whole, individuated animal. In the *Zusatz* on animal assimilation in the *Encyclopaedia Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel writes that the Understanding, whose instrument is reflection, regards chemical and mechanical mediations that happen in the digestive process as external relationships. However, viewed properly, from the perspective of reflection-back-into-itself, these processes are part of the 'free vitality [*Lebendigkeit*] and self-feeling' (*PN*: §365Z: 406/494) of the organism as a self-sufficient individual, the relationship of a living whole to its parts. Hegel writes that 'the Idea has truth and actuality only in so far as it has subjectivity implicit within it', and this happens only with the emergence of life (*PN*: §337: 273/337).

The parts of the organism, considered independently of the whole, are lifeless. Likewise, the splitting character of reflection threatens to turn nature into a hopelessly multifarious entity to which no unity can be ascribed. Hegel's critique of the reflective activity of the understanding from the *Phenomenology of Spirit* focused on the accretive account of system to which this type of thinking led. In this final section we turn to Hegel's appropriation of Kant's concept of reflective judgement to account for the unity of the system through its very reflective activity.

V. Overcoming a one-sided sense of reflection

In reflective judgement, according to Kant, the mind starts from an empirically given particular, a natural entity beautiful for its form or wondrous for its organization, and searches for a universal, referring given representations a priori to a transcendental principle of formal purposiveness which concerns merely the inner state of the subject. Without the a priori, indeterminate principle of purposiveness, Kant argues, any investigation into the unity of the plurality of discrete empirical laws could not be undertaken at all.[10] For Kant, transcendental reflection and reflective judgement have in common a relation to cognition that does not correspond to anything external in a manner that would require a judgement of truth or falsity. Teleological judging is brought into the investigation of nature *problematically*, by *analogy* with causality in terms of purposes, 'without presuming to *explain* it in terms of that causality' (*KU*: 360). This makes teleological judgement reflective rather than determinative.

Kant introduced reflective judgement in the Third *Critique* as a way of assuring unity and orientation in the dual human project of coming to know and bringing about the final purpose of existence in the natural world. The introduction of reflective judgement aims toward overcoming what appeared to be a dualism in

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Kant's philosophy, an 'abyss' between nature and freedom. Although purposiveness in the sense of unifying knowledge of the natural world (that all discrete natural laws *ought to* work together and make sense as a rational whole of nature) is merely presupposed a priori as the condition under which this project can be undertaken, rather than being a constitutive principle of knowledge, reflective judgement is nevertheless crucial for bridging the gap between theoretical and practical philosophy (*KU*: 196).

Kant explicitly argues that introducing reflective judgement into the philosophy of nature is necessary in order to re-animate it. For:

> [I]t is clear that reflective judgement, by its nature, cannot undertake to *classify* all of nature in terms of its empirical variety unless it presupposes that nature itself *makes* its transcendental laws *specific* in terms of some principle. Now this principle can only be that of [nature's] appropriateness for the power of judgement itself, [i.e. for judgement's attempt] to find among things, [despite] their immense diversity in terms of [all the] possible empirical laws, sufficient kinship to be able to bring them under empirical concepts (classes), and bring these under more general laws (higher genera), and so arrive at an empirical system of nature. (*KU:* 215)

In the case of teleological judgement, without the presupposition that the diverse multitude of discrete empirical laws of nature could be organized into a rational system, the human being would be overwhelmed by the sheer number of differences among natural things; as Nuzzo notes, 'no order would be discernible and hence no comprehension possible', and 'everything would appear in a state of confusion and chaos' (Nuzzo 2013: 23).

