

# *Introduction*

## *German Idealism and the Logocentric Predicament*

### 0.1 Logic in Hegel's *Logic*?

In spite of its title, Hegel's *Logic* seems not to have anything to do with logic at all.<sup>1</sup> Clearly, its ambitions go well beyond those of formal logic, the area of philosophy concerned with the nature of valid argument. The controversial philosophical doctrines the *Logic* contains seem unrelated to the most elementary rules of thought. Understandably, the *Logic* is more commonly considered a work of metaphysics, though this designation is also not without its problems.

On a received view, the *Logic* is a work whose primary aim is to defend an account of the fundamental nature of reality ("the Absolute"), even of God. Seen in this light, logic in Hegel's sense of the term means something like "the logos" of Platonic-Aristotelian metaphysics. Certainly this interpretation is one that Hegel himself invites when he describes the work's subject matter as "the logos, the reason of that which is, [*der Logos, die Vernunft dessen, was ist*] the truth of what we call things; it is least of all the logos that should be kept outside the science of logic" (WdL 21: 17/SoL 19).<sup>2</sup> Yet if that is so, then Hegel's own designation of his work as one in logic can seem misleading.

An alternative approach to clarifying the sense in which Hegel's *Logic* is a logic would be to treat Hegel's *Logic* as a successor to the enterprise of "transcendental logic" began in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (A 131/B 170).<sup>3</sup> Clearly, both Hegel and Kant are concerned to offer theories of the categories or, as Hegel calls them, "thought determinations" (*Denkbestimmungen*) (WdL 21: 48/SoL 42; EL § 24 Z1, Z2). Categories

<sup>1</sup> Krohn (1972: 7).

<sup>2</sup> Hegel also invokes *Nous* a famous passage attributing to Anaxagoras logic's "intellectual view of the universe" (WdL 21:34/SoL 29).

<sup>3</sup> Hegel himself draws this parallel to Kant's "transcendental logic" (WdL 21: 47/SoL 40).

such as cause, substance, quantity and quality are among the most fundamental concepts we possess, the templates for all others. The categories are presupposed in all our thinking, and in scientific inquiry as well. Yet as Hume and others had shown, such concepts are incapable of being derived from sense experience: Causation, understood as “necessary connection” rather than “constant conjunction,” is an “idea” with no corresponding “impression.” Unlike ordinary empirical concepts, which can be derived from sense experience through Locke’s “comparison, abstraction and reflection,” a priori concepts such as these stand in need of a special type of justification. If they are to be legitimate, then they will need to be shown to have a different source than sense experience. What, then, might that source be?

In keeping with his Copernican revolution in philosophy and transcendental idealism, Kant offered a clear answer. For Kant, the categories are contributed by the knowing subject as “conditions on the possibility of experience” (B 160). Rather than have the categories derive from experience, as Hume would have done, Kant will have experience, meaning “empirical knowledge,” derive from them. This is Kant’s idealist strategy of defending our entitlement to the categories, but it has well-known costs. In particular, it requires that the use of the categories in theoretical knowledge be restricted to objects of possible experience or “appearances” (*Erscheinungen*). They cannot be used to know things as they are in themselves.

Hegel too is involved in the enterprise of giving a theory of the categories but departs from Kant in important ways. He certainly agrees with Kant that there are nonempirical concepts of this type, with a pervasive role in both scientific inquiry and everyday experience. He also agrees that they stand in need of a distinctive type of justification that ordinary empirical concepts do not require. However, he attempts to avoid the cost of Kant’s transcendental idealist strategy for justifying our use of the categories, namely, their restriction to the realm of appearances.

Here, matters become controversial, though the difficulties are less important to my question than might at first be apparent. There is one obvious parallel between Kant’s transcendental logic and Hegel’s speculative variety. Neither is an aesthetic, an analysis of sensibility and its a priori forms if any there be. Each concerns itself with conceptual thought and the categories or “thought determinations” internal to it. So much is uncontroversial. Beyond this, however, it is difficult to say much about what would unite the two projects. All readers of Hegel would agree that he wants to avoid the “subjectivist” character of Kant’s theory of the

categories and embrace a more resolutely “objective” theory. How, exactly, he does so is unclear, and the recent literature offers a range of options.

Does Hegel, for example, reject Kant’s idealist theory of the categories in favor of an alternative pre-Kantian or “realist” theory, an ontology such as those found in the Scholastic-Aristotelian tradition? Does he instead adopt Kant’s theory but amend it in such a way that we are no longer left disconnected from things-in-themselves? Or is this, perhaps, a false choice from Hegel’s point of view? Might his position be some type of hybrid of these approaches? And, if so, how, exactly would the synthesis be achieved? Which element, if any, would predominate? The jury, it seems, is out.

Yet this is of little use in the present context. Whatever the precise nature of Hegel’s theory of the categories, it will not help us understand whether, and in what sense, Hegel’s *Logic* is a logic. Even granting that Hegel’s logic is some type of descendent of Kant’s transcendental logic, this would simply relocate rather than resolve the issue. As Kant himself was well aware, transcendental logic is not logic in any ordinary sense either: “general logic.” Hegel registers this too when, in a remark concerning transcendental logic, he says that the latter differs from ordinary logic or what has usually gone by the name “logic”:

*Recently Kant has opposed to what has usually been called “logic” another, namely a transcendental logic ... Kant distinguishes it from what he calls general logic because it deals with concepts that refer to intended objects a priori, and hence does not abstract from all the content of objective cognition, or in that it contains the rules of the pure thinking of an intended object. (WdL 21: 47/SoL 40, italics mine)*

At a first approximation, the difference between general and transcendental logic is this. In the former, we abstract from the object, considering only the internal consistency of our thinking. In the latter, we consider the object, albeit from a maximally abstract perspective. Of course, the question of the relationship between general and transcendental logic is controversial, but this much can safely be said. In concerning itself with such topics as causality, quality, quantity and so on, transcendental logic has a substantive content lacked by ordinary logic owing to its formality. Although not yet empirical science, transcendental logic operates at a slightly lower level of abstraction than formal logic.

Hegel’s speculative logic departs from ordinary logic in this respect as well, perhaps even to a greater extent than Kant’s transcendental logic. For Hegel, substantive notions such as cause, quality, quantity and so on

are just the beginning when it comes to enriching logic with content. Yet Kant, at least, does his readers the courtesy of providing an account of the precise relationship of his innovative contentful form of logic and the traditional variety (A 50/B 74). Unfortunately, Hegel does not seem to do so, at least not in any comparably explicit way. We are therefore left with the impression that Hegel was oblivious to the existence of logic in the ordinary sense, though this impression turns out to be misleading.

Even a cursory glance through Hegel's *Logic* confirms that logic in the traditional sense is a frequent topic of discussion. Evidently, innovative varieties of logic from the German idealist period are by no means the only ones Hegel recognizes. Alongside discussions of speculative and transcendental logic, there are others focusing on what Hegel calls "ordinary logic" (*die gewöhnliche Logik*) (WdL 21: 35/SoL 30; WdL 12: 28/SoL 525). This is especially true in the so-called "Subjective Logic," which treats the trio of classically logical topics familiar from Kant and Wolff: concept, judgment and inference.<sup>4</sup> Yet there is also a discussion of the traditional laws of logic at the outset of the Doctrine of Essence in the "Objective Logic," such as the laws of identity, noncontradiction and excluded middle.

Evidently, logic in the ordinary sense is a concern of Hegel's *Logic*, but what exactly is common logic for Hegel? What would a reader of his time have understood by this phrase? One obvious approach to answering this question is historical, and it is Hegel's own conception of the history of logic that deserves to be heard first. Formulations such as "ordinary logic" "common logic" or even "the former logic" imply much more unanimity among Hegel's predecessors than actually seems to have existed. When we turn to Hegel's remarks on the history of logic, we find out why. As it turns out, Hegel has a fairly monolithic conception of the history of logic. To all appearances, Hegel shares Kant's assessment that there have been few developments of consequence in this science since the days of its founding by Aristotle.

*Aristotle* is the founder of this science ... To this day, the logic of Aristotle represents the logical [sphere], which has merely been made more elaborate, primarily by the Scholastics of the Middle Ages. The Scholastics did not add to the material, but merely developed it further. The work of more recent times with respect to logic consists primarily in omitting many of the logical determinations spun out further by Aristotle and the Scholastics, on the one hand, and in superimposing a lot of psychological material [on the other]. (EL § 20Z)

<sup>4</sup> Krohn (1972: 7–8).

... we have still Aristotle's science of abstract thought, a Logic, to consider. For hundreds and thousands of years it was just as much honored as it is despised now. Aristotle has been regarded as the originator of Logic: his logical works are the source of, and authority for the logical treatises of all times; which last were, in great measure, only special developments or deductions, and must have been dull, insipid, imperfect, and purely formal. And even in quite recent times, Kant has said that since the age of Aristotle, logic like pure geometry since Euclid's day – has been a complete and perfect science which has kept its place even down to the present day, without attaining to any further scientific improvements or alteration [*die keine Verbesserung und kein Veränderung erhalten hat*] (VGP 2/LHoP 2 "Aristotle: 4. The Logic:)

From a certain perspective, Hegel's conception of the history of logic is disappointing. Can a catch-all term such as "the former logic" really do justice to the more than two millennia of reflection on this subject that includes Aristotle's logical writings, Stoic logic, Scholastic logic, Port-Royal logic, the logic of the Leibniz–Wolff school, and Kant's logic? Here, there is a strong temptation for the commentator to step in and add some much-needed nuance and complexity to Hegel's account of the history of logic. However, I will defer completely to Hegel's own account of the history of logic and argue later that a failure to do so has led to fundamental distortions of Hegel's thought on this topic.

Ultimately, then, Hegel and Kant are in broad agreement about the history of logic, though it would be a mistake to conclude from this that they agree about logic itself.

