

LIFE AND AUTONOMY: FORMS OF SELF-DETERMINATION IN KANT AND HEGEL *

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It is, by now, a well-established thesis that one major path that runs from Kant, through Fichte and Schelling, up to Hegel is defined by the conception of freedom as autonomy. It is less known and has been less frequently the object of study that from Kant to Hegel a new idea of life takes shape as well. Even less taken into account is the fact that these two paths from Kant to Hegel might be systematically intertwined. If the notion of life in German Idealism is discussed at all, it has been discussed mostly in dealing with the philosophies of nature and biology of Kant and his successors. This framing is, of course, not wrong in itself; yet to my mind we can only fully account for the thought of what is living and the new interest that the idealist philosophies of nature actually deserve if we regard life as a *practical notion*. For the idealists, life is, as Fichte has it, an “analogue of *freedom* in nature,”¹ and it describes the one form of object we can encounter in nature that possesses a kind of unity and organization that comes close to the unity and the organization of spirit. In various accounts of German Idealism, life is not only regarded as an analogue of a self-grounded

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¹ J. G. Fichte, “Eigene Meditationen zur Elementarphilosophie,” in: *Gesamtausgabe: Nachgelassene Schriften Bd. 3: 1793–1795*, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann Holzboog 1971, p. 244.

order, but figures furthermore as a precondition of the actuality of freedom: It is in being alive that we might become free.² How exactly this is so is of course not only a very complicated issue but also a contested one among Kant and his successors. In order to outline at least two basic approaches to relating ‘life’ and ‘autonomy,’ I would like to present a sketch of a reading of Kant, in whose works the analogy of life and autonomy first manifests itself, and of Hegel, who has to my mind most fully developed the potential of this constellation. Starting with Kant is inevitable, for he has provided the decisive formulation of the concept of autonomy (in the *Groundwork* and his second *Critique*) and has introduced a new thinking of the living (in his “Critique of Teleological Judgment”), both of which were in turn taken up and developed by his successors. In the following I would like to point out some of the structural analogies present in Kant’s thought on practical autonomy and living self-constitution (I) in order to briefly address why he himself does not eventually draw on this analogy (II). It seems that Kant thought that in order to be free, we in fact have to abstract from our living nature rather than build on the way in which it already is in a basic sense self-constitutive. In the second half of this paper I want to turn to Hegel in order to show how he deepens the interconnection between the living and the autonomous, life and spirit, without however reducing autonomy to a biological feature. While he stresses the degree to which living beings are

² There seem to be two fundamental points of departure for this thought in Kant: first the idea that in order to be or become free, a being must possess the faculty of desire or a will (in the broad sense): the faculty to be by means of its representations the cause of the reality of the objects of these representations (cf. Kant’s definition of Life from the *Critique of Practical Reason*: “Life is the faculty of a being to act in accordance with laws of the faculty of desire. The *faculty of desire* is a being’s *faculty to be by means of its representations the cause of the reality of the objects of these representations*.” (KpV 5:10)). The second point of departure is the idea that in order to be free, a being must be of the self-organizing and self-constituting sort that living beings are. In the following I will only directly deal with this second idea. It is an open question for me how being a self-organizing and self-constituting entity is precisely related to being an entity that can will something.

indeed, in a basic sense, “autonomous”, and while he indicates that it is from life that spirit emerges (III), he specifies the mode of a self-conscious life of spirit that is to be distinguished from the biological form of the living (IV).

I.

The peculiarity of the concept of autonomy lies in the fact that it articulates a concept of freedom and a notion of order in one and the same stroke. Whereas the conception of freedom as the freedom from external constraint and the idea of freedom as the freedom to act arbitrarily both indicate a notion that seems in a basic fashion to be opposed to order, the concept of autonomy formulates a freedom that expresses itself as an order: an order of laws one has given to oneself or an order of laws of which one can regard oneself as the author. Freedom exists, in Rousseau’s famous expression, as “obedience to the law one has prescribed to oneself” and is in this sense opposed to a “natural freedom” which knows no constraints at all.³ The concept of autonomy thus contains two connected thoughts: First, that to be free is to obey laws of a peculiar kind. Second, that for a law or an order to be fully normative, it has to be self-prescribed and not given externally. Freedom and normativity are, in this sense, correlative ideas. For an order to be normative it has to be rooted in freedom and for freedom to be real it has to express itself as a normative order.⁴

Kant’s concept of autonomy can be regarded as the central formulation encoding this idea of an internal connection between liberty and order, freedom and the law. In Kant’s own

³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Of the Social Contract*, in: *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, ed. and trans. V. Gourevitch, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997, p. 54.

⁴ Cf. Robert Brandom, “Freedom and Constraint by Norms,” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 16 (1979), pp. 187–196.

exposition of this kind of order, it is practical reason or the will that is described as autonomous. Now, the will is free in Kant's description if it is subjected to a law *in such a way* that it can also be regarded as self-legislating. That is to say, it is only 'freely' and 'normatively' bound by laws to the degree that it can itself be regarded as the source of these laws: "Hence the will is not merely subject to the law but subject to it in such a way that it must be viewed as also giving the law to itself and just because of this as first subject to the law (of which it can regard itself as the author)." (GMS 4:431) Freedom in this sense consists in a peculiar *mode of subjection*: a mode in which the entity subjected to the law can be simultaneously regarded as the source of the law. The free subjection of the will is one in which the subjection is simultaneously an expression of the will.