Hegel transforms Kant's conclusion in arguing that the orderability of nature as such, its total, systematic structure, can be discerned reflectively not just through a mental act performed in presupposing purposiveness as an a priori regulative principle of judgement, but also by observing nature itself in its concrete activity as a whole. He focuses on the 'self-organizing entity' (*KU*: 290–91) whose development is not exhaustively comprehensible through mechanical causes, since the *whole* of the organism, including its development in time, must be kept in mind in order to understand the particular activity of any one of its parts. Each bodily organ has a purpose only in its relation to the whole animal, each bud or leaf in relation to the whole plant. This whole can often not be observed in simultaneity with all of its parts, which develop successively or discursively; however, knowledge of an organism *all at once* can be obtained not discursively, but intuitively (Förster 2010: 323–47). While we primarily observe this inherent unity as the essence of any organism, it is also the basis for thinking nature itself as a rationally ordered system.

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Hegel acknowledges that Kantian reflective judgement attempts to overcome the divide between intuition and concept, but he argues that it remains committed to an insurmountable lacuna between them. While repeatedly critiquing even the notion that mind is 'purely subjective', however, he points to the ideas of reason as a place where Kant aimed beyond the purely finite stance of reflection that pits nature in opposition to mind. Hegel ultimately disparages these ideas as remaining a 'mere negativity to something that reflection has fixed' (*GW*: 76–77). In contrast, three aspects of reflective judgement make it important for Hegel.

First, despite Kant's description of reflective judgement as purely subjective, Hegel writes that 'the concept of absolute reflection' is implicit in it, by which he means that because the universal for which reflective judgement searches arises out of the immediate particular, it cannot be anything external to it, 'but is rather its true being' (*SL*: 350/31).

Secondly, Hegel was especially interested in Kant's articulation of at least the possibility of a purely spontaneous intelligence, where what is present in thought is also given in actuality (*KU*: §77, 402). Such an intelligence does not need to proceed discursively from one part of nature to another as a finite mind would, but intuits the whole at once (*KU*: 349). Reflective judgement seems to be the human's replacement for such an understanding, where the part leads not just to the next part contiguous to it, but also to a non-sensory and in some sense retroactive intuition that encompasses the whole.[11] In Kant's description of the living organism, Hegel finds that 'the final cause is a moulding principle and an energy immanent in the matter' (*EL*: §57, 103/141).

Thirdly, the reflective judgement provides a part that mirrors and can give insight into the whole, just as a part of a developing organism can illuminate its entire structure.[12] As Dahlstrom notes, 'Kant's account of inner purposiveness in nature is in Hegel's mind nothing short of a disclosure of what Hegel understands as the "Idea", or the unity of concept and reality' (Dahlstrom 1998: 174). Of course, for Kant, the account of inner purposiveness is limited to the individual organism, and any extension of this account of purposiveness to nature as a whole rests on an a priori principle of reflective judgement employed merely heuristically.

Reflective judgement, in Hegel's view, expressed a Kantian move toward overcoming the opposition between nature and thought, allowing for a passage from sensory imagination to moral freedom, even if Kant himself was unwilling to embrace it as anything more than a principle assumed for the sake of unitary cognition. In adopting Kant's theory of reflective judgement, however, Hegel fundamentally modified it in the service of a realist understanding of reflection. In other words, 'In his speculative theory of life, Hegel both spiritualizes Kant's philosophy of nature and, crucially, naturalizes his philosophy of mind and freedom' (Hance 1998: 52).

Hegel judges the usual pursuit of reflection to be one-sided because it 'leaves the question of a final purpose unanswered' and calls for the reflective teleological

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judgement. Hegel writes that Kantian reflective judgement is important because it constitutes a connecting middle term between the universal of reason and the particular of intuition. He calls this a 'concrete universal', because the universal is immanent in the individual, making it 'active', by which he means 'seeking to repel itself from itself' (*SL*: 656/433–34). A determining judgement, by contrast, is a static abstraction that only becomes concrete in something else, namely, the particular. If the principle of inner purposiveness had been further 'adhered to and developed' into something not merely subjective but a principle of living nature, Hegel writes, 'it would have brought about a completely different, much higher way of envisaging this purposiveness' (*EL*: §58R, 104/142). Reflective judgement, in Hegel's view, is immanent to phenomena, rather than the act of a judging subject (*EL*: §174Z, 252/326; see also *LA*: 123/166).