Kant thought further of logic, that is, the aggregate of definitions and propositions that ordinarily passes for logic [*das im gewöhnlichen Sinne Logik heißt*], as fortunate because, as contrasted with other sciences, it was its lot to attain an early completion; since Aristotle, it has taken no backward step, but also none forward, the latter because to all appearances it seems to be finished and complete. If logic has not undergone change since Aristotle – and in fact, judging from the latest compendiums of logic, the usual changes mostly consist only of omissions – then surely the conclusion to be drawn is that it is all the more in need of a total reworking [*einer totalen Umarbeitung*]. (WdL 21: 35–36/SoL 31)

As we have seen, Hegel refers more than once and by and large approvingly to Kant's famous remark about the history of logic from the preface to the first critique. As Hegel reminds us, Kant said that logic had not needed to take a single step since its founding by Aristotle, in contrast to that endless battlefield of controversies, metaphysics (B viii). Yet Hegel here sounds a note of disagreement, remarking that if this is true then

Kant ought to have drawn the opposite conclusion. Rather than conclude that logic is complete, Kant ought to have concluded that a change is long overdue:<sup>5</sup>

To be clear, Hegel is not denying that the older logic was successful in the modest task it set itself. In spite of the sarcastic barb, he does share Kant's view that logic attained a certain form of completeness in Aristotle: in particular, observing and classifying "the phenomena of thought as they simply occur." Yet it is clear that Hegel regards this as insufficient:

A logic that does not perform this task [the task of Hegelian logic – JM] can at most claim the value of a natural description of the phenomena of thought as they simply occur. It is an infinite merit of Aristotle, one that must fill us with the highest admiration for the power of his genius, that he was the first to undertake this description. But it is necessary to go further and determine both the systematic connection [*systematische Zusammenhang*] of these forms and their value. (WdL 12: 28/SoL 525)

Unfortunately, beyond the allusion to exploring the "systematic connection" between the forms of thought, Hegel does not specify what it would mean to "go further."

If we are to understand how Hegel aspires to surpass the tradition, we must better understand what he took the tradition to have already achieved in the logical domain. As we will see in more detail later, Hegel also inherits from Kant and the tradition the conviction that four topics are central to logic.<sup>6</sup> They are as follows:

- i. The laws of thought, for example noncontradiction
- ii. Concepts
- iii. (Forms of) judgments
- iv. (Forms of) inferences (syllogism).

Broadly speaking, these topics are unified by a conception of logic as the authoritative source not only of the laws of good reasoning (i) but also of the basic materials or templates good reasoning uses (ii–iv). So we have four areas distributed among two main desiderata. Unclearly about either laws or materials could lead to different types of error. These four topics are discussed in passing in Kant's first critique, and more extensively in his logical writings. All are discussed in Hegel's *Logic* as well.

<sup>5</sup> See also Bowman (2013: Introduction: "A Totally Transformed View of Logic": 0.1 Hegel's Metaphysical Project).

<sup>6</sup> Dyck (2016).

To be clear, the four topics do not form a natural set in Hegel's *Logic* in the way that they did in more traditional works such as Kant's and also those of logicians before him.<sup>7</sup> Treating them as if they did, however, can be useful. The aim of doing so would not be to falsely assimilate Hegel to the tradition. On the contrary, it would be to take the full measure of his divergence from the tradition by comparing his views on these typical topics to the views of his predecessors, including those of Kant himself. If Hegel is broadly in agreement with Kant about the history of logic, he is by no means in agreement with Kant about logic itself.

As we have already said, Hegel's treatment of logic's laws and materials is part of a broader philosophical enterprise and encompasses much that is patently extralogical on virtually any conception of formal logic: a purified reconstruction of the entire history of philosophy, a survey of definitions of the Absolute, reflections on the nature of God, comparisons of different world religions (Christianity, Buddhism, Islam), then recent innovations in sciences such as chemistry, biology and physics. The logic not only treats much that we would expect empirical sciences of nature to treat but also, it seems, much that is supernatural – Hegel's antipathy to otherworldly forms of religion and metaphysics notwithstanding. If that is so, then we are confronted with a question one commentator, Paul Redding, has put with admirable clarity: What is the place of “logic commonly so called” in Hegel's *Science of Logic*?<sup>8</sup>

Admittedly, there are good reasons to doubt an investigation of Hegel's views on more conventional logical topics would be fruitful. In addition to being few and far between, these discussions are somewhat incongruous with their surroundings, where topics that are anything but abstract and formal are discussed (life, freedom, chemistry and so on). Even considered on their own, Hegel's more classically logical discussions are by no means the most promising or influential part of his legacy. Notoriously, Hegel, at one point, appears to deny the law of noncontradiction, providing

<sup>7</sup> In my view, Hegel includes both the Aristotelian-Scholastic tradition *and* Kant under the heading “the common logic.” I here follow Hanna (1986: 305), who emphasizes that Kantian general logic is traditional, at least from a Hegelian point of view. Pippin (2018: Ch. 1) holds a different view, presenting Kant as a revolutionary figure in logic whose lead Hegel followed.

Whether or not Hegel held it, the view that Kant's logic is continuous with the Scholastic variety may have independent merit. See Dyck (2016) and also Tolley (2017).

Though he acknowledges differences between Wolff and Kant, Dyck is interested in Kant's remarks from the 1770s onward to the effect that Wolff's general logic is “die beste,” “die beste die man Hat,” “die beste die man antrifft.” Dyck makes a compelling case that this is no mere back-handed compliment (2).

<sup>8</sup> Redding (2014).

fodder for some his critics in the Anglophone or “analytic” tradition who view him as an opponent of exact thinking.<sup>9</sup> More recently, Hegel’s fortunes have improved considerably with the massive revival of interest in nonclassical logics among Anglophone philosophers. Today certain logicians, for example Priest, are far more approving of this particular part of his thought than even a great many Hegel scholars.<sup>10</sup> Still, this remains a minority view, and it is noteworthy that those hoping to gain a hearing for Hegel’s thought in analytic philosophy have, by and large, denied that he is a critic of the law of noncontradiction.

An additional reason for concern has less to do with Hegel’s own unorthodox views in logic than with the broader tradition of logic in which he worked. Figures in this tradition have always seemed to their analytic critics to be much too interested in the (subject–predicate) judgment as well as the syllogism. These were topics central to Aristotelian logic but marginal (at best) in the new and more powerful mathematical variety invented by Frege. Syllogisms can be reduced to special cases of a more general theory, a project announced in the introduction of Frege’s *Begriffsschrift*. More fundamentally, the central place items such as judgment had in the older logic was thought to be a symptom of that logic’s impurity. In particular, judgment was thought of as being of merely grammatical or psychological significance.

Hegel may have aspired to transcend the tradition, but he can seem overly indebted to it just the same. As if to confirm his critics’ worst fears about the impurity of traditional logic, Hegel tells us that his *Logic* is a work in which logic and metaphysics coincide.<sup>11</sup> Hence, its focus on judgment could now be redescribed in even less flattering terms: as an artefact of Aristotelian substance–accident ontology. Yet much recent scholarship shows that Hegel considered the “logic-and-metaphysics coincide” idea to be his work’s chief innovation.<sup>12</sup> Before turning to the topic of the relationship between logic and metaphysics in Hegel’s own work, it is worth reflecting on why the two areas of philosophy would have seemed distinct to readers from his time, and often still do to us today.

<sup>9</sup> For an alternative perspective, see the section concerning “the myth that Hegel denied the law of non-contradiction” in Stewart’s (1996) anthology *The Hegel Myths and Legends* (Chs. 16–17).

<sup>10</sup> See Priest (1989: 388–415, 1995, 2006), as well as Bordignon (2017), Ficara (2020a: Ch. 16 “Hegelian Paraconsistentism”) and Moss (2020: Ch. 5 “Absolute Empiricism and the Problem of the Missing Difference”) for discussions of the parallels.

<sup>11</sup> “Logic thus coincides [*fählt daher ... zusammen*] with metaphysics” (EL § 24).

<sup>12</sup> Pippin (2017, 2018) and Pinkard (2017).



One reason concerns the differing roles they have traditionally had in philosophy. Logic may be necessary to help us avoid certain gross errors in reasoning, such as embracing a contradiction or drawing an invalid inference. However, it does not suffice for metaphysical truth. If principles as elementary and widely known as those of logic could resolve the persistent controversies of metaphysics, then one imagines they would have been resolved long ago. This is not to deny the obvious fact that logic is a field of sophisticated inquiry in its own right. It is merely to remind us that it is somewhat rare for its more technical findings to bear on fraught metaphysical questions, especially of the traditional variety.<sup>13</sup>

To be sure, logic is authoritative in a way vaguely comparable to metaphysics (“first philosophy”). It lays down rules for our thinking in all other areas of philosophy and the sciences. However, logic is also typically neutral, incapable of being invoked on behalf of any especially controversial philosophical position, metaphysical or otherwise.

Finally, logic has occasionally been said to be completely empty of content, lacking any subject matter at all.<sup>14</sup> This is a view sometimes attributed to Kant, in his general logic. It is also sometimes attributed to the early Wittgenstein, who thought this was an implication of logic’s status as metalinguistic rather than a science of such abstract objects as “Concept” and “Object.” Yet regardless of whether we hold that logic is *completely* empty or not, it should be clear that it lacks the type of content traditionally attributed to metaphysics: For example, we could recall here the three objects of special metaphysics in Kant’s time (God, the world, the soul). First-order logic, it is sometimes said, presupposes a nonempty world, a world with at least one object over which we can quantify. Yet this has no serious bearing on metaphysics, beyond ruling out such extreme views as that nothing exists.

While these philosophical intuitions concerning logic are deeply entrenched, they also suggest an intriguing possibility for any philosopher willing to challenge logic’s traditional role. I mean, quite simply, the possibility that logic, whose status was traditionally to be a point of unquestioned common ground for proponents of rival philosophical points of

<sup>13</sup> Dummett (1991) sought a “logical basis for metaphysics.” Yet even he would have acknowledged that this involved a conception of metaphysics that is quite deflationary. For this and other criticisms of Dummett’s proposal see Peacocke (2019).

<sup>14</sup> See Conant (1991: esp. 133, 138) for whom this view is characteristic of Kant and the early Wittgenstein, though not of Frege. For Frege, logic has a subject matter, though one more abstract than those of other sciences. Logic studies the laws governing concept and object, just as physics studies the laws governing matter in motion.

view, might nevertheless be invoked on behalf of a particular one. In this case, the position that a reformed logic would be marshaled to support will be Hegel's own: more specifically, his metaphysics. Hegel may well be one of the only figures in the history of philosophy to claim that his preferred metaphysics can be read off of logic – or, at least, the correct logic.