If we take the language of the will "giving" or "imposing" the law that binds it literally, the concept of autonomy can seem to be endangered by a paradox: If the will is bound by the law only under the condition that it has given the law to itself, it seems that the will is ultimately not bound at all: If the binding quality of the law fully derives from it being instituted by the will itself, what should prevent the will from, in a second act, abandoning the law and instituting a different one? If we then, however, presume that the will therefore must have had reasons for instituting the law in the first place, it was already bound in instituting the law and in this sense not free in giving itself the law, in this sense not the "Urheber" of this law. (The actual *Urheber* seems to be the law giving the will reasons to give itself the law so that the will is in the last instance under a law it has not given to itself).⁵ If the paradox would hold in the strict

sense, it would be, of course, fatal to the intelligibility of the idea of autonomy. To argue, on the other hand, that the paradoxical formulation rests on a simple misconstrual or misunderstanding of the idea of autonomy and that, in fact, the conception of autonomy is a simple and unambiguous one, also does not seem right in that it does not account for the way in which Kant and his successors indeed struggled with the complex conjunction of freedom and the law in the concept of autonomy. This struggle seems to indicate that the paradoxical formulation expresses a tension that is indeed vital for the idea of autonomy: Autonomy entails both subjection to order and expression of freedom; these moments are conditions for one other, just as they are also in tension with one another.⁶

In order to trace this tension without articulating it as a sheer—and thus empty—paradox, it might be helpful to say which basic law it is that the will, on Kant's view, is subjected to in being at the same time law-giving. The law through which the will just as much binds itself as it expresses itself is, according to Kant, the categorical imperative: to act only according to that maxim that you can at the same time will as a universal law. The will is free in adopting this or that maxim and thereby taking this or that path of action, insofar as it adopts the maxim only on the grounds that it could legislate the maxim as a universal law. To express the thought in a different way, we could say that the will is only restricted by the ability of the maxim to be willed to the fullest degree, which means that the will is restricted only by the will-ability of the maxim and thus by something rooted in itself. This capacity of a maxim to be willed to the fullest degree corresponds to the degree to which it can be willed as a law. The reason for this resides in the nature

⁵ For the deeper structure of this paradox of autonomy see Robert Pippin, "Hegel's Practical Philosophy: The Actualization of Freedom," in: *Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000, pp. 180–199; Terry Pinkard, *German Philosophy 1760–1860: The Legacy of Idealism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2002; Robert Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy: Rational Agency as Ethical Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2008, ch. 3; see also the

contributions in Thomas Khurana and Christoph Menke (eds.), *Paradoxien der Autonomie*, Berlin: August Verlag 2011.

⁶ For further elaborations on such a dialectical conception of autonomy, see Thomas Khurana, "Paradoxes of Autonomy: On the Dialectics of Freedom and Normativity," *Symposium: Canadian Journal of Continental Philosophy* 17 (2013), pp. 50–74.

of the rational will: a will exerts causal power, and insofar as causality necessarily implies laws, a lawless will seems incomprehensible to Kant: “ein Unding” (GMS 4:446).⁷ As the capacity to cause a state of affairs by means of a representation the rational will thus has to exhibit a specific form of lawfulness. The rational will itself is in this sense lawful; it naturally adopts the form of the law. This is the reason why Kant can use the formulation that the will is a law unto itself (“*der Wille ist sich Gesetz*”).⁸

I do not want to enter into an investigation of the concept of the will at this point and deal with the question how convincing it is to tie a will to lawfulness in this way;⁹ at this point I am rather interested in the *form* of the account that Kant gives for making plausible that something is autonomous, bound by something to the degree that it expresses itself in that by which it is bound. This can be the case, it seems, in the sense that something is subject to the laws that are *its own*, laws that *derive from its own nature*. In its adoption of maxims, the will is not restricted by an external influence; it is restricted only by the categorical imperative—the law of lawfulness—that the rational will by its very nature exposes as the supreme law: The categorical imperative orders the will to be a universal lawgiver which is so much in accordance with the will’s nature that it can regard itself to be ordered by ‘itself’ to do so. The will, by

its nature, “is” this law. By subjecting itself to it, it can thus ‘regard’ itself as its author. The freedom of the will is not lawless, but rather a “causality according to immutable laws of a special kind” (GMS 4:446): laws that are prescribed by the will itself, in the sense that the will is bound in this prescription only by its own nature, the law of lawfulness. The will is neither determined to act nor otherwise bound by something external to it, but instead is determined and bound by its own nature. In this sense the actions of the will are explained by laws of autonomy and not laws of heteronomy (laws that specify the way in which something is determined by something external to it).

According to this description, being autonomous is not literally to be under laws that are self-prescribed, self-legislated or self-given—it means to be under laws that are *one’s own*. They are one’s own in the sense that they spring from one’s own nature,¹⁰ pertain to one specifically and concern the effects of events that are relevant according to one’s nature. In order to make plausible what this means precisely—to be bound by one’s own law (to be determined “*eigengesetzlich*”)—commentators have repeatedly alluded to the nature of laws of the living.¹¹ The will’s law is not “its own” because the will has given it to itself in a lawless act; it is rather its own *because this law expresses its nature*. The way in which the laws are the will’s own might thus seem parallel to the way in which the laws deter-

⁷ Kant writes: “Since the concept of causality brings with it that of laws in accordance with which, by something that we call a cause, something else, namely an effect, must be posited, so freedom, although it is not a property of the will in accordance with natural laws, is not for that reason lawless but must instead be a causality in accordance with immutable laws but of a special kind; for otherwise a free will would be an absurdity [*ein Unding*].” (GMS 4:446)

⁸ Cf. Kant’s formulation from the *Groundwork* that “autonomy of the will is the property of the will by which it is a law to itself” (GMS 4:440; see also: GMS 4:446).

⁹ In addition, I will not discuss the question of whether the notion of autonomy in Kant is irreducibly tied to the moral law or whether there might also be a Kantian concept of autonomy that is to be understood as morally neutral in order to make room for the possibility of a freely chosen evil. Cf. Henry E. Allison, *Kant’s Theory of Freedom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1990, pp. 94ff.