Hegel argues that reflection is also more multi-faceted than Kant would have it. In the *Science of Logic* he describes three forms of reflection. The first form of reflection, posited reflection, posits a negation, announcing what a thing is not, and thereby implying what it is; such a statement is posited, that is, 'just there', seemingly issuing from nothing. The second form, external reflection, elaborates a connection and distinction between essence and appearance where what truly is lies beyond yet is connected to what is present to the senses as cause to effect, or essence to appearance (even though the latter is negated as non-essential). The third form of reflection, determining reflection, brings posited reflection and external reflection together (*SL*: 346/32).

To elucidate the difference between these three types of reflection, I return to the *Phenomenology of Spirit,* this time to 'Force and the Understanding', where Consciousness attempts to understand and theorize the essence of an external reality that it still takes to be something over and against which exists. In this section of the *Phenomenology* Consciousness still conceptualizes nature as mechanical and devoid of subjectivity, yet in its development we discern the genesis of a reflective nature in which thought is intertwined with being; this movement implicitly contains the emergence of Self-Consciousness and life. By attending to its dynamic shifts, we can also see a transition from splitting to unity, or from reflection to reflective judgement.

At the beginning of 'Force and the Understanding', significantly, Hegel writes that 'for us' phenomenologists, 'the reflection is the same on both sides', namely, that of the subject and of the object. However, at first Consciousness 'has for its content merely the objective essence', and therefore it is taken up only as an external reality over and against an observing consciousness (*PhG*: §132, 80/108). The mutual involvement and indeed identity in difference of Consciousness and its object only becomes apparent at the end of the section. 'Force and the Understanding' begins with a mechanical and external view of nature, and ends with an understanding of their mutual relationship. From a purely formal,

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mechanical or physical view of being, consciousness transitions to an account of the interdependence of the living forces of nature and of subjectivity.

In 'Force and the Understanding' Hegel describes a tripartite shift away from a broadly metaphysical conception of natural essence that posits a 'noumenal' realm as the other of the finite realm of *Schein,* where what is 'reflected into self' is what truly is, yet appears to be something else for consciousness ('posited reflection'). Posited reflection takes appearance to be self-referential *Schein* or 'shine', a 'nothingness or lack of essence' (*SL*: 346/25), unconnected in any meaningful way to what truly is. From here, consciousness becomes a 'reflection into itself', a Newtonian scientific understanding of reality as a 'tranquil realm of laws' underlying appearances, where what *is* can be considered doubled in its reality 'in-itself' as a force and its expression 'for itself' ('external reflection'). Finally, force and its expression are comprehended as a dynamic interplay between the conceptual and the real, such that either can only one-sidedly be named either a supersensible or a sensible realm ('determining reflection'). Hegel calls this a distinction 'of itself from itself' in such a way that what *is* relates to itself as an other with an analogous structure to itself, a difference that in fact 'is no difference'[13]; this is essentially the structure of self-consciousness as well. I argue that the transition from posited reflection to external reflection to determining reflection follows precisely this structural shift.

Recall that in the trajectory of the *Phenomenology of Spirit,* subsequent to discovering the 'nothingness' of sensuous immediacy in Sense-Certainty, consciousness shifts to Perception, where the particular thing is conceived as a bundle of universal qualities, but consciousness oscillates between differing visions of what constitutes its truth (as either object or subject). In 'Force and the Understanding' Hegel considers force, which lies between and connects subject and object, as a nonsensible 'unconditioned universal' whose effects, such as those of electricity or magnetism, are nonetheless visible in the objects we sense (*PhG*: §134, 80/108).