## 0.2 What Justifies a Law of Logic? A Dilemma

In this study, I argue that Hegel's thought contains a response to a very old problem from the history and philosophy of logic. This is a problem going back to Aristotle, though one I hope to show took on a new and unexpected significance in the wake of Kant's critical philosophy. Just to give the problem that interests me a name, I will call it "the logocentric predicament."<sup>15</sup> The name suggests a parallel with "the egocentric predicament" from early modern philosophy. Very roughly, this is the problem of how one can be in a position to verify one's perceptions if there is no getting outside "the veil of perceptions." The logocentric predicament is also a bootstrapping problem, though arguably an even more fundamental one. It concerns the justification of logic's most fundamental laws and materials. We rely on these principles in all our ordinary efforts to justify ourselves through rational argument. How, then, can they themselves be justified without already relying on them? In asking for such justification, we need not suppose that logic's principles are further premises in the arguments we make. Carroll's regress, from the parable of Achilles and the Tortoise, is commonly taken to show that this cannot be the case.<sup>16</sup> Yet logic's laws are undoubtedly underwriting our inferences somehow, even if they do not serve as premises. This makes urgent the question of these principles' justification, the source of their legitimacy.

<sup>15</sup> I here follow Ricketts' (1985: 3) discussion of the logocentric predicament. I believe I am the first to relate German idealism to the logocentric predicament, though others have sought solutions to problems with which it is easily confused.

In my view, the logocentric predicament is different from, and arguably more fundamental than, the Agrippan Trilemma that Franks (2005) relates to German idealism via the PSR from early modern rationalism. The logocentric predicament challenges our ability to express anything truth-apt at all, and not just to achieve ultimate justification in epistemology, metaphysics or natural science.

In this regard, the problem I emphasize might seem to more closely resemble the one that exercises Pippin and Pinkard's Hegel: making sense of making sense, the sense-making of all possible sense-makings (Pinkard 2017; Pippin 2017). But, once again, the problem that interests me is more specific, since formal logic – logic in the traditional and narrower sense – represents only one form of sense-making, alongside aesthetic judgment, normative evaluation and so on.

<sup>16</sup> Carroll (1895: 691–693).

The stakes are high. At issue is the justification of justification itself via the logical principles on which it depends. If we cannot answer it, then not only logic or philosophy but all our efforts at rational argument in all areas of human knowledge might conceivably be thrown into doubt. Here, the analogy is once more useful. An extreme manifestation of the egocentric predicament is skepticism about other minds and the external world. A comparably extreme manifestation of the logocentric predicament would be skepticism about logic, perhaps not *all* logics but at least *classical* logic. Yet in attempting to answer the question of what justifies a law of logic, we confront a dilemma.

At first, it may seem that our entitlement to these principles is some type of brute fact, one for which no reason can be given. They are, perhaps, self-evident to anyone who reflects on them (whether for psychological, semantic or even perhaps pragmatic reasons). They could also be said to be foundational in a formal system where they are the unproven basis on which everything else is proved. Or maybe they are unchallengeable for some other more exotic reason. “Justifications come to an end somewhere.” At a certain point, “my spade is turned.” Nor does this stopping point seem arbitrary, in the way regress-stoppers are sometimes said to be.<sup>17</sup> In this case, there is a principled reason for why we cannot expect to go deeper in our efforts to justify ourselves.

However, this approach soon proves inadequate. Today, as ever, there are figures who do not find such principles self-evident in any of these senses. As is well known, there are (alleged) counterexamples to them: for example, dialetheias, apparent cases of true contradiction, many of which are millennia old.<sup>18</sup> The liar from the well-known paradox is the primary one. His claim about what he says is both true and false, true if it is false and false if it is true. Even today, however, it is not the only such example.

Zeno’s account of motion in the arrow paradox is a classic example, not unknown to Hegel. It was later emphasized by Engels and other dialectical materialists.<sup>19</sup> On this account, motion cannot simply involve being at one place at one time and another place at another, later time. That would be consistent with being at rest all throughout – popping out of existence at one moment, only to emerge in a different place at another. Instead,

<sup>17</sup> Franks (2005: 8).

<sup>18</sup> Other examples include: truth value gaps and gluts; vague predicates; certain legal situations; and, most obviously, paradoxes of self-reference (the liar). See, once again, Priest (1985, 2006).

<sup>19</sup> See Engels (1947).

motion appears to involve a type of “blurring” in which a thing is in two slightly different positions at one and the same time.

To be clear, we may not be entirely persuaded by such counterexamples. However, the mere fact that anyone should regard these cases as potential counterexamples is unsettling enough on its own. After all, it was claimed that those laws are self-evident to anyone who reflects them. *Prima facie*, this is not so, regardless of whether we ourselves share the dissenting perspective. We can deny that our interlocutor denies what they claim to deny, but this seems *ad hoc*. In the face of this type of skeptical challenge, appeals to brute fact can seem complacent.

A second possibility is that we respond to this request for a justification of the laws of logic in the way we would in any other area of philosophy, attempting to give some type of rational argument in the way we so often do as philosophers. However, this approach soon confronts a significant obstacle as well. In the first place, it is unclear what could possibly be more fundamental than the laws of logic (psychology? language? natural science? something else?). How would we express the propositions of this base level and their interconnections without relying on logic’s laws and materials? However, we can grant for the sake of argument that something more fundamental can be identified.

The deeper problem is that the logical principles in question are so elementary, so fundamental, that any argument we might be able to give for such principles would, it seems, already presupposition them. In a way, this is unsurprising, since the nonoptionality of such laws for rational discourse is their whole point. Our argument would need to invoke them in order to take even a single step from premise to conclusion. No sooner has an inferential step been taken than a law of logic has been invoked. If the preceding approach seemed complacent, then this one seems far worse. It helps itself to the very principles whose credentials are in question. It is circular. It could be argued that this is virtuous, rather than vicious, circularity. Yet this seems arbitrary. Relying prematurely on principles one hoped to justify at a later stage seems as objectionable here as in any other area.

Worse still, the problem quickly generalizes, and in a way that should become evident when we recall that logic not only concerns laws of thinking (well) but also the basic set of materials thinking presupposes. This bootstrapping problem does not simply arise when we attempt to argue for a law of logic and find we must rely on it in doing so. It also does so when we attempt to justify the use of certain basic materials employed in reasoning: for example, the predicate or negation.

At issue is less compliance with a logical law than the legitimation of some logical tool but the problem has the same abstract form. Here too these materials are so fundamental that any attempt to legitimate them would seem to already rely on them. The issue is not so much that of relying on principles one has not proven to hold true but the more basic one of even invoking notions one has not legitimated. Why these notions, rather than others? Why any?

In some version or other, this problem is very old, going back to Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*. There, Aristotle proposes the disturbing possibility that there can be no demonstration of the principles on which all demonstration depends. These principles would seem to be either brute or justified circularly.

In vol. 2 of his *Logical Investigations* Husserl also raises a version of this problem for the nascent program of "psychologism."<sup>20</sup> In this program, logic is said to derive from an empirical science: psychology. However, a science is a body of empirical propositions, standing in particular logical (deductive) relations to one another. If that is so, then the attempt to derive logic from psychology will be circular, relying on the very laws it seeks to derive.

Frege encounters a version of this problem, closer to the second "materials"-based version we considered than the first "law"-based one.<sup>21</sup> This he does when he is forced to deny that the language of the *Begriffsschrift* can be used to talk about that language. We are, apparently, forbidden from making even the most basic statements about this language. Notoriously, there is no way to utter the apparent truism "The concept horse is a concept," in Frege's system.<sup>22</sup> This statement treats a concept as an object, thus violating Frege's famous rule from the *Foundations of Arithmetic* that the two ("concept" and "object," *Begriff* and *Gegenstand*) cannot exchange their functions.<sup>23</sup> Yet such statements as these are necessary if we are to induct others into our way of speaking. If the form of this problem reminds one of Wittgenstein's idea of a ladder one must climb and then cast away, then this is no coincidence. Similar problems are broached in the *Tractatus*.<sup>24</sup> There, the propositions of logic, those on which all our sayings depend, cannot themselves be said, only shown.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Husserl (2013: § 19: 43–44).

<sup>21</sup> Frege (1991: esp. 140) and Ricketts (1985).

<sup>22</sup> Frege (1892).

<sup>23</sup> Frege (1980).

<sup>24</sup> Wittgenstein (2005: 6.54).

<sup>25</sup> Wittgenstein (2005: 4.121).

Finally, a version of this problem has been raised in the recent literature on inference by authors such as Boghossian and others. Boghossian helpfully describes it as the problem of rule-circularity, relying on the very rule one is attempting to prove. Here he is explaining how it would arise if one tried to construct an inferentially based justification for the rule of inference known as *modus ponens* (MPP):

This brings us, then, to the inferential path. Here there are a number of distinct possibilities, but they would all seem to suffer from the same master difficulty: in being inferential, they would have to be *rule-circular*. If MPP is the only underived rule of inference, then any inferential argument for MPP would either have to use MPP or use some other rule whose justification depends on MPP. And many philosophers have maintained that a rule-circular justification of a rule of inference is no justification at all. (Boghossian 2000: 231)

The solutions preferred in this more recent literature are closer to the first family of responses, even if they do not all fit perfectly there. Appeals to “default justification,” pragmatic entitlement and virtuous circularity are by no means all best characterized as appeals to brute fact, let alone crude ones. However, they are alternatives to inferential justification of rules of inference.

As we will soon see, the idealists’ favored solutions differ, belonging to this second family of inference-based solutions. They are therefore in a certain sense more ambitious – but also perhaps less likely to succeed.

### 0.3 Jäsche on the Role of Logic in Kant and Post-Kantian German Idealism

Is there any reason to think this age-old problem in the history and philosophy of logic, present in Aristotle and also in recent philosophy, might have been important to German idealism? After all, German idealism is a movement more commonly thought of as preoccupied with questions in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, politics, “life,” the philosophy of history, aesthetics – but almost never logic, at least if that term is understood in its usual sense. None of its major protagonists is considered an important contributor to logic, and this received view is one I would not contest.

Yet German idealism is above all a post-Kantian movement, a response to Kant’s critical project that revolutionized philosophical reflection on all of these topics. Moreover, logic had a new and unprecedented role in Kant’s project. If that is so, then it would not be at all surprising if logic

were important to the idealist reception of his thought. In any case, it is from this post-Kantian perspective that I will approach the idealists' interest in the topic. As I hope to show, there was one question – less a question within logic than one about logic – that was important to the idealist reception of Kant. So far as I know, this question has been absent from treatments of German idealism in recent years. Integrating it into discussions of this movement could therefore allow us to see the movement in a new light.