¹⁰ If we put it like this, the thought of autonomy clearly possesses Spinozist resonances—compare Spinoza’s definition of a free thing from the *Ethics*: “That thing is said to be free [*liber*] which exists solely from the necessity of its own nature, and is determined to action by itself alone. A thing is said to be necessary [*necessarius*] or rather, constrained [*coactus*], if it is determined by another thing to exist and to act in a definite and determinate way.” (Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, in: *Complete Works*, trans. Samuel Shirley, ed. Michael L. Morgan, Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing 2002, Part I, Def. 7, p. 217). Certainly, there is a limit to the parallel insofar as Spinoza holds that only God can be described as such a free cause; for only he exists and acts solely from the necessity of his own nature (*Ibid.*, Part I, Proposition 17, Corollary 2, p. 228).

¹¹ See e.g. Sebastian Rödl, *Self-Consciousness*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007, ch. 4; Christine Korsgaard, *Self-Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2009, esp. ch. 2.

mining the operations and developments of an organism are its own in expressing its “nature,” the specific life-form that pertains to it. Insofar as the living being is not determined by another being to exist and to act in a particular way, but rather by the necessity of its own nature, it can appear to be autonomously determined.¹² Take a migrant bird, for example, and what it does in the spring. That the bird determines itself to fly back north under certain conditions in spring is an act that is to be understood according to the laws proper to the bird’s life-form: in following these laws the bird acts in accordance with its *own* laws. Certainly, it is prompted to act in this way by circumstances; but these circumstances only possess significance due to the bird’s life-form and do not have the same effect on a non-living mass of matter of the same size and roughly the same components. The circumstances that motivate the act hence are not purely external but effective to the degree that they possess an internal significance for the life-form. In being moved by these circumstances the living being accords with its own nature: it is determined by its own laws to act in the way it does.

Now, if we provisionally grant that the autonomous law of the practical agent might be the agent’s own law in a sense that is formally parallel to the way in which the specific laws of a living being are its own, we certainly need to consider more

¹² Sebastian Rödl, who advances an interpretation of autonomy as being under one’s own law (instead of autonomy as “giving oneself the law”), tries to explain further in what sense “laws of the living” might be “laws of autonomy” (Rödl, *Self-Consciousness*, p. 118). Inanimate nature is subject to laws of heteronomy of the form “An N does A, if an M does B to it”; N’s act in this sense is solicited by an act of M which did not itself accord with a law of N but happens independently of N and its laws. Living nature instead is subject to laws of autonomy, that possess the form “An N does A, when (the time comes and) an M does B to it,” in which the “when” indicates a systematic relation between M’s act and the laws of N. Laws of a life-form “place its instances in circumstances that solicit the dispositions and powers characteristic of the life-form” (Ibid., p. 119). From this basic form of autonomy to be found in all living beings, Rödl distinguishes a stronger sense of autonomy pertaining to laws of reason: “Being under laws of reason, I am subject to nothing other than myself in the sense that these laws spring from and constitute the nature of that to which I refer first personally.” (Ibid., p. 120)

precisely the way in which they are. Is it really enough for something to realize laws that spring from its own nature—its specific form or essence—to be autonomous? If my computer turns itself off when the battery is low and it thereby follows its (designed) inner nature we will probably not be inclined to say that my computer follows an autonomous law. If there is something to using the analogy of living beings, there must be more involved here in speaking of the living following its “*own* laws.” I believe that Kant’s account of living beings (and the way they differ from designed machines) can be of help in showing the way in which it might be indeed correct to say that living beings exhibit a basic form of autonomy. This occurs, however, in attaining a more complex account of what one can name “one’s own” laws: not just laws that pertain to the respective entity specifically, but laws of an entity that produces or constitutes itself. In order to explain what this could mean, we have to consider briefly Kant’s account of living beings in the third *Critique*.

The fact that Kant’s “Critique of Teleological Judgment” and the characterization of living beings contained therein might be relevant to the question of autonomy is very generally suggested by the fact that living beings seem to require a different form of judgment or explanation than is usually employed in order to account for effects described by laws of heteronomy: They exhibit a type of organization “not analogous with any causality that we know” (KU 5:375) and if we only take recourse to mechanical causality, we cannot explain the specific necessity of living beings, the lawfulness that these beings display.

For if one adduces, e.g., the structure of a bird [...] one says that given the mere *nexus effectivus* [...] this is all in the highest degree contingent: i.e., that nature, considered as a mere mechanism, could have formed itself in a thousand different ways without hitting precisely upon the *unity in accordance with such a rule*, and that it is therefore only outside the con-

cept of nature, not within it, that one could have even the least ground *a priori* for hoping to find such a principle. (KU 5:360; emphasis added)

In order to account for the specific ‘unity in accordance with a rule’ of the living being—the laws that are the living’s “own” in a peculiar sense—we have to take recourse to the principle of purposiveness (which is characterized in the introduction to the *Critique of Judgment* as the mediating term (“*vermittelnde Begriff*”) between conceptions of nature and the concept of freedom). In order to account for the way in which living entities expose an inner unity and necessity that on the other hand cannot be made sense of in terms of a merely mechanical natural necessity, the power of judgment (*Urteilkraft*) grasps living beings as if they were purposively produced.

Now, what characterizes this specific “lawful unity” that pertains to the living being (and moves us to impute to it a certain purposiveness)? Kant describes this sort of lawful unity in two stages:¹³ (1) Living beings are *organized beings* in the sense that their “parts (as far as their existence and their form are concerned) are possible only through their relation to the whole” (KU 5:373). Their parts are suited to one another and to the whole in such a manner as to form a functional unity. Organisms share this property with designed artifacts. In the case of artifacts, this is explicable however by the plan or design that antedates the artifact and that has governed the selection, formation, or arrangement of the parts in this functional array. The natural being exposes a comparable inner structure—a comparable “lawfulness” of the inner arrangement—while we however are not able to point at a preceding design or a creator

¹³ On the distinction between these two stages that concern two levels of living things’ mechanical inexplicability—that which they share with artifacts and the other which distinguishes them from artifacts—cf. Hannah Ginsborg, “Two Kinds of Mechanical Inexplicability in Kant and Aristotle,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 42 (2004), pp. 33–65.