Hegel uses the concept of 'force' in this section to foreground consciousness's attention-shift away from the static objects considered in perception toward a world of constant self-diremption that nonetheless remains identical to itself, namely, force. As Hegel writes in the *Encyclopaedia Logic*:

> the reflection-into-another of what exists is not separate from its inward reflection; the ground is the unity of these two, out of which existence has gone forth. Hence, what exists contains relationality and its own manifold connectedness with other existents in itself; and it is reflected within itself as ground. (*EL*: §124, 193/254)

This 'relation to self as other' eventually comes to be seen as characterizing not only mechanically interacting nature, but also 1) living nature, as a self-directing,

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reciprocally conditioning whole, and 2) the structure of self-consciousness; both entities are considered in analogy to the individual organism, which relates to itself precisely in its own self-differing. Hegel writes that *Schein,* or 'appearance', is more than just immediacy; it is immediacy conceived as the other of something that does not appear, or 'shine which is internalized and therefore alienated from its immediacy'. Therefore he gives it an 'alien', non-German name, '*Reflexion*' (*SL*: 345/24).

In posited reflection, immediacy is conceived of as a 'turning back' in the sense that a supersensible realm is merely posited, where *Schein* is 'the negative of itself'. Reflection is the 'sublating of *its other*, of the immediacy'. In positing, reflection is a 'presupposing' of that which cannot be sensed, such that immediacy 'comes on the scene simply and solely as a turning back' (*SL*: 347/24). Likewise, Force in its first moment is a self-identical essence posited as an absolute antithesis between being-for-self and being-for another (*PhG*: §136, 81/110), such as the Kantian distinction between things as they are in themselves and appearances. Reflection as posited refers both to a reflection outward and a reflection inward, but the two do not correspond in any way that would allow knowledge of the in-itself.

External or 'real' reflection differs from posited reflection in that it 'presupposes itself as sublated, as the negative of itself', and 'in this determination, it is doubled' (*SL*: 348/28). In 'Force and the Understanding', the second moment sees force doubled, for example, with a Newtonian inert realm of laws that can be deduced from the appearances they effect in the phenomenal world. As such, external reflection brings into the picture the activity of the reflecting subject, which inversely mirrors the reflection of the object. Although the discernment of the reflection occurs in the mind of the subject, it reflects real distinctions within the object. External reflection still posits an opposition that cannot be overcome, however. As Hegel puts it:

> The usual error of reflection is to take *essence* as what is merely *inner*. If it is taken only in this way, then this view of it is also a quite *external* one and that 'essence' is the empty external abstraction. (*EL*: §140R, 209/274)

Determining reflection, like the inverted world of 'Force and the Understanding', brings posited and external reflection together in a unity (*SL*: 351/32). Just prior to his discussion of determining reflection, Hegel includes a long remark on reflection in Kant. Reflection, he writes, is usually taken in a subjective sense as the movement of judging. Hegel describes reflective judgement as a judgement that 'transcends an immediately given representation and seeks more universal determinations for it or compares it with such determinations' (*SL*: 350/31). Kant himself intends such a search for the universal for a given particular in reflective judgement to be an external reflection, in Hegel's view. As Kant describes it, the particular is

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given, but the universal derives purely from the attunement of the subject's cognitive powers, that is, merely subjectively. The universality of the reflective judgement is entirely dependent on the activity of the reflective subject, and in particular derives from the subject's disinterestedness. Although reflective judgement as Kant describes it remains merely 'external' (in Hegel's taxonomy), Hegel nonetheless argues that 'the concept of absolute reflection, too, is implicit in it' (*SL:* 350/31). What Hegel means by this is that in reflective judgement, 'what reflection does to the immediate, and the determinations that derive from it, is not anything external to it but is rather its true being' (*SL:* 350/31). In other words, as we noted above, the activity of the reflecting subject mirrors real distinctions in the object itself. Thus, although overall Kant's theory of judgement is merely external, what Hegel calls determining reflection is implicit within it.