Here, it may be valuable to consult an observation on the philosophical scene in Germany *c.* 1800 by Benjamin Jäsche, a student of Kant best known for compiling his lectures on logic for publication. As Jäsche observes in the preface to the first edition of these lectures from 1800, a rift appeared to have opened between Kant and his immediate followers in their attitude toward the laws of logic, such as the laws of identity and noncontradiction. Kant's idealist followers found themselves confronted with the dilemma just considered, which arises when we consider the question of what justifies a law of logic. When we do find we must either treat such laws as brute or else as justified in a way that seems destined to be circular.

[T]here is no doubt about Kant's judgment on this point. He frequently explained, determinately and expressly, that logic is to be regarded as a separate science, existing for itself and grounded in itself [*für sich bestehende, und in sich selbst Begründete Wissenschaft*], and hence that from its origin and first development with Aristotle, right down to our times, it could not really gain anything in scientific grounding. In conformity with this claim, Kant did not think either about grounding the logical principles of identity and contradiction on a higher principle, or about deducing the logical forms of judgment. He recognized and treated the principle of contradiction as a proposition that has its evidence in itself and requires no derivation from a higher principle. But now whether the logical principle of identity and of contradiction is really incapable of or does not need any further deduction, in itself and without qualification, that is of course a different question, which leads to the highly significant question of whether there is in general an absolutely first principle of all cognition and science, whether such a thing is possible and can be found. [Fichte's] doctrine of science believes that it has discovered such a principle in the pure, absolute I, and hence that it has grounded all philosophical knowledge perfectly, not merely as to form but also as to content. And having presupposed the possibility and the apodictic validity of this absolutely one and unconditioned principle, it then proceeds completely consistently when it does not allow the logical principles of identity and of contradiction, the propositions  $A=A$  and  $-A = -A$ , to hold unconditionally, but instead declares them to be subaltern principles, which can and must be established and determined only through it and its highest proposition: I am. (JL 523–524/7–8)

Once more, we run across Kant's (in)famous remark that logic had attained early completion and had not had to take a single step since Aristotle. Yet what is more interesting than the remark itself are the implications Jäsche and other idealists drew from it. Usually the passage is cited to as evidence of Kant's backwardness in the area of logic.<sup>26</sup> Here, however, it serves a different, more constructive role.

In particular, it is meant to be a clue to understanding the role of logic in the first critique. At least according to Jäsche, Kant's conviction that logic is fundamentally in order informs Kant's decision not to present any type of rational argument for logic's basic laws and principles, such as the laws of identity and noncontradiction. Certainly, Kant had not sought anything as ambitious as a noncircular argument, one that would show that these logical laws could be derived from some more fundamental principle that did not already rely upon them.

As Jäsche indicates, this had become especially clear in Kant's *Metaphysical Deduction of the categories*. There, logic's table of forms of judgment is appealed to for the very important purpose of identifying the categories. Yet very little explicit indication as to how this table might itself be argued for was given.

By contrast, Kant's immediate followers were dissatisfied with his attitude toward logic, which they thought of as complacent.<sup>27</sup> As Jäsche explains, they took the opposing view that logic's laws and materials would have to be derived from a more fundamental principle. Here, Jäsche alludes to Fichte's own first principle, a version of the *Cogito*: "I am." Yet there is an obstacle standing in the way of any such attempt. Would not the argument that takes us from philosophy's first principle to a law of logic have to rely on that very law?

Fichte himself had taken up this question in the opening argument of his *Science of Knowledge* (*Wissenschaftslehre*), the argument Jäsche alludes to when he mentions the Fichtean principle  $I=I$ .

The laws of (common) logic ... have not yet been proved valid, but are tacitly assumed to be familiar and established. Only at a later point will they be derived from that proposition whose assertion is warranted only if they are also. This is a circle though an unavoidable one. (WL 92, SoK 93–94)

<sup>26</sup> Russell (2015: 463).

<sup>27</sup> S. Maimon is among the most important early idealist critics of Kant's logic. See Beiser (1987: 309) as well as (Wolff 2013): 98 n. 18).



Here, Fichte alludes to the striking idea of a proof for the laws of logic. However, he also brings up the problem of circularity that we have seen dogs any attempt to argue for the laws of logic. There is precedent for the project of proving logic even earlier in Fichte's career. Fichte first voices the idea of a noncircular argument for the laws and materials of logic in the programmatic text "Über den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre" ("On the Concept of the Science of Knowledge") (1794/98). Here Fichte could not be less ambiguous in his insistence that it is his philosophy that will ground logic, and not the reverse: "[L]ogic borrows its validity [*entlehnt ... ihre Gültigkeit*] from the Science of Knowledge, but the Science of Knowledge does not borrow its own from logic" (SW I 67). Even a principle as fundamental as the law of noncontradiction will not be presupposed by his philosophy but, rather, deduced from it (SW I 67)<sup>28</sup>

My basic proposal in response to Jäsche's observation is that the rift that had opened up between Kant and his idealist followers can be seen as a version of the very dilemma in the history and philosophy of logic we have been discussing. In Jäsche's portrayal, the idealists choose the way of rational argument with its attendant risk of circularity, Kant the way of self-evidence with its risk of complacency.

Yet if this is so, it raises a difficult historical question. Why would the German idealists, who proclaimed themselves Kant's followers, depart from him on such a fundamental question? The answer, I think, can only be that they believed the fate of the critical philosophy itself depended on a fundamentally revised view of the role of logic in philosophy.

#### 0.4 Marburg Neo-Kantianism versus German Idealism

Although somewhat arcane, the question of the role of logic in the first critique nearly always emerges as important for figures seeking to understand that work's argumentative structure.<sup>29</sup> Yet the specific way in which it became important for Kant's idealist followers is unique. I hope to illustrate its uniqueness through a comparison of the idealists' Kant interpretation with that of another school, arguably much more influential in the reception of Kant: the Marburg Neo-Kantians.<sup>30</sup>

Here, I will focus on the specific issue of the relationship between general and transcendental logic. For the Marburgers, it was wholly

<sup>28</sup> Martin (2003) provides an excellent account of the circularity problem in Fichte.

<sup>29</sup> Reich (1992: 2).

<sup>30</sup> Here, I draw on Edgar (2010) and Heis (2018).

unacceptable that Kant's table of categories should have been derived from the table of forms of judgment given in the logic of the day. They understood the fundamental premise of Kant's system to be "the fact of science," that is, the truth of Newtonian natural science. Hence, they saw the twelve categories of transcendental logic as "abstractions" from a more fundamental set of twelve principles more immediately relevant to Newtonian natural science (Kant's "system of principles" from the *Analytic*). They then saw the twelve forms of judgment from general logic as still further "abstractions."<sup>31</sup>

In other words, pure general logic was not fundamental but in an important sense derivative. Indeed, it was at a twofold remove from what was genuinely fundamental in Kant's thought, the principles from his theoretical philosophy that formed the basis for natural science. Although Cohen is a famous exponent of this approach, a more accessible example of such a reading can be found in Cassirer.

A notable advantage of the Marburg interpretation is the anti-psychologistic interpretation of Kant it makes possible. The ultimate foundation of Kant's claims is not faculty psychology but scientific knowledge "printed in books," as Cohen is fond of saying.

Yet the interpretation also has a serious flaw. It ignores Kant's fairly clear insistence that relying on "the fact of science" is merely an expedient for use in the more popular presentation of his views given in the *Prolegomena* (P 4:274–275/25–26). The *Critique* itself does not rely on this presupposition, even if the *Prolegomena* does. Guarding against this error is the point of Kant's distinction between the "analytic/regressive" and "synthetic/progressive" methods of these two different works. Yet this is a distinction the Marburgers appear to elide. Some are even led to claim (implausibly) that it is the *Prolegomena* rather than the first *Critique* that provides the more accurate representation of Kant's considered view.

Given the problem with the Marburg approach, there is reason to consider an alternative. More specifically, there is reason to consider an alternative account of the role of logic in the critical philosophy. Here, the German idealists provide a contrasting perspective. For the Marburgers, as we have seen, the problem posed by logic for the critical philosophy is one of overconfidence: more specifically, the overconfidence it seems to reflect on Kant's part in philosophy and what it can achieve vis-à-vis

<sup>31</sup> For Cassirer, the categories, as concepts of objects in general, are prior to the logical forms of judgment: "[W]hen expressed in exact logical notation, the types and forms of synthetic unity [the Categories – JM] are precisely what yield the forms of judgment" (Cassirer 1981: 172).

natural science. For the German idealists, the problem is, if anything, the opposite, one of underconfidence.

As I read them, the German idealists, such as the Marburgers, are preoccupied with Kant's decision to derive the laws and materials of transcendental logic (categories, ideas) from those of ordinary or general logic (forms of judgment, forms of inference, laws of thought). In a way, it is unsurprising that they too would have been led to this topic. The German idealists were doubtful that the order of exposition in the first critique reflected the order of the argument. They sought to discover in it a fundamental "first principle" from which the whole of Kant's critical philosophy could be derived. This project, which may have begun as a merely reconstructive one, quickly took on a revisionary aspect. Particularly vulnerable to criticism were those doctrines Kant had laid down as self-evident but apparently not argued for in any sustained way: for example, the distinction or dualism between the knowing subjects and the object of knowledge, the sensibility–understanding distinction, the finitude of our knowledge as contrasted with that of an infinite knower (God) and so on.

Although not itself one of the *most* prominent examples of a possible point of vulnerability in the critical system, Kant's commitment to the logic of the day quickly attracted a similar sort of scrutiny. Here too this scrutiny is based on the suspicion that logic was both fundamental to the argument and insufficiently well-defended. The idealists argued that closer attention to this logic would reveal that it could not bear the weight Kant placed upon it in his critical system. For example, it was important to Kant to demonstrate that his table of the categories was complete. Yet Kant was less explicit than he might have been about *why* it was so important to him to achieve this goal.

Given the paucity of explanation Kant provides, some readers doubt that it can have been central to his project as he suggests. Yet, as I hope to show, the German idealists did not share this view. I will later attempt to provide an explanation that does justice to the idealists' conviction that the fate of the critical philosophy itself turns on this issue. As is well known, the idealists regard Kant's attempt to prove completeness as a failure. In their view, it fails because of the role of the logic of the day in it. In my retelling, this will be the most important place that logic enters into the dispute between Kant and his idealist followers.