existing independently of this being. (2) Secondly, living beings are *self-organizing beings*. As I pointed out, they are not—in any way known to us—the effect of a concept given in an understanding external to them (as in the analogous case, the plan or the purpose of the artisan); they are rather *cause and effect of themselves*: they produce themselves. Its parts are “combined into a whole by being reciprocally the cause and effect of their form” (KU 5:373). This self-organizing character has two consequences that distinguish living beings from artifacts. *First*, the way in which the moments or organs of an organism depend on the framework of the whole seems stronger than the way in which the parts of an artifact are related to its whole. The moments of the self-organizing being not only depend on the whole in the sense that they are defined as functional elements that can only be specified and identified as functional elements with reference to the whole, but in the stronger sense that they can only come into existence and subsist within and due to the whole: Through their interrelation the moments reciprocally produce and sustain themselves.¹⁴ Whereas the wheels of the watch are only suited to one another and do not produce each other, the organs of a living being cause one another reciprocally and are only there “because of” and “through” each other (KU 5:374). *Second*, in a self-organizing being the whole is not external or transcendent, but immanent to the complex being in question. Whereas in the watch the producing cause of the watch and its form is not contained in nature but in the mind of its creator, in the living being the parts are reciprocally the cause and effect of each other and *in this way bring about a whole that is immanent to them*. “In this way alone is it possible in turn for the idea of the whole conversely (reciprocally) to determine the form and combination of all the parts”—not as a whole

¹⁴ The moments, thus, are not parts that can subsist independently of the interrelation of the parts within a whole. An organ detached from the body does not subsist as this organ but as an aggregate of matter, merely resembling this former organ.

given ahead or situated above the actual happenings, but as a whole present in the co-production of the parts.¹⁵

For Kant, this immanence of the idea of the whole generates our difficulties in understanding living organisms: We do not possess the capacity for an intuitive understanding that would be able to intuit the whole as such (i.e. a concrete and actual whole) and that could go “from the synthetically universal (of the intuition of a whole as such) to the particular, i.e., from the whole to the parts” (KU 5:407). As we have only a discursive understanding, our understanding has to start out from an analytical universal (a concept) so that we cannot begin from a concrete and immanent whole but only from *the representation* of the whole (an abstract and merely possible whole, so to speak). Thus, we have to conceive of living beings on the model of the production of artifacts: in order to grasp their wholeness at all we have to treat them *as if* they began from an abstract representation of the whole under which then—in a process of technical construction—particular elements were subsumed so as to form the whole being. In other words, we have to treat them *as if* they were purposively designed, although this seems to fail to grasp the actual way in which this purposiveness manifests itself.¹⁶

¹⁵ That implies that the parts are not only more dependent on the whole than the parts of an artifact; *they are simultaneously more autonomous*: Insofar as they participate in producing a whole they are not just a mere part but also co-author of the whole that in turn determines them. The parts thereby turn out to be autonomous by way of depending on a whole of a peculiar type. — Kant parallelizes this type of immanent organization with forms of organization in the political field (KU 5:375)—cf. on this point Sally Sedgwick, “The State as Organism: The Metaphysical Basis of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 39 (2001), pp. 171–188. For the way in which Hegel deepens the Kantian idea and understands the form of social self-determination in terms of an organic structure that gives autonomy also to its parts, see Frederick Neuhouser, *The Foundations of Hegel’s Social Theory: Actualizing Freedom*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2000, especially pp. 41–49, 121–144; 204ff.

¹⁶ Instead of locating the whole in an idea which is really present in some other understanding, one could also try to locate it in an immanent, formative force that defines the dynamic inner unity of the organized entity and its capacity to organize further matter. Such a force, which Kant in fact mentions (KU 5:374 “formative power”; KU 5:422ff.: “formative drive”), can however not be determined independently of the

Yet no matter how problematic our mode of knowing the self-organizing structure of the living being may be, the structure in itself—which Kant describes quite clearly, despite the restrictions of our discursive understanding—is highly relevant to the problem with which we began: how to imagine an autonomous order, an order that would be under its “own” laws. It is precisely as a *self-organizing* being that immanently produces its governing purposive unity—and that does not receive its lawfulness from without—that we might say that the living being is autonomous and possesses its own laws. Not only are the actions or features of the living being to be explained by laws of autonomy in the sense that these laws “refer to nothing not contained in its own nature.”¹⁷ That is to say, the actions and features of the living being are not only to be explained by laws that are its own in the sense that these laws derive from its own *organization*. These laws are the living beings’ own in the deeper sense that they are brought about by this very being: Insofar as a living being constitutes and organizes *itself*, it can be regarded as the very source of its form. While we will explain the shape and the behavior of an artifact, e.g., a watch, with reference to its specific purposive form—the purposive nature of this object—it however does not seem felicitous to speak of the autonomy of a watch, as this purposive nature is implanted into

organism, is not e.g. a peculiar quality of a certain matter, but is rather an expression for the unexplained holistic property of the organized being. Hence it remains a problematic concept in the realm of the natural sciences. For more on Kant’s use of Blumenbach’s proto-biological concept of the “formative drive” cf. James L. Larson, “Vital Forces: Regulative Principles or Constitutive Agents?,” *ISIS* 70 (1979), pp. 235–249; Timothy Lenoir, *The Strategy of Life*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press 1982; P. McLaughlin, “Blumenbach und der Bildungstrieb,” *Medizinhistorisches Journal* 17:4 (1982), pp. 357–372; Robert J. Richards, *The Romantic Conception of Life*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2002, pp. 207ff. In addition, cf. my “Force and Form: An Essay on the Dialectics of the Living,” *Constellations* 18:1 (2010), pp. 21–34.