The discussion of determining reflection is analogous to the comprehension, in 'Force and the Understanding', of the inverted world, which introduces to Consciousness the external world as itself. Two forms of reflection, the reflection/diremption of the subject who posits the distinction between appearance and reality, and that of the object, which is split into its phenomenal and essential nature, are here brought together. The underlying law of the supersensible world is brought squarely into the realm of the sensible, and 'such an antithesis of inner and outer, of appearance and the supersensible, as of two different kinds of actuality, we no longer find here' (*PhG*: §159, 98/129). Likewise, determining reflection brings together the truth of positing and external judgement. At the end of 'Force and the Understanding', Hegel calls this unity 'infinity', or 'the simple essence of life' (*PhG:* §162, 100/132). What he means by this articulation is that the inverted world, like consciousness, and like life itself taken as a self-maintaining whole, preserves itself through repeated self-diremptions or reflections. Part and whole mutually and reciprocally imply each other.[14]

Ultimately, Hegel argues that reflection, even external reflection, which is the object of most of his critique of Kant, should not be understood solely at the level of consciousness (*SL*: 350/30).[15] This 'determining reflection' reflects the reciprocal relation between the subject's reflection on the object and the object's own nature, resulting in a combined form of judgement melding Kant's determinative and reflective judgement. When we speak of reflection as a judgement, then, we do so by abstracting reflection from its already immanent presence in the external, natural world. In other words, 'The sentence "I reflect on a thing" is … misleading. The sentence should be "The thing reflects its deeper truth in my mind"' (Carlson 2003: 31).[16] Marcuse, too, argues that 'reflection is not primarily the process of thinking but the process of being itself' (Marcuse 1973: 143).

In fact, the methodological version of reflection's finite nature results not only from consciousness's own limitations, but also from its exclusive focus on the *division* of the material world into its component parts, as opposed to considering

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these parts in their relation to the whole of nature as a system. If the finitude of reflection is to be overcome, this can be done only in and with nature, whose own activity is precisely that of reflection, namely, the 'reflection' of parts in harmony with their end or whole. The analogy for this reciprocal causal unity of parts and whole is the organism, the presence of which in nature 'shows the *actuality* of the *Ideal* even for the senses' (*EL*: §55R, 102/140).

Hegel distinguishes the judgement of reflection from qualitative judgement or the judgement of 'thereness', which describes the object within the formal confines of perception and description, e.g., 'the plant is green'. Reflective judgement, by contrast, describes the object qua existent in its relationship and concrete connectedness with others in an external world, for example, 'this plant is curative'. Reflective judgement can also be connected to a perspectival consideration, and 'the more concrete the object, the more points of view it offers to reflection' (*EL*: §174Z, 252/326).

With the preceding discussion in mind, we can turn to the perplexing wording of Hegel's account of the movement from the sphere of logic to that of nature. In the 1830 *Encyclopaedia*, Hegel writes that 'considered according to [the] unity that it has with itself, the Idea that is for itself is intuiting and the intuiting Idea is Nature' (*EL*: §244, 307/393). By using the word 'intuiting', or *anschauen,* Hegel refers to sense perception and the realm of nature, that is, to external objects that affect our senses. By separating out our power of reception through sensation, on the one hand, and our active capacity to form the content of empirical intuition through the concepts of the understanding, the Kantian account of cognition presents nature only through 'external reflection', where the cognition of the knower is external to what is known. Hegel insists that the Idea does not merely let 'life *shine* within itself as finite cognition', as would be the case in a Kantian vision of the relation between the epistemic subject and the phenomenon/noumenon, but that it in fact '*resolves to release out of itself* into freedom the moment of its particularity or of the initial determining and otherness, [i.e.] the *immediate Idea* as its reflexion [*Widerschein*], or itself as *Nature*' (*EL*: §244, 307/393). The Idea itself, retrospectively discerned, divides itself actively into its otherness, or externalizes itself into nature; in the unity of being, reflection and intuition are united in such a way that neither its subjective nor objective character predominates.