To the idealists, this failure was symptomatic of a deeper problem in the critical philosophy: Kant's uncritical attitude toward the logic of the day. Kant had declared that all sciences must justify themselves at the bar

of the critical philosophy, but apparently made an exception of logic. It was, after all, complete and had been for millennia. Yet despite drawing on logic's findings at crucial junctures in his own argument, he had comparatively little to say about the reasons for its success. Certainly, Kant had not done for logic what he had done for mathematical, natural-scientific and metaphysical knowledge: At least in the first critique itself, he had not provided the same type of probing account of the nature and sources of the knowledge claims made in logic as he had for these other fields. Kant asks, in each chapter of his *Prolegomena*, "how is pure mathematics possible?" "how is natural science possible?" "is metaphysics possible?" Yet despite relying on logic throughout his attempt to answer these questions, he never poses the corresponding "how possible?" question for it.<sup>32</sup>

In fairness to Kant, logic seemed to him to be much less mysterious in this regard, and he had good reasons for thinking it unproblematic. Yet as we will soon see, this was thought by the idealists to be incompatible with the spirit of his philosophical project. Was this uncharacteristically complacent attitude toward logic not a betrayal of the critical philosophy's basic aspiration to subject all knowledge claims to critical scrutiny? Did this lapse in critical scrutiny not also constitute a lapse in self-scrutiny, inasmuch as the logic of the day formed an important presupposition of the critical philosophy itself?

Although this criticism has been made many times since, and in many different traditions, there is no more influential proponent of it than Hegel. Yet it is seldom asked in the recent literature what influence this may have had on the shape of Hegel's own mature system and the relationship between speculative logic and ordinary logic in it. In many prominent recent studies, it goes almost completely unmentioned. Sometimes its importance is explicitly minimized. In the interpretation defended here, Hegel's objection to Kant's reliance on logic will be treated as central. What is more, I will argue that this objection is fundamentally anti-Kantian, rather than superficially so.

### 0.5 A Heideggerian Hegel? Logic and "the Question of Being"

As I hope to show, Hegel's solution to this problem ("the logocentric predicament") invokes ontology, and in a way that prefigures the approach to logic taken by a subsequent German philosopher: Heidegger. I therefore

<sup>32</sup> Kant's failure to provide a critique of logic is an important theme in Lu-Adler's recent study of his logical writings (Lu-Adler 2018: Ch. 5 "Logic and the Demands of Kantian Science").

want to embark on one more historical digression before introducing Hegel's resolution of the dilemma.<sup>33</sup>

In a lecture course from the 1930s on logic, Heidegger poses for his students a simple but disarming question: What does logic have to do with philosophy?<sup>34</sup> After considering and discarding various influential answers, Heidegger introduces his own. Logic, he tells us, is inseparable from "the question of being." Heidegger anticipates that this will sound surprising but claims that this is only because the connection has been occluded in modern mathematical logic. This is a technical discipline that has lost touch with the traditional concerns of metaphysics, chief among them the question of being. Yet Heidegger also insists that the connection between logic and being is one that modern logicians have never been able to completely sever, even in modern logic.

In another such course, Heidegger defends this provocative claim by examining the Platonic metaphysics that the new crop of mathematical logicians were led to invoke in the nineteenth century in their struggle against psychologism.

Therefore we could say that although this critique of psychologism is from the outset utterly clear on the guiding distinction between empirical and ideal being ... These are questions that did not surface first of all in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries, but that already engaged Greek philosophy, especially Plato. This distinction is the same as the Platonic one between sensible being ... and the being that is accessible through reason. (Heidegger 2010: 44)

Resisting the reduction of logic to empirical psychology would require placing logic's laws and materials in a realm not unlike Plato's intelligible world. In outlining his aims for the course, Heidegger proposes to uncover the traditional historical association between logic and what he maintains is the central question of metaphysics, the question of being.

As a clue to the discovery of this connection Heidegger cites the logical copula "is" without which judgment would be impossible.<sup>35</sup> Here in the logical form of judgment itself, we find ourselves confronted with the

<sup>33</sup> I here, once again, follow Hanna (1986: 310), who draws a similar parallel between Hegel and Heidegger. Both regard logic as, in Hanna's terms, "founded" rather than "founding."

<sup>34</sup> Heidegger (1984: 18). "But what does logic have to do with all this? What does logic have to do with the freedom of existence? How does the basic question of being enter here? Logic does not treat being directly, but deals with thinking."

<sup>35</sup> "And finally, determinative thinking, as thinking about beings, brings, in its own way, the being of beings to expression. The simple statement 'A is B' shows this in the most rudimentary way" (Heidegger 1984: 20).

notion of being. This is to say that we find ourselves confronted with the question of what this little word, pervasive in our language, could mean. What is it for anything, a number, a planet, a person, a state, to be at all? What definition could we possibly give of something so ordinary and pervasive? In the ensuing lectures, Heidegger endeavors to show that previous figures always bore the connection between logic and metaphysics in mind. Leibniz is his main example.

Elsewhere Heidegger makes clear that his preferred way of relating logic to the question of being is somewhat different from that of the tradition. It is less to relate logic to metaphysics as the tradition knew it than to what Heidegger calls fundamental ontology/the existential analytic of Dasein. Swiftly and crudely summarized, this means situating the subject matter of logic in structural features of ordinary, lived experience (specifically, the most fundamental forms of behavioral and linguistic comportment toward the world and toward others).

Whatever the merits of this approach, and it certainly resonates with Hegel's project on certain broadly Kantian-idealist interpretation, I find myself drawn to another – though also one suggested by Heidegger's writings. This approach would take its bearings from Heidegger's insistence that the project of Being and time was always, in a sense, provisional. In particular, there was to be a third division in which Heidegger would overturn the "subjectivism" and idealism inherent in the idea of an existential analytic: more specifically, the idea that the question of Being could be pursued only in relation to Dasein, that being whose being is at issue for it. It is precisely this overcoming of subjectivism that Heidegger aims to achieve in his later work, though here too the question of why he made the "Kehre" (turn) is controversial. The vicissitudes of Heidegger's relationship to metaphysics notwithstanding, this nonsubjectivist approach to grounding logic in the question of being would seem to be the one Heidegger finds in the tradition. Hence, it is this latter approach I want to take to Hegel's way of relating logic and metaphysics.

### **o.6 Logic and Metaphysics (General and Special)**

The main claim I will defend concerning the metaphysical foundations of logic in Hegel's thought requires that we recall the dilemma from earlier. In the face of a challenge to justify logic, we find ourselves confronted by a choice between an appeal to brute fact, on the one hand, and to viciously circular argument, on the other. Hegel, I think, chooses the way of rational argument, rather than that of the appeal to brute fact that he associates

with the tradition. With the possible exception of his idealist predecessor, Fichte, Hegel may be the only figure to ever do so. There is scarcely anybody in the history of philosophy or today of whom I am aware who is so bold as to attempt an argument for the principles on which all rational argument defends. By far, the dominant approach has been to treat these principles as, in some sense, brute. Hence, the interest, I think, of Hegel's project as I interpret it here.

Yet if Hegel is to argue for the principles on which all rational argument depends, he must avoid vicious circularity. Doing so would seem to require two things. The first is a set of resources that do not already presuppose laws and materials of ordinary logic, even such elementary logical laws as noncontradiction. The second is a method of argument that is not that of ordinary logic, for example syllogistic argument, or arguments in premise–conclusion form. If Hegel can satisfy these requirements, he will have done something that has likely never been accomplished. So far as I know, it has never even been attempted. I mean the task of discovering a form of discourse that is both rational and argument-driven while at the same time unregimented by formal logic. The benefit of this form of discourse is that it would furnish an external perspective on formal logic, one from which the latter could be critically appraised and revitalized.

Beginning with the starting point, I want to explore the possibility that, for Hegel, the laws of formal logic derive from general metaphysics or ontology.<sup>36</sup> As with traditional logic, traditional metaphysics – in particular, general metaphysics or ontology – has itself become a proper part of Hegel's *Logic*. Just as he did with logic, Hegel tells us that the subject matter of metaphysics, in a narrower and more traditional sense of that term, corresponds to a particular part of his logic.

The objective logic thus takes the place rather of the former metaphysics which was supposed to be the scientific edifice of the world as constructed by thoughts alone. – If we look at the final shape in the elaboration of this science, then it is ontology which objective logic most directly replaces in the first instance. (WdL 21: 48/ SoL 42)

Objective Logic, which corresponds to ontology, precedes Subjective Logic. Hegel tells us elsewhere that the latter corresponds to traditional

<sup>36</sup> Many have argued that Hegel's *Logic* is best approached as ontology, but the interpretations most important for my own are two very well-known instances of treating Hegel's *Logic* as ontology, Houlgate (2006: 116) and Doz (1987: 22–23). I am also indebted to the more recent *Ontologie des Selbstbestimmung* of Martin (2012).

logic. Correspondence, in this context, refers to an overlap in subject matter. Objective Logic treats the subject matter of traditional ontology, the categories. Subjective Logic treats the subject matter of traditional logic, the forms of judgment and inference. (Some of this subject matter can be found earlier, but I set this aside for now.)

What, then, is the relationship between Hegel's reconstituted version of ontology and his reconstituted version of logic? While the two are undeniably interdependent, I want for the purposes of addressing the "logocentric predicament" to focus on the dependence of Subjective Logic upon Objective. It is this part that is relevant to my project of recovering a Hegelian solution to the logocentric predicament. However, I will return to the issue of dependence in the reverse direction at the end.

The question of how, exactly, logic and metaphysics relate in Hegel is much discussed in recent scholarship. However, the face of the question I am interested in here differs from the one that dominates present discussions. Since Hegel tells us that logic and metaphysics coincide, it is often thought that he is telling us something about the entire logic. Swiftly and crudely summarized, his point would be that it is consistently logical and metaphysical throughout, a study of the categories of thought and those of what is. The categories and forms of judgment or inference are one and all "objective thoughts." They are simultaneously forms of thinking and of being, though there are subtle issues about how best to understand this claim.

By contrast, the question that interests me concerns the relationship between two parts of the logic, whatever may be said about the whole. What is more, my question is more directly concerned with logic and metaphysics in the pre-Hegelian senses of those terms. What becomes of formal logic and precritical metaphysics when they reemerge in Hegel's system? More specifically, what becomes of the subject matter of these two sciences? The answer I give concerns the dependence of the former on the latter, not their thoroughgoing identity with one another. While I will not address interpretive questions concerning Hegel's slogan here, I do want to note that there are other ways for things to coincide beyond simply being identical.