¹⁷ This is Rödl’s formula for autonomy in the fundamental sense: “A law of autonomy is the subject’s own law in that it refers to nothing not contained in its own nature.” (Rödl, *Self-Consciousness*, p. 120)

it from without.¹⁸ Insofar as living beings, in contradistinction to artifacts, produce themselves, we can indeed say that their laws are in a deeper sense their own: living beings produce and maintain their own laws, laws which they do not receive from a plan or design given from without. In thinking the concept of autonomy, it is an essential problem to find a way of imagining how the subject can give itself its own law without thereby implying an unbound legislator or creator imposing this law. The idea of a self-organizing living being can be brought to bear on this question by giving us a model of a type of organization that is self-constituting.

Now, one might argue that this self-organization is not really pertinent to the question of *autonomy* as we are here dealing with a *de facto* order: The living being might be self-produced, but it does not give itself a *law*. Kant, however, emphasizes (especially in the first introduction to the *Critique of Judgment*) that the self-organization of living things does not merely generate a *de facto* order, but rather exhibits an order of *normative* necessity. A living being does not merely *exist* in this or that manner; rather, it tends to suggest “that there is something that it *ought to be*” (EE 20:240).¹⁹ Insofar as the living being appears

as a “natural purpose,” it relates to something it ought to be and makes room for judgments as to whether the actual creature adequately lives up to itself (*viz.* its species) and hence can be called ‘healthy’ or ‘defective.’ Living beings, when considered in terms of their inner purposiveness, manifest a sort of oughtness that involves a unique form of “necessity,” to be distinguished from the “physical-mechanical necessity”: the living creature exhibits a normative “necessity of being formed in a certain way” (EE 20:240; translation modified). The living creature manifests a norm, in the form of its species’ inner purposiveness, to which it specifically is subject.²⁰ Living beings thus not only *bring themselves forth*, but are thereby also *laws unto themselves*.²¹

If we put it in this way, an analogy to an autonomous order might become more suggestive than it perhaps seemed at the outset. It is however important to note that this analogy only holds under a peculiar understanding of the living as *self-organizing*. It is not enough to have an organized being—a complex functional unity—or a merely self-maintaining process in order to have an analogue of an autonomous order. Autonomy is not just being under one’s own law, but being under a law that is one’s own in the sense that one is bringing it forth.

in which the moments of the living being are means and end to each other, reciprocally cause and effect of each other, which suggests that there is something that they ought to have been. It is this immanence and openness of the normative standard that in fact makes the normativity of living beings so interesting with regard to the question of autonomy.

²⁰ For an attempt to ground practical normativity upon the basic form of natural normativity characteristic of the living, cf. Philippa Foot, *Natural Goodness*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001. For a characterization of the normativity of the living which diverges from this idea of normativity, cf. Georges Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological*, New York: Zone Books 1998, pp. 115ff.

²¹ If one contemplates a bit the formulation that living beings are laws unto themselves, one will soon become suspicious: It seems questionable to what degree they grasp the norms produced in the living process *as norms*. Another way of saying this: they might be laws unto themselves *only for us*. This is precisely Hegel’s thought in stating that living beings in a fundamental way already expose the concept of spirit, but only for us, *not for themselves*. It is only in self-consciousness that this structure comes to exist for itself.

¹⁸ This distinction of a *determination from within* and a *determination from without* should not be taken to concern merely the *location* of the source of the organizing principle, but as pointing to a difference in certain *modes* of organization: The determination from within—the unity of the living being—is peculiar in that it is not really adequately represented in an expression detached from it (a plan or an idea in an understanding external to it); it is a unity that manifests itself only in the articulated living being itself.

¹⁹ Kant himself describes this normativity by referring to two forms of purposiveness that allow for normative evaluation: *first*, the relation of the organic being to the concept of this organic being which we treat, hypothetically, as its cause (i.e. the organic being as a purpose of nature); *second*, the suitability of an organ to its function (the way in which e.g. the eye fulfills its purpose of seeing). Kant does not elaborate on the precise relation of these two instances of purposiveness and, what is more, he does not really investigate the specific openness of the normativity of the living that is caused by the fact that we cannot identify the purpose of nature independently from the organism, the function of the organ independently from the actual doings of the organ since we cannot point to any preceding plan or concept in an understanding independent from the organic being. There is no separate standard, but only the way

II.

Now, despite the structural parallels between life and autonomy on the Kantian picture that I have tried to trace, Kant himself has not employed this analogy in any way in order to elucidate the autonomy of practical reason. Although Kant does specify the rational will as a “kind of causality of *living beings*” (GMS 4:446; my emphasis), the rational will is autonomous only insofar as it precisely does *not* allow itself to be determined by the sensible, living nature of the agent. The subject of an autonomous order is for Kant the rational will as such. Hence, the only determinations that are capable of conditioning the autonomous order are those that are rooted in the nature of the rational will itself (and not, for example, in the nature of human life). The autonomy of human practical reason paradigmatically manifests itself in the fact that it precisely does *not* allow itself to be guided by its living nature.

It is an interesting question why exactly this is the case: Is it the case because the will, as the will of a rational being as such, is essentially distinct from our living existence in nature so that our living existence becomes a heteronomous force *relative to the will*? Or is it also the case because a living order is in and of itself a heteronomous order, an order not—or not fully—grounded in itself? At most points Kant doesn’t argue directly or explicitly that life is in itself an order that is necessarily heteronomous in structure; rather, he argues that it is a source of *heteronomy with regard to the rational will*: The “sensible nature of rational beings” as their existence under empirically conditioned laws is, as Kant writes, “*for reason heteronomy*” (KpV 5:43; emphasis added). The laws of duty and the laws of life are different and hence cannot be mixed together without giving rise to heteronomy. The “majesty of duty has nothing to do with the enjoyment of life, it has its own law and also its own court and even though one might want to shake both of them thor-

oughly together, [...] they soon separate of themselves.” (KpV 5:88) This, however, would not necessarily entail that the living in and of itself could not said to be autonomous in a basic sense.