The language of opposition that Hegel draws between 'finite cognition' and the Idea's act of 'releasing [nature] out of itself' in freedom as a reflexion indicates that he considers reflection to have a simultaneously epistemological and ontological significance; it is fundamentally an 'ontology of the concept', as Houlgate notes (2011: 142), citing Jaeschke. In transcribing the Latinate '*Reflexion'* into the German *Widerschein,* emphasizing the 're-' or *wider*, Hegel reminds the reader that there is always a dual directionality or reciprocity to a reflection, both outward and back inward. What is divided will eventually be reunited, something that we see

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in the natural world. Rendering the term in German rather than Latin indicates that what is reflected is no longer alien to what does the reflecting. As Zambrana puts it, 'reflection must … be understood as the reflexive character of things themselves, rather than the activity of an I or the determining power of an extrasensuous principle' (Zambrana 2015: 69). Thus for Hegel, following Goethe as well as Schelling,[17] reflection is characteristic of living things themselves, not just the product of the activity of a cognizing subject.[18]

Widerschein is a term adopted from Schelling and Goethe (see, e.g., Schelling 1994: 182), and also used by Hegel in his *Lectures on Fine Art* (*LA*: 524/594), specifically to indicate an externality that reflects an inner, non-material nature. This inner nature is not the chronological origin of the external thing; rather, it is nature's own rational order, which can only be intuited by the subject retrospectively with the development of spirit. This connection of the singular appearance of every natural thing to a universal unifying idea is an instance of reflective judgement, which Hegel refers to as one of the few Kantian concepts that can be considered 'genuinely speculative' in making a movement directly from the realm of finite experience to a realm beyond the world of experience. Whereas for Kant, reflective judgement is the cognitive movement from an immediate singularity to a universal that cannot be determined and thus is purely subjective, for Hegel the universal is 'concurrently concrete' in reflective judgement, existing immanently in the object as a 'concrete unity between thought and sense representations' (*EL*: §55R, 102/140). Reason here is self-driving and generative or creative, aiming toward, ultimately, not only conditioned universality (nature) but also absolute concepts in spirit.

Hegel insists that there can be 'no transition' [*kein Übergang*] between the Idea and nature, and that the determination of nature 'has not issued from a process of becoming', meaning that the idea 'freely releasing itself into its self-determination as nature' indicates its logical rather than chronological precedence over its physical manifestation (*SL*: 753/573).[19] A 'transition' would imply a sequential, ontologically continuous movement and also an ascension to a higher level. What the language of 'free releasement' suggests is that there is no mechanical causality or necessity at work in the movement from logic to nature; this 'release' in no way implies an efficient cause, any more than *kenosis* does in religious language. Nature does not issue from a God-like creative act or thought, but rather embodies in its very order a concrete idea, the universal structure of which can only be ascertained after-the-fact, just as the totality of an organism cannot be discerned by merely adding together its pieces one by one but must be conceptualized from the perspective of the whole, which itself must be imagined, since it cannot be fully intuited by the human understanding.[20] Nature can thus be called 'nothing' only in so far as it is posited by the subject as merely sensuously immediate, as nonhuman animals do.

Reflection in the movement from logic to philosophy of nature thus describes a self-sundering of material nature that eventually gives rise to thought through the

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evolution of human beings who have the capacity then to retrospectively discern the order that was present in nature from its 'germ'. This is Hegel's sense of 'judgement', which splits [*ur-teilen*], a reciprocal relation of subject and object. Thought in turn recognizes and organizes the diverse empirical laws of nature into a unity/system (subject becoming substance or Concept becoming Idea in the sense of a living system). For Hegel, reflective judgement links thought to nature in a unity, not just in thought's own system (which would continue to hold nature and the understanding apart). Hegel argues that a move in the direction of this interpretation is already implicitly present in Kant's own text where 'the end-relation is more than judgement; it is the syllogism of the self-subsistent free Concept that unites itself with itself through objectivity' (*SL*: 739/554). Through the generation of a conceptual unity, reflective judgement reunites what had been split by original reflection. Although Hegel relentlessly critiques reflection as a finite attitude toward knowing, he nonetheless puts reflection forward as a way of understanding the relationship between particular and universal. Thus consciousness and nature are correlative, and this correlation can be understood through the concept of reflection.