In claiming Hegel's *Logic*, or at least the first part of it, can be approached as ontology, I build on and develop the work of a number of commentators. By far the most important for my project is Houlgate, whose interpretation of the logic as a presuppositionless derivation of the categories of ontology is seconded throughout this study. However, the proposal that Hegel's logic is an ontology, not original in itself, takes on a unique significance in the context of my project's guiding philosophical



problem: the logocentric predicament. In terms of the dilemma posed above, there is one simple reason why the strategy of deriving (formal) logical principles from general metaphysical or ontological ones is promising. It is that, at least in its distinctive Hegelian guise, *ontology is pre-formal logical*. That is not of course to say that it stands outside “speculative logic,” since, for Hegel, scarcely anything does. It is rather to say that the ontology of the first part of the *Logic* is innocent of any formal logical principles: the laws of identity and noncontradiction, the forms of judgment and valid inference, even, I will suggest, concepts (if these are defined in any theoretically sophisticated way). It is, we might say, primordial ontology, giving the point a Heideggerian spin. Interpretive issues aside, I think that there is independent philosophical interest to the idea of a form of thought, outside of the ambit of formal logic but nevertheless rational.

As I will explain later, there is a *formal* reason for the primordality of ontology, at least as put forward in the Doctrine of Being. All of the ontological principles Hegel considers have a much more primitive structure than the ordinary logical ones. In Hegel’s idiom, this is a matter of the “immediacy” of the former and the “reflected” or “mediated” nature of the latter. The former do not even have the structure of a “proposition” (*Satz*), let alone “judgment” (*Urteil*), whereas the latter do. As I will put it later, Hegel’s ontology is prepredicative and noninferential – but pursues a form of rational argument nonetheless. Just what such a form of argument might be is too difficult a question to answer at this early stage.

Having a non(-formal)-logical basis from which to proceed is not enough, however. We also need a non(-formal) logical method of argument to get from these simpler principles to their more complex descendants. I believe we find this in the dialectic, which, I argue, does not use the laws and materials of logic. Using its twin strategies of immanent critique and determinate negation, the dialectical method operates on individual concepts. It therefore completely dispenses with the logical apparatus of claim and argument that are the philosopher’s usual stock in trade. In short, it too operates at a logically simpler level, pre-formal logical but not for that reason nonrational. Though this only scratches the surface of its unusual method of proceeding, we can say that, in Hegel’s logic, unit of analysis is the concept. I deny that the logic is made of judgments or inferences of any kind: even perhaps the “speculative judgments” of which his logic is sometimes said to consist (erroneously in my view).

It would be understandable to worry that Hegel, as I interpret him, is a Romantic irrationalist, rejecting formal logic and therefore reason itself.

This may be the position of Jacobi or Schelling in one or another of their phases, but not Hegel. The later Heidegger, an inspiration for my interpretation, often finds himself accused of the same. In my view, Hegel's uniqueness lies in his aspiration to find a *via media* between traditional, formal logic and the forms of mysticism or esotericism characteristic of the Romantics.

An important outcome of this investigation will be greater insight into why Hegel accords categories such a preeminent status in his speculative logic. This is something many of Hegel's readers take for granted as unproblematic. Perhaps this is because Hegel is a follower of Kant's critical philosophy, who had given categories a central place in his transcendental logic. Perhaps it is because Hegel is fundamentally Aristotelian metaphysician, a figure for whom logic just is metaphysics. If that were so, then it would be unsurprising that Hegel regards categories as important to logic, since they are the part of general metaphysics or ontology. Or perhaps Hegel's position is some hybrid of Kantian-idealist and Aristotelian-metaphysical ones – so that his interest in categories is overdetermined. However, I believe there is more of a mystery about why Hegel is interested in categories than either reading alone, or any combination of them, can accommodate. Such readings obscure one of Hegel's more important innovations over both Kant and the tradition. Unsurprisingly, I understand this innovation in terms of the history and philosophy of (formal) logic: more specifically, the logocentric predicament.

Today, the theory of the categories is not considered part of logic, as topics such as substance, quantity and quality are concrete in a way the concerns of formal logic are not. Even traditionally, however, the theory of the categories had what was at best an ambiguous status between logic and metaphysics. It was considered both a study of the fundamental types of predicate and of the fundamental forms of being. Through its treatment in the *Categories*, it was considered part of the *organon* containing Aristotle's logical writings. Yet it was clearly also a topic in the central books his *Metaphysics*, where the material from the *Categories* resurfaces. In this new context, the categories are said to describe properties of every being or entity considered as such, that is being-qua-being.

What is more, category theory was not only ambiguous but also marginal in both of the fields to which it was thought to belong. It was upstaged by special metaphysics (theology, psychology and cosmology), on the one hand, and syllogistic, on the other. How, then, did Hegel come to accord the theory of the categories such an important role?

As I hope to show, Hegel's approach differs from that of Kant, who sought to claim category theory for a new transcendental logic. Kant's new transcendental logic was to be distinct from the earlier general logic but also compatible with it. Indeed, the former would rely on the latter in numerous respects. By contrast, Hegel will incorporate category theory into his *Logic* in a way that leaves no room for this type of rapprochement.

Hegel will first resolve the ambiguity concerning category theory as either a metaphysical or a logical discipline. He will do so decisively in favor of metaphysics: more specifically, general metaphysics (ontology). Then he will argue for the unorthodox thesis that all of logic's other traditional branches (the laws of logic, concept, judgment and syllogism) have their foundation in his ontological theory of the categories.<sup>37</sup> On this basis, then, Hegel will justify subsuming the whole of logic under a traditional type of metaphysics, as well as reforming that logic in whatever way this change requires. Far from deriving the categories from logic, as Kant had done, Hegel will derive logic from them. Seen in relation to the traditional logic, then, Hegel's approach to category theory is both more radical and less Kantian in its aims than it has often seemed. It is also something not often attempted in the Aristotelian tradition, or ever so far as I am aware.

As we saw earlier, Hegel rejects this prioritization, but only now do we see that he proposes to completely invert it. A well-known Marxist trope applies here. Having found Kant standing on his head, Hegel turns him right side up, arriving at a radically non-Kantian form of metaphysics. The alternative Hegel will defend draws on an ontological or general metaphysical theory of the categories, developed on a logic-independent basis (though, of course, not independent of *speculative* logic). This then forms the foundation for a new logic of concept, judgment and syllogism, contentful in a way the older variety is not.

However, this is only half the story when it comes to the metaphysics Hegel uses to criticize "the former logic." While all I have said so far would suggest that the foundation Hegel lays for the principles of ordinary logic is one that overlaps with "general metaphysics" (ontology), it overlaps with "special metaphysics" as well.

<sup>37</sup> Varzi (2009) defends a similar view of logic. More broadly I am informed by Peacocke's (2014, 2019) "metaphysics-first" view. The view is that in any given domain of philosophy, the metaphysics of the entities in that domain is prior to the theory of meaning or intentional content for that domain.

But objective logic comprises within itself also the rest of metaphysics, the metaphysics which sought to comprehend with the pure forms of thought such particular substrata, originally drawn from the imagination, as the soul, the world, and God, and in this type of consideration the determinations of thought constituted the essential factor. (WdL 21: 49/SoL 42)

Some interpreters are wary of going this far, preferring a Hegel whose metaphysics is confined to some more austere enterprise: a table of the categories or a case for generalized hylomorphism. Here too the suggestion that Hegel pursues not only general but also special metaphysics is not uncommon, but it assumes a special importance in the context of my project.

Hegel's antipathy to "special metaphysics" in its traditional form reflects a wariness of the "representations" or "picture-thoughts" of God, the soul and the world found in Christianity. More broadly, Hegel is no orthodox Christian and was throughout his life hostile to otherworldly and dualistic forms of religion (though also sensitive to the esoteric, this-worldly teaching of Christianity reflected in the doctrine of the incarnation). Still it is the residues of these crudely dualistic forms of religion in Kant's doctrine of the postulates that Hegel objects to in his great predecessor's thought most of all. One theme of my discussion is that, perhaps counterintuitively, the more one attends to Hegel's hostility toward traditional religious teachings, the greater his debt to at least certain forms of precritical metaphysics becomes. The example of Spinoza proves that these two stances are by no means incompatible but can, in rare cases, be mutually supporting. Yet, as with Spinoza, it would be going too far to conclude that Hegel is an atheist. Hegel nevertheless insists that the first part of his logic overlaps with "special metaphysics" and insists that each definition of the Absolute can be treated as an account of God. God may be a metaphor with questionable uses, but that does not mean Hegel regarded it as completely dispensable either. Not every metaphor is a *mere* metaphor.

In addition to textual reasons, there are strategic ones pertinent to present debates. Kantian-idealist interpreters of Hegel have assimilated forms of Aristotelian general metaphysics previously invoked against their readings: for example, an ontology of substantial form, once said to be incompatible with Hegel's idealism on a broadly Kantian interpretation. Successful or not, the assimilation suggests that future iterations of this debate, which appears not to have been concluded to many people's satisfaction, will take place on a different terrain. Regardless, I will give a central place to one particular instance of overlap between Hegel's logic and special metaphysics or theology: his ontological argument.

One way to motivate this idea is to recall a criticism of Hegel's project from the direction of Kant's critical philosophy. Even granting that Hegel successfully derives the traditional subject matter of logic from a set of ontological categories, what would prevent this from being a scheme of abstract concepts with no concrete, existential import? What would make it anything more than a mere game thought plays with itself, without ever making contact with reality? Thoughts without content are empty, after all. Fichte, whose early system appeared while Kant was still alive, received this criticism from Kant himself.<sup>38</sup> Obviously, Hegel did not, but his *Logic* continues to be met by versions of it.

While Hegel's followers have many answers to this type of charge, recent treatments have turned to one area of Hegel's thought in particular: his rethinking of the division of labor in our knowledge between concept and intuition, understanding and sensibility, category and form of intuition. Another related response concerns Hegel's "identity theory of truth," summed up in Wittgenstein's famous phrase that, when we think or say something, we and our thinking or saying "do not stop anywhere short of the fact."<sup>39</sup> Both lines of response have resonances with recent Anglophone philosophy, especially in the writings of Quine, Sellars, Davidson and McDowell.

While I will not contest these answers to the Kantian allegation directly, I will focus on an answer that has not so far as I know been heard in the recent literature.<sup>40</sup> Essentially, it is that Hegel's categories avoid a merely subjective status because they are concepts of God: more specifically, the God of the ontological argument. It is part of their essence or nature to exist, so that if their existence is even so much as possible, it is necessary. As I hope to show, Hegel's ontology, and especially the first (Being), incorporates a Hegelian version of the ontological argument for the existence of God, well-known from Anselm, Spinoza and Descartes.