On the other hand, it is clear that Kant locates autonomy only on one level: the level of practical reason. This suggests that he considers the laws of the living as in and of themselves laws of heteronomy. Kant’s discussion of what he calls the “comparative concept of freedom” (KpV 5:96) might be instructive on this point. Kant argues that a comparative conception of freedom is insufficient, a mere subterfuge, and it seems that Kant is considering here a type of freedom that has some resonances with the idea of freedom as being under “one’s own law.” According to a comparative conception of freedom, Kant says, a free effect is something “the determining natural ground of which lies *within* the acting being” (KpV 5:96). Comparative freedom is thus attributed to such effects that are not externally imposed on an entity but that spring from its inner state or nature. Kant’s first example is a projectile in free motion, unhindered and unimpelled from without; his second example is the motion of a clock that “moves the hands itself” (KpV 5:96) and thereby seems to be the source of its own movement and thus ‘free.’ Kant’s third example is that of the actions of a human being which, although necessary by their determining grounds, might be regarded as comparatively free, “insofar as the actions are caused from within” (KpV 5:96). It thus suggests itself that Kant would have to say that for an animal, be it rational or not, to be motivated by its living nature would only imply freedom in this comparative sense: The determining grounds can be said to lie within this animal. But it is irrelevant, so Kant wants to suggest, where the source of the determination is to be located: “it does not matter whether the causality determined in accordance with a natural law is necessary through determining grounds lying *within* the subject or *outside* him.” Not the site of the source, but the *form* or *mode* of determination is decisive.

The form or mode of determination that Kant wants to characterize as unfree at this point is the form of causal determination in time that he calls that of the “mechanism of nature”: “all necessity of events in time in accordance with the natural laws of causality can be called the *mechanism of nature*” (KpV 5:97). Whatever springs from our nature according to the mechanism of nature in this sense can never be properly called free²² and could be regarded as “heteronomous” in structure.

If, as Kant explains in the third *Critique*, living beings are mechanically inexplicable for our discursive understanding, it is difficult to determine if this implies as well that they embody a form of determination that strictly escapes “the mechanism of nature” in the sense that the cited passage from the second *Critique* indicates.²³ In any event, Kant tries to characterize our

²² It is a much-discussed issue whether Kant thinks—and should think—that practical freedom and autonomy are only possible on the condition of transcendental freedom (as the above passage suggests), or if it might be possible to assume that there is practical freedom even if we are in fact not transcendently free (but rather determined by a higher mechanism of nature). For the latter see especially the following passage from the *Critique of Pure Reason*: “Whether reason is not, in the actions through which it prescribes laws, itself again determined by other influences, and whether that which, in relation to sensuous impulses, is entitled freedom, may not, in relation to higher and more remote operating causes be nature again, is a question which in the practical field does not concern us, since we are demanding of reason nothing but the *rule of conduct*, it is a merely speculative question, which we can leave aside so long as we are considering what ought or ought not to be done.” (KrV A803/B831)

²³ It is a difficult question what exactly Kant refers to when he says in the third *Critique* that organized beings cannot be understood by means of “mechanical explanation.” Candidates that have been discussed are (i) that living beings are mechanically inexplicable in the sense that they do not allow for an explanation of the whole by means of its independent parts (see McLaughlin, *Kants Kritik der teleologischen Urteilskraft*, Bonn: Bouvier 1989; a corresponding passage in Kant is EE 20:236); (ii) that living beings seem to contradict a mechanistic explanation in the sense that the powers of matter are insufficient to account for the production of organisms (see Ginsborg, “Two Kinds of Mechanical Inexplicability”); (iii) that living beings cannot be explained in terms of efficient causality (Rachel Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Biology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2007, pp. 101ff.). The third perspective would imply that Kant’s description of living beings’ inner purposiveness indeed is in tension with the structure of causal determination explicated in the “Second Analogy” (see Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Biology*, p. 136). The idea of a reciprocal determination implied by natural purposiveness according to which A is cause and effect of B and thereby in some sense both antecedent and subsequent to B, cannot be understood under the principle of succession. This might be the strongest reason why Kant thinks we have

mode of knowledge of living beings in such a way that it does not directly contradict the mechanism of nature. And, although he describes them as *self-organizing*, he does not attribute to them a spontaneity that is comparable to the full spontaneity of a being that can make an unconditioned beginning. Under the condition that practical freedom and autonomy are thought to presuppose such a transcendental freedom, the way in which a living being follows laws that are its own seems to remain foreign to the autonomy of the rational will: It lacks the absolute spontaneity of freedom of the intelligible character that is unconditioned by the sensible world and only thereby to be regarded as the source of autonomy. Insofar as Kant thinks that without transcendental freedom “no moral law is possible and no imputation in accordance with it,” (KpV 5:97) the formal ‘autonomy’ of living beings remains useless for him in the effort to understand the autonomy of practical reason.

However, if one does not presuppose transcendental freedom as the condition of practical freedom, one can begin to reconsider the way in which the formal autonomy of living beings might illuminate the autonomy of practical reason. In taking up the distinction that Kant indicates between different *sites* of the grounds of determination (that are not really decisive in questions of freedom) and different *modes* of determination (that *are* of relevance) the question emerges of whether living beings, insofar as they are *self-organizing* beings (and not only organized beings), do not indeed embody a specific *mode of determination* characteristic of autonomy as such. Insofar as reason is also to be conceived as a self-organizing entity, as Kant suggests when he speaks of an “epigenesis of reason,”²⁴ we

to conceive of living beings according to the analogy of intentional purposiveness, as intentional purposiveness seems in harmony with the principle of succession: the whole that is produced by its parts does not as such precede these parts—it is the *idea* or *representation* of the whole that precedes them.

²⁴ Kant uses this term of the biology of his time in order to characterize pure reason as self-constituting and self-organizing: In the B-Deduction he speaks of the system

might ask whether the autonomy of practical reason might not be informed in one way or another by the mode of determination found in living beings. In the second half of my paper I want to turn to Hegel who seems to pursue precisely this line of thought.