Some commentators have wanted to restrict reflection to its epistemological sense for fear of endorsing a dogmatic metaphysical or mystical interpretation of Hegel's logic with (as Johnston puts it, arguing against this interpretation), a 'mega-Mind pulling the strings of finite natural and human realities' (Johnston 2012: 104).[21] However, reflection refers not to a purely ideal existence, but to an order discerned in a material being by analytically distinguishing between how it appears and its underlying cause as two seemingly discrete phenomena, while simultaneously bringing them together in a single explanation. Hegel gives the example of the relationship of a fire to a lightning flash that causes it, and of the constitution of a people to their life-circumstances (*EL*: §123Z, 193/254). Reflection organizes a continually changing world by tracing the underlying forces that bring about these changes, as well as the constitution inherent to a natural being that allows it to adapt to its changing environment, while reflective judgement draws these dynamic relationships together in a systematic, rational whole. 'When *we* consider the ground of something, this ground is not something abstractly inward', Hegel writes, but instead 'is … itself an existent again' (*EL*: §123Z, 193/254, my emphasis). Yet reflection 'leaves the question of a final purpose unanswered' (*EL*: §123Z, 193/254), thereby necessitating reflective judgement. Reflection and reflective judgement draw together subject and object, as two structurally identical sides of a whole, reuniting what had been split. Whereas in Kant's case the split occurs between the idea of nature as mechanism and human freedom, for Hegel the diremption or reflection emerges from a previous, implicit unity, and when re-united the whole result of reflective judgement constitutes the explicit actuality of what was present in the beginning, whether logical, material, or spiritual. Thus, by

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considering Hegel's remarks on reflection and reflective judgement together, the relationship between logic and nature can be demystified.

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Notes

[1] Abbreviations:

All German texts, except *Jenaer Systementwürfe*, are from Hegel (1970).

D = Hegel, *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, trans. W. Cerf and H. S. Harris (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988)/*Werke* 2.

EL = Hegel, *The Encyclopaedia Logic,* trans. T. Geraets, W. A. Suchting and H. S. Harris (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1991)/*Werke* 8.

GW = Hegel, *Faith and Knowledge,* trans. W. Cerf and H. S. Harris (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988)/*Werke* 2.

JSE = Hegel, *Jenaer Systementwürfe III, Naturphilosophie und Philosophie des Geistes (1805–1806)*, ed. R.-P. Horstmann (Hamburg: Meiner, 1987).

KrV = Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* trans. W. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1996).

KU = Kant, *Critique of Judgment,* trans. W. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1987). (Page numbers from *Akademie* text.)

LA = Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, *Vol. 1*, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)/*Werke* 13.

PhG = Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977)/*Werke* 3.

PN = Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature,* trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)/*Werke* 9.

SF = Hegel, 'Fragment of a System' in *Early Theological Writings,* trans. T. M. Knox (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971)/*Werke* 1.

SL = Hegel, *Science of Logic,* trans. G. di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)/*Werke* 6.

[2] The interpretation of 'reflection' or 'reflexion' as an ontological structure rather than simply a form of thought was first put forward by Jaeschke (1978). Stephen Houlgate, countering Longuenesse (2007), who reads reflection as solely a mental activity, concurs that 'reflexion is what being itself proves to be at a certain point in its logical development', and uses the word 'reflexion' to distinguish the ontological structure from 'reflection', or the operation of the

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mind, something Hegel himself does not consistently do (see Jaeschke 1978; Houlgate 2011). I will argue here that 'reflexion' is not only a logical structure but also present in nature, on Hegel's view, as the expansive and contractive structure of *physis*. See also Houlgate (1999), where Houlgate argues that the *Logic* not only sketches out an underlying rational idea or foundation of being, but that we ultimately come to recognize 'such rationality itself to exist as space, time, matter, and history' (27). Although I agree with Houlgate and am therefore tempted to use 'reflexion' for conceptual clarity, I continue to use 'reflection' to signal the proximity to 'reflective judgement'.