Like "that being than which no greater can be conceived," Spinoza's substance that is *causa sui* or Descartes' God whose essence is to exist, Hegel's categories are concepts that raise a claim to necessary instantiation. They are ones whose noninstantiation or emptiness is meant not to be even

<sup>38</sup> Martin (2003: 33).

<sup>39</sup> Wittgenstein (2009: 49).

<sup>40</sup> In this, I am hearkening back to Henrich's first book on the ontological proof (1960), though he is there somewhat unsympathetic to Hegel's ontological argument. The more sympathetic treatments of Hegel's ontological argument from which I have benefited more directly are Harrelson (2006), Williams (2017) and Melichar (2020). I follow Harrelson in locating an ontological argument much earlier in the logic than is often supposed.

so much as possible, conceptually speaking. As we will see, Hegel concedes Kant's point that most concepts without intuitions are empty – but Hegel thinks it is going too far to claim that all are. If the claim of Being to necessary instantiation is upheld, then it will transmit necessary instantiation to all its successors. This protects the entire chain from remaining wholly out of touch with reality. It is for this reason, I think, that the ontological argument crops up again and again throughout the logical progression. The advent of a new category very often means a new version of the ontological proof.<sup>41</sup>

As we will see, Hegel's version of the proof is closest to Anselm's or Spinoza's in that it leverages a concept of God as maximally comprehensive. Such a being would have to exist, not least because there is no room for anything else to do so independently of it. (Obviously, this oversimplifies. It is not space per se that concerns us but logical or conceptual space that does so.)

Once we see that is so, we are in a position to further question the conception of a category Hegel is said to have inherited from Kant and Aristotle by prevailing readings. Whether general metaphysical (ontological) or transcendental logical, whether a “predicate” of any (full-fledged) being simply insofar as it is a being or a “concept of an object in general,” the categories of Aristotle and Kant share an important feature: Each is one over many. After all, there are a plurality of *onta* falling under Aristotle's categories, and of appearances or “objects of possible experience” falling under Kant's as well. Interpretive debates rage over whose categories, exactly, Hegel's more closely resemble, usually with a view to settling the larger issue of the nature of Hegel's metaphysics and whether it can be rendered compatible to Kant's critical or transcendental philosophy. Yet once we bear in mind Hegel's interest, not only in a successor to ontology or transcendental logic but also to theology and the ontological proof, the picture becomes more complex. Hegel's categories, it now seems, are less “one over many” than “one over one,” at least until we enter the *Realphilosophie*.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> So, for example, Hegel discusses the ontological argument in connection between Being (*Sein*) (WdL 21: 76–77/SoL 65–66), Reality (*Realität*) (WdL 21: 99/SoL 86), Concrete Existence (*Existenz*) (WdL 11: 325, 420), Disjunctive Syllogism (WdL 12: 127/SoL 625).

<sup>42</sup> Bowman (2013: 166), following Fulda, holds that Hegel's Concept is a *singulare tantum*. I prefer Henrich's (2001) *Hen-Kai-Pan*. This adds the further thought that the Concept, in addition to being one, is all. This issue aside, I want to ask how the other logical categories appear, when seen in light of the Concept as a *singulare tantum*. My proposal is that they can be seen as candidates for this status. *Substance*, for example, the Concept's immediate predecessor is meant to bear this status, as is Parmenidean Being and the Absolute Idea. Indeed, there is reason to think it is true of all Hegel's categories. This would follow, essentially, from two facets of Hegel's method:

Both Aristotle's categories and Kant's are finite, from Hegel's perspective, and his categories more closely resemble the master concept of a philosopher who rejected category theory in any form: Spinoza. Notwithstanding Hegel's very real reservations about the anti-idealist monism of these figures, Spinoza's substance and Parmenides' One are better templates for Hegel's categories than any found in Aristotle and Kant.

Another way to put the point would be to say that Hegel is appropriating for his theory of the categories aspects of the broader philosophical systems of Aristotle and Kant that transcend their respective theories of the categories.<sup>43</sup> Hegel's Absolute Idea famously resembles Aristotle's thought-thinking-itself, which, as Michael Frede points out, belongs to his theology and not to his ontology.<sup>44</sup> Frede ascribes to Aristotle a view I believe Hegel also held. Roughly, this is the view that ontology and theology both constitute parts of metaphysics because they concern the question of being and that of the highest being: the question of what it is to be *tout court* and the question of which being best exemplifies this. I am skeptical of any attempt to integrate Aristotle's ideas into an interpretation of Hegel that omits this latter, theological component and focuses instead on category theory or the theory of substantial forms.

I follow Kreines in being similarly skeptical of any account of Hegel's relationship to Kant that includes only the Analytic and not the Dialectic. Perhaps such an account would treat Hegel as pursuing a general metaphysics or theory of the categories but be uninterested in his special metaphysics of the unconditioned or Idea. Indeed, I attempt to go beyond Kreines, integrating the Dialectic in its entirety, and not just the Antinomies. In this connection, I further argue that the paradigmatic Idea for Hegel is neither the soul nor the world-whole from the paralogisms or Antinomies but, rather, the *omnitudo realitatis/ ens realissimum* from the final section Transcendental Ideal of the first critique.

Going further, I challenge the common idea that it is above all "categories" that Hegel's Logic concerns. I contend that Hegel's categories more

1. that a category is always criticized in and through its metaphysical use rather than antecedent to its metaphysical use ("learning to swim without getting wet") and
2. that it is always criticized on its own terms and therefore in isolation from others and from experience ("immanent critique").

What *use* does one make of a category *in isolation*? The only possible answer seems to me to be that it is the monist use of a category, made by figures such as Parmenides, Spinoza, and others.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Lau (2008).

<sup>44</sup> Frede (1987: 81–99). See also Düsing (2009: esp. 7–8). Düsing offers an interpretation of Hegel whose point of departure is the ambiguity between ontology and theology in the traditional Aristotelian definition of metaphysics.

closely resemble Kant's Ideas of the unconditioned than his categories, "concepts of an object in general." So lofty are Hegel's ambitions that even Kant's Ideas of reason are insufficient from a Hegelian perspective. However, they at least improve upon Kant's categories, or pure concepts of the understanding.

My proposal is that Hegel has not simply changed the subject from category to Idea but announced a break with his predecessors. This break consists in Hegel's conviction that it is something more closely resembling an Idea, rather than a category, which will be the default in a theory of the fundamental constituents of thought. For Kant, the use of Ideas by metaphysicians intent on gaining knowledge of the unconditioned is, in effect, the misuses of categories whose home is natural science, perception and common science. Hegel effectively inverts this picture, so that the metaphysical use of an Idea is the default case and that of a category in an ordinary or natural-scientific context its misuse. Ideas are not overambitious categories that need humbling. Categories, Kantian Aristotelian or otherwise, are overly modest Ideas – ones that need emboldening.

As I have said, the main obstacle to this project is the fallacy of explaining the less obscure by the more. Yet Hegel's contention is that these ontological and theological principles are in no way obscure, at least when they are approached in the right way. Part of Hegel's achievement is to have recast ontology and theology as thought's default-justified employment rather than its most extravagant excess. What is more, if successful, he will not only have challenged but inverted a received view. That is, he will have shown that it is the categories and formal logical laws and materials, assumed as unproblematic by ordinary thought, natural science and transcendental philosophy, that stand in need of a more ambitious justification than they have received thus far.

### 0.7 Pippin's Hegel

In this book, my principal aim is to address a question in the philosophy of logic from a Hegelian perspective. It is not to defend, in detail, a controversial interpretation of Hegel's metaphysics. However, I do rely throughout on an account of Hegel's metaphysics as fundamentally un-Kantian. In my retelling, Kant is indeed a "subjectivist," Hegel a figure who allows us to recapture a form of "objectivity" missing from earlier idealisms. However, everything turns on what, exactly, it means for Hegel to overcome Kant's subjectivism. It is possible to go awry by ignoring the ways in which Kant is himself already overcoming subjectivism: for example,



by rejecting Berkeleyan–Cartesian idealism; preserving the possibility of thinking things in themselves by means of the categories, even if this does not yield theoretical (scientific) cognition; and so on.<sup>45</sup> However, the symmetrical version of this error would be that of being overly impressed by Kant's own efforts in an anti-psychologistic, anti-empiricist, anti-Cartesian direction, so much so that one is convinced that the essentials of Hegel's position are already in place.

While this is a broader issue than I can discuss here, I do want to address just one “logical” face of it. In a recent book, Robert Pippin offers an account of Hegel's relationship to Kant's logic that differs from the one I will present here. For Hegel, as Pippin presents him, Kant's subjectivism would seem to be limited to his contention that the forms of sensible intuition are species specific. There is nothing objectionably subjectivist about Kant's (pure) general logic, which is why Hegel can draw on it to construct a metaphysics. Of course, Kant did not himself regard (pure) general logic as having serious metaphysical potential. Yet Hegel shows it can realize this potential once we resolve the problem posed by the forms of sensible intuition, namely, their “parochialism.”

For Pippin, one of Hegel's main sources of inspiration in Kant is the metaphysical deduction of the categories, an argument I think of Hegel as repudiating.<sup>46</sup> Pippin is doubtless aware of Hegel's well-known criticisms of this argument, so the question becomes that of just how anti-Kantian these criticisms truly are. The project of the metaphysical deduction is to derive the categories of transcendental logic from the forms of judgment in (pure) general logic: for example, the category cause–effect from the judgment form ground–consequent (“if ... than”). According to Pippin, Hegel sees that this derivation would constitute a metaphysics once it is freed from its association with certain residually empiricist elements of Kant's thought: for example, Kant's “subjectivist” account of the forms of intuition.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps Hegel objects to Kant's use of resources from the logic of the day as lazy and unoriginal. However, this does not undermine the idea that Hegel is deeply indebted to the general idea of deriving the categories from the forms of judgment.

In order to understand what could be wrong with the metaphysical deduction from a Hegelian perspective, we must dwell a bit longer on the

<sup>45</sup> These are some of the considerations raised by Ameriks (1985, 2000) and Guyer (1993) in defense of Kant, and responded to by the Hegelian Bristow (2007).

<sup>46</sup> Pippin (2018: 64).

<sup>47</sup> Pippin (2018: 74 ff.).

meaning of the term “subjectivism.” By subjectivism, I understand the general Hegelian allegation, made across a range of areas of philosophy, that Kant gives undue weight to the standpoint of the knowing (and acting) subject. Pippin, in my view, possesses an overly narrow understanding of subjectivism as “parochialism.” He argues that its main source in Kant could be his conception of the forms of intuition: more specifically, his tendency to regard them as “species specific.” This leads him to conclude that once the problem posed by the forms of intuition is solved the threat of subjectivism is mitigated. Accordingly, Hegel is free to adopt Kant’s findings concerning that other stem of our cognitive power, the understanding and its concepts. Since it is here that the project of the metaphysical deduction takes place, there is no risk of subjectivism. As far as Pippin’s Hegel is concerned, the rot of subjectivism does not spread beyond Kant’s first stem.

In disagreeing, I would like to adapt a point made in the criticism of this type of Hegel interpretation by Tolley,<sup>48</sup> who observes that logic, for Kant, is subjective in a perfectly straightforward sense. Logic studies the knowing subject: more specifically, its faculties of understanding and reason. Logic’s laws, as Kant conceives them, just are principles internal to these faculties. They are principles presupposed in any possible exercise of them. They describe what it is in the nature of these faculties to do. They are, in short, constitutive norms of those faculties. Logic, as Kant defines it, is the “science of the correct use of the understanding and of reason in general” (JL, 530–531/16). On this conception, logic is not empirical psychology, so there is no risk of what Frege called “psychologism,” that is, reducing the normative laws of logic to descriptive generalizations. For empirical psychology, sensible intuition would be required. Yet logic is still founded in a type of teleological faculty psychology nonetheless.

While this is a well-known feature of Kant’s position, Pippin does not in my view respect it sufficiently. For Pippin, as I read him, Kant anticipates Frege in being a fundamentally anti-psychologistic thinker. Pippin is careful to note certain discrepancies: Kant espouses a logic of judgments and act types, while the latter espouses one of propositions.<sup>49</sup> I certainly have no quarrel whatsoever with anti-psychologistic interpretations of Kant,

<sup>48</sup> Tolley (2019a: III. Human Understanding. Kant on the Subjective Universality of Logic). While I agree with Tolley that logic, for Kant, remains subjective, I would not go so far as to claim that logic, for Kant, concerns a merely human faculty (“for Kant logic seems instead to be first and foremost precisely the science of finite, especially human, discursive intelligibility”).

<sup>49</sup> Pippin (2018: 70–71).

which have well-known advantages. Among other things, they explain the difference between transcendental psychology and both the empirical and rational (metaphysical) varieties. Yet, in my view, any interpretation that omits the irreducibly psychological dimension of Kant's logical theory is simply implausible.<sup>50</sup>

If one is an analytic neo-Kantian, then there is less of a need for faculty psychology. A "conceptual scheme" or "space of reasons," the analytic stand-ins for Kant's categories, does not necessarily presuppose a teleological faculty psychology. Perhaps this is because of the linguistic turn many analytic neo-Kantians implicitly give Kant's thought. Presumably, if one were to regard Kant's logical forms as (meta)linguistic, then there would be no need to ground them in a faculty. This approach would also, implicitly, socialize and historicize the categories, and in a way anticipating Hegel. The focus would shift from the norms self-imposed by the individual reasoner to the patterns of use in a linguistic community. However, Kant's logical theory does, I think, center capacities, and to pretend otherwise would be anachronistic. It is, as one recent commentator puts it, a "capacities-first" approach to philosophy. Yet I deny that Hegel is an adherent of the "capacities-first" approach, even of a version that avoids the common skeptical pitfalls.

To be clear, I am not alleging that Pippin is tacitly relying on these claims from analytic neo-Kantianism. However, this makes it more mysterious, not less, why Pippin would pass over the subjectivism inherent in Kant's logic. By effacing this dimension of Kant's logic, Pippin is able to claim, wrongly in my view, that Hegel overcomes the subjectivism of Kant's critical philosophy by fleeing one part of it for another – aesthetic for logic – whereas I will argue that Hegel is fully able to do so only when he avails himself of resources that exceed the critical philosophy.

What, then, is the nature of this break? Kant's subjectivism is not, I think, limited to his belief that the forms of intuition are "species specific." It refers more broadly to his relentless (in my view, oppressive), insistence that reflection on any conceivable philosophical topic begins from a reflection on the relevant capacity: mathematics and natural science referring to the faculty of reason; art and biology to the faculty of judgment; morality and politics and world history to the faculty of practical reason and so on. It is precisely this anthropocentric – or, better,

<sup>50</sup> In presenting Kant's logical theory Pippin (2018: 61) speaks often of "distinctions and relations," "conditions," "sense-making" and so on. This shifts the emphasis off of psychological faculties, mental capacities and cognitive powers.

logocentric – outlook that Hegel is urging us to transcend (though I have not yet said anything about the specific problems Hegel identifies with it). Some commentators prefer to have Hegel adopt such an approach but avoid its unwelcome consequences. They set to work explaining away all the unwelcome associations that the notion of a faculty may have. I choose a different route, preferring to emphasize Hegel's affinities with figures, traditions, and ideas that are simply illegible from a Kantian point of view.

Significantly, Pippin denies the accuracy of Hegel's own description of his project as a departure from Fichte's earlier, "subjective," idealism, but I will advocate that we take Hegel's self-presentation seriously. Unlike Hegel's absolute idealism, Fichte's "subjective idealism" is everywhere permeated by the anxiety that reason will be compromised through any departure from its closed circle. Hence, Fichte simply rejects any role in his system mind-independent world of the substance-monist, the (Romantic) philosopher of nature, and of traditional Scholastic-Aristotelian ontology. The "self-positing" subject or "I" and its acts of "counter-positing" a world are all that will concern us in the *Wissenschaftslehre*. By contrast, the objective idealisms of Schelling and Hegel are free of this anxiety and confident that reason's self-alienation entails its self-recovery, and in a strengthened form. By losing itself in contemplation of nature, Substance, or Being, reason acquires a knowledge of the holistic character of reality that would elude it otherwise. By recovering itself subsequently, it is able to draw on this knowledge to achieve insight into itself as the one-and-all, a conclusion Fichte's dualistic approach can only approximate through a *progressus ad infinitum*. The objective idealist dynamic of self-alienation and self-recovery is often associated with the relationship between the realms of nature and spirit, but I believe it unfolds in the course of the logic as well. How else would the *Logic* provide a template for what is to come in the system? The idea that any such approach would have to be reductively naturalistic reflects a form of Fichtean paranoia completely alien to Hegel.

As I have indicated, Hegel's renunciation at the logic's outset of a logocentric outlook may only be provisional. For Hegel is ultimately a profoundly logocentric thinker. Indeed, this temporary renunciation of logocentrism may be for the sake of something more resolutely rationalistic than even Kant's Enlightenment creed: "reason in the world." However, it is important that we set aside the standpoint of thought thinking itself, so we do not beg the question against nonlogocentric positions, such as the Parmenidean one presented at the outset of the Doctrine of Being. It is generally accepted that in such writings as the *Phenomenology* Hegel

begins with a position that is the polar opposite of his own, radical empiricism, only to show that it entails an absolute idealist alternative. My own view is that the *Logic* does something similar, though the opposed position is not an anti-idealist epistemology but an anti-idealist metaphysics: Parmenidean (Eleatic) monism, in a form Hegel associates closely with Jacobi and Spinoza. It would not quite be in character for Hegel to simply forbid the pursuit of rival philosophical approaches, perhaps in the way Kant or the logical positivists sometimes do. Hegel, I think, prefers to allow them to proceed, knowing all the while that they will undermine themselves (though not before making the unique contribution that it is each one's destiny to provide).

In proceeding on the basis of (pure) general logic, as Pippin's Hegel urges, we would, in effect, be treating something subjective as the basis of metaphysics. The laws and materials of logic are *not* subjective in the sense that the forms of intuition are: "species specific." According to Kant, they hold good for any possible thinker, and we can grant this provisionally for the sake of argument. They are objective in the sense that they are inter-subjectively valid, among finite subjects (and any others there may be). Yet it remains the case that the laws of logic, as Kant understands them, are "in" the subject. They are not "in" the subject in the way that conscious mental states inhere a mental substance for a Cartesian or early modern philosopher. No law of logic is a "quale," a "raw qualitative feel" or "what it's like" aspect, in modern terms. Yet they are, rather, "in" the subject in the way that the activity inherent to a thing's nature is in it, according to Aristotelians. Pippin's Hegel, in contesting Kant's claim that the forms of intuition are species specific, removes *one* impediment to treating logic as metaphysics. However, this is, in my view, insufficient for showing that a form of judgment is a form of being. The logocentric predicament is not the "egocentric predicament," but it can present a similar face. Both involve the threat of confinement within a restricted sphere, the ego or reason. I have urged that the threat is credible in both cases and that counteracting it in the former case is not sufficient to counteract it in the latter.

Hegel, as I interpret him, rejects Kant's logic and therefore the possibility of a project like the one Pippin describes – but this still leaves the question of Hegel's relationship to precritical metaphysics and Kant's critique of it. My aim in this study is to show how Hegel's metaphysics, on a traditional interpretation, resolves the logocentric predicament, and not necessarily to defend that interpretation as superior to more modern alternatives. I do agree that it would be folly to completely equate Hegel's position with those of the precritical, dogmatic metaphysicians of

the Leibniz–Wolff school. However, I seriously doubt the best versions of the (neo)metaphysical reading genuinely risk this. I further am indebted to those who have argued that Hegel’s metaphysics follows those forms of rationalism that employ rational argument, rather than a far-fetched intellectual intuition of supersensible objects. My own minor contribution to this debate is just one historical point concerning the logocentric predicament.

The project undertaken here gives us one novel reason to reject the common accusation that Hegel, interpreted in this way, turns out to be a pre-critical, “Wolffian” or rationalist thinker. No pre-critical thinker, so far as I am aware, pursued ontology and theology in a pre- or non-formal logical way. Nor, more importantly, did any do so with the aim of providing a non-formal logical ground or basis for a radically reconstituted logic. Certainly Hegel does not see this aspiration in the tradition, which he views as complacent about logic.

Ultimately, though, I base my preference for this interpretation on philosophical, rather than interpretive, grounds. To me, the project of resolving the logocentric predicament in the way Hegel proposes is so novel, ambitious and interesting for it to be blacklisted as “pre-critical metaphysics.” To some extent, Hegel’s idea of metaphysics as a non-formal logical enterprise constitutes a novel defense of metaphysics, not encountered so far as I know in the tradition. Seen as “primordial” in the way I advocate, metaphysics no longer appears as thinking’s greatest extravagance. It is, instead, thought’s most basic, default-justified employment.