III.

Hegel is clearly following Kant's lead in characterizing the formal essence of spirit (*Geist*) as "freedom" and in further determining this freedom in terms of self-determination (EPG §382). "Actual freedom," for Hegel, is "not something that is immediately in spirit, but something to be produced by spirit's activity" (EPG §382Z; translation modified). Spirit manifests itself as the "producer of its freedom" and its development is to be characterized as a constant activity of "freeing [...] itself" (EPG §382Z). Thus, for Hegel, to be free in the sense that one is subject to one's own laws is neither to be viewed as something given (as something that is just there as a part of the nature of my reason) nor is it bound to any single act of legislation. Being subject to one's own laws rather means continuing to produce one's own freedom and constantly becoming what one is. Spirit is 'autonomous' in the sense that it is a "product of itself" and that "its actuality" is "merely that it has made itself into what it is."²⁵ The "concept" (*Begriff*) for Hegel also gives itself reality in this manner (WL 6:258/587), for it "has actuality [...] in such a way that it gives this actuality to itself" (PR §1). Hegel thus explicates the idea of the autonomy of spirit and the concept *in terms of the idea of self-production or self-actualization*. Autonomy thereby

of the "epigenesis of pure reason," in order to indicate that the categories are self-thought *a priori* ("selbstgedacht") and neither derived from experience nor implanted in us by our Creator.

²⁵ M. J. Petry (ed.), *Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, vol. 1, Dordrecht: Reidel 1978, p. 7. The cited passage stems from the notes of Kehler and Griesheim.

moves even closer to the form of self-constitution which defines the living according to Kant and Hegel. It is thus no accident or slip that Hegel characterizes the living, with reference to animal organisms, exactly as he had characterized spirit: a living creature "only is, in making itself into that which it is" (EN §352; translation modified).²⁶ Life and spirit are both characterized as entities that produce and constitute themselves by making themselves into what they are. Neither exists as a given, but only as its own achievement and result.

The parallel between spirit and life can be seen more clearly if we take a brief look at Hegel's characterization of animal life in his *Encyclopaedia*. Hegel describes animal life as the point in nature where *subjectivity* emerges. That is to say, animals possess a basic form of subjectivity that prefigures the self-productive quality of spirit in decisive respects: The animal exists as self-production in the sense of the *production of a self*. The animal does that by producing its own shape, by endowing its environment with a specific form impregnated with the animal's self and by actualizing a general form in its particular being. Hegel articulates these three dimensions of self-production as (1) the *process of shape*, (2) the *process of assimilation*, and (3) the *genus-process*. As the process of shape concerns the self-articulation of the living individual into its parts, which reciprocally condition and produce each other, the process of assimilation concerns the relation of the living being to its (inorganic) environment. The genus-process concerns the interrelation of different individuals of one genus. In this sense the process of shape concerns the self-relation of the living, as the process of assimilation concerns the relation of the living to its other. The genus-process unifies these two relations insofar as it concerns the way in which what is living relates to itself in relating to its

²⁶ See also VPGE 183/109: "Thus, the organic individual produces itself: it makes itself into what it is in itself; spirit, too, is simply that into what it makes itself, and it makes itself into what it is in itself."

other. These three processes determine the way in which the living can be said to be self-constitutive, to make itself into what it is and to realize a basic form of freedom: a Being-at-one-with-oneself-in-the-other.²⁷

(1) Hegel's descriptions of the process of shape are largely indebted to Kant's concept of the organism as a self-organizing entity in which the parts are cause and effect of one another. The shape of the organism is alive precisely to the extent that it exists as a process: a process of articulation whereby the parts (as moments of the whole) and the whole (as produced by its parts) are brought forth. The parts of the shape are not independent parts, but "moments in a living subjectivity" (EN §356Z).²⁸ Hegel explains this process of organization—slightly different from Kant's more harmonious picture—as itself already a dialectical and tense process comprised of two moments: the articulating or producing of an inner self (not bound by any single shape) on the one hand and of the concrete, sustained external shape on the other hand. The organism is the "higher repose" as the "unity" of these two moments, the "internal and external" (EN §356Z). The dialectical quality and the negativity involved become evident in Hegel's characterization of the process of shaping: It is the process "in which the organism converts its own members into a non-organic nature, into means, lives on itself and produces its own self, i.e. this same totality of articulated members, so that *each member is reciprocally end and means*, maintains itself through the other

members and in opposition to them." (EN §356; emphasis added) Hegel thereby reformulates the very type of organization that Kant characterized as the form of organized living beings.

(2) The second dimension in which Hegel describes this self-organizing form is its relation to its environment. This is an aspect of the self-organizing being upon which Kant had not particularly focused and that contributes to an extension of the analogy between life and practical subjectivity in Hegel.²⁹ Hegel conceives of the animal's relation to its non-organic environment as one of assimilation. Assimilation takes on the form of a theoretical process, a practical process, and a unity of both termed the "ideally real process" (EN §357Z). The theoretical assimilation signifies a process whereby a living being takes up the environment with its senses and in doing so transforms it into something that is formative for itself. Practical assimilation describes the way in which the living being employs non-organic nature in order to get rid of its sensation of lack (either by transforming the outer nature into an instrument for doing so [formal assimilation] or by consuming and destroying parts of the environment to fulfill its needs [real assimilation]). What is important in the idea of assimilation is the way in which the animal literally transforms its environment into a part of itself (by employing or consuming it). It can do so to the extent that it has a self-relation in which the environment is already implied: the sensation of lack. The fact that the living being is in need is a mark of distinction in Hegel's view. Only a living being can feel lack, and this is the precondition for its having an assimilative relation to its environment (that means: for not being just indifferently opposed to its environment, but in such

²⁷ Cf. "Freedom is to will something determinate, yet to be with oneself (*bei sich*) in this determinacy and to return once more to the universal." (PR §7Z) See also: "Spirit is here purely at home with itself, and thereby free, for that is just what freedom is: being at home with oneself in one's other, depending on oneself and being one's own determinant." (EL §24Z2) For the thesis that Hegel's conception of "Being-at-one-with-oneself-in-the-other" is deeply connected to his conception of "life," see Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Naturalism: Mind, Nature, and the Final Ends of Life*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2012.

²⁸ In his *Science of Logic* Hegel expresses this thought by saying that "the organism is a manifold, not of *parts* but of *members*" (WL 6:476/766).

²⁹ The point is however not totally absent from Kant. See his description of growth in §64: "This plant first pre-pares the matter that it adds to itself with a quality peculiar to its species, which would not be provided by the mechanism of nature outside of it, and develops itself further by means of material which, as far as its composition is concerned, is its own product." (KU 5:371)

a relation to the environment that it is potentially transformable into the animal itself). In the concept of lack the lack's overcoming is already present in such a way that this manner of being finite is simultaneously a form of infinitude.³⁰ The animal, by being in need, is no longer merely subject to external causes, but to "external potencies" and is thus subject to a different mode of being determined: one in which it itself is already implied (EN §359).³¹ That is to say, the laws of the living not only specify that living beings of the type N do A, if—accidentally, unforeseeably—an M does B to them, but they specify that N's do A under specific circumstances ("when M's do B") that N's are adapted to. The laws of the living comprise the specific circumstances of the living, since the animal is actual not only in the shape of its body but also in the peculiar "shape" with which it endows its environment. The basic form in which the living being specifies elements of its environment is according to Hegel "instinct" (which is, of course, a very rudimentary and still limited form of accessing a specific environment).

By means of assimilation, that is, by becoming able to transform its environment into a part of itself, the animal posits itself "as subjectivity, as real being for-self" (EN §365Z). In the forms of practical assimilation the subject, however, does so only in a limited way by satisfying specific needs (e.g. its hunger or thirst). It does not yet "satisfy itself;" (or: its Self) in the sense of gaining a sense of its own selfhood. There is however one form of assimilation—that which unifies theoretical and practical assimilation—in which the animal even accomplishes this in a rudimentary form: in its constructive instinct ("*Bildungstrieb*,"

"*Kunsttrieb*") it transforms its environment—e.g. by building nests, constructing weapons—in such a way that the environment reflects the animal self: "In the constructive instinct the creature has produced itself as an outer existence and yet remains the same immediate creature; here, then, it first attains to self-enjoyment, to the specific feeling of self." (EN §365Z)³²

(3) The third dimension in which the animal subjectivity is characterized is the genus-process: the relation of the individual animal being to its genus. The genus is the concrete substance of the singular subject, and a living being is inherently related to its genus: it exemplifies, maintains and reproduces its genus. But the way in which it does this attests to a decisive limit of the living. The genus is only in an "implicit" ("ansichseiender") unity with the singularity of the subject (EN §367). In manifesting its genus—through reproduction, in the confrontation of different species and in illness and natural death—the particular living being each time perishes (literally: dies). The living being is an *outcome* and a *means* or *vehicle* of genus-process, but we do not find a living individual that is in and for itself the genus.³³ This is the very limit of the living: Its inability to be for itself genus and to maintain itself in this relation. This can only become possible for a being that becomes aware of its life as such and that in this sense becomes capable of transforming this natural mode of subjectivity.

While animal life can indeed be regarded as "autonomous" in the formal sense with regard to the inner organization brought about by the living process itself, and while animals

³² The animal in this sense already seems to be on the track to the provisional 'solution' of the master-slave problem: *Arbeit* and *Bildung*.

³³ If it is true that Hegel regards this limited right of the individual as a shortcoming of the form of the living, this suggests that he will need to have a different notion of the status of the individual in the sphere of spirit. Hegel's description of the living thus seems to imply that the realm of a fully actualized freedom of spirit requires a form of individual freedom that goes beyond individuals being a mere "vehicle" of cosmic spirit." For a critique of such a view of the individual's freedom within *Sittlichkeit*, see Neuhauser, *The Foundations of Hegel's Social Theory*, pp. 50ff.

³⁰ "A being which is capable of containing and enduring its own contradiction is a subject; this constitutes its infinitude." (EN §359Z)

³¹ The parallel formulation in the *Science of Logic* is: "In so far as the object confronts the living being in the first instance as an indifferent externality, it can act upon it mechanically; but in doing so it is not acting on a living being; where it enters into relationship with a living being it does not act on it as a cause, but excites it." (WL 6:482/771)

can be regarded as expressing, through their assimilative activity, the idealism of the free will that does not take the things “as they are, to be in and for themselves”³⁴ but transforms and appropriates them, they do not, in the cycle of reproduction, manifest the identity of producing and produced that Hegel requires of spirit.³⁵ The “animal soul is still not free for [...] it is only in the form of individuality that the genus is for the animal. The animal can only sense the genus, it is not aware of it. [...] By the sublation of the particularity of the sexes which occurs in the genus process the animal does not attain to the production of the genus; what is produced by this process is again only an individual.” (EPG §381Z) That which is living in this sense produces a structure that it cannot fully grasp for itself. It is only in a new form of self-conscious vitality that this can be accomplished.

IV.

Hegel not only extends the structural parallels of life and spirit as self-constituting entities marked by processes of articulation, assimilation and reproduction, but also introduces a new form of distinguishing and relating life and spirit: Spirit does not exist alongside or somewhere beyond living nature; it is instead intimately connected to living nature. That however is not to say that it is just an extension or an enhancement of living nature—instead it displays a thoroughly transformed life of its

own that is gained from and against natural life. The life of spirit is of such a sort that natural life “appears partly as opposed to it, partly as posited at one with it” (WL 6:471/762).³⁶ There are various sites where Hegel deals with the passage from merely animal life to self-conscious life. At this point, I want