[3] Hegel cites Kant's notion of immanent purposiveness in the organism approvingly in *LPR*: 428–29. See Khurana (2013) for more on this.

[4] For a very complete account of the history of these different senses of reflection, see Gasché (1986: chs. 1–3).

[5] Andreja Novakovic calls reflection 'a movement that can be discerned in any object that is capable of transforming into something else while remaining what it is, so retaining its identity in the face of differentiation'. She emphasizes that reflection is a movement that need not be conscious at all (Novakovic 2017: 6).

[6] Note that ordinary empirical reflection would be logical determinate reflection, as Kant describes it in the *Critique of Judgement,* whereas I argue that transcendental reflection is a form of reflective judgement, which determinate judgement presupposes.

[7] A reference to Fichte, according to Miller (in footnote to Hegel 1977: 31).

[8] See also Miller (2002: 45–76).

[9] See also Houlgate (2011: 141).

[10] See the 'First Introduction' to Kant, *KU*, in particular sections II–VII.

[11] For a discussion of this, see Förster (2009: 197–217).

[12] According to Förster, Hegel first introduces the idea of reflection as a self-movement or 'inner life' toward a totality instead of an external act in 'Logik, Metaphysik, Naturphilosophie', an 1804–5 text that he wanted to present to Goethe (Förster 2010: 335–36).

[13] For an excellent discussion of this passage, see Bowman (n.d.: 15).

[14] As Burbidge writes, 'Reflection first synthesizes the complex, recognizes that it itself stands outside of the complex, and then establishes the permanent structures that define the essence both of the complex and of its recognition. In other words, reflection considers the reciprocal flickering as a unity which has permanent determinations that help to constitute the opposition between two sides. It comprehends both dissolution and transition' (Burbidge 1992: 31). He continues to hold the reflecting subject and the object apart, however.

[15] The object of Hegel's critique of external reflection is the constitution of reflection as merely a mental act. However, even external reflection is one of the processes of the logical determinations of immanent reflection (Jaeschke 1978: 89).

[16] See also Kosok: 'Reflection is therefore a generating process in which an initially unformed element *becomes* formed, making reference to the element impossible without reference to the act of reflection. The activity of reflection becomes an integral aspect of the element reflected, and a process of continual reflection amounts to self-reflection – the initial element embodying reflection as its form' (1966: 598).

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[17] It is beyond the scope of this paper to contrast Hegel's use of reflection at length to that of Schelling. However, the previous section traced Hegel's critique (in the Preface to the *Phenomenology of Spirit*) of a form of reflection that I think can fairly be called Schellingian.

[18] John Burbidge articulates a traditional interpretation of Hegel's reflection when he writes that reflection, in the *Logic,* is an operation of pure thought, appearing to have nothing to do with material reality (Burbidge 1992: 26). As Burbidge notes, this is also Marx's early critique of Hegel.

[19] I have translated *entlässt* as 'released' rather than 'discharged'.

[20] See *GW*: 89/341, where Hegel writes that the Kantian idea of an intuitive intellect 'is at bottom nothing else but the *same Idea* of the transcendental imagination'. I take this to mean that what for an alternate, possibly divine understanding would be an intuitive ability to move from part to whole can only be an imaginative leap for human understanding. That Hegel thinks this kind of leap is possible through imagination attests to Goethe's influence on his view of nature. For discussion of the importance of *KU*, sections 76 and 77, and of Goethe's morphological studies for Hegel, see Förster (2010). See also Malabou's discussion of *kenosis* in Hegel (2005: 93–94), where she discusses Hegel's insistence that the unity of God and human in Christ was concrete.

[21] Karen Ng also notes that many contemporary interpretations of Hegel (e.g., Brandom, Pinkard, and Pippin) try to avoid the double constitution of the self-actualizing concept by focusing solely on the normative constitution of subjective structures, but then end up worrying about the 'return' to the empirical world (Ng 2013: 52 n28).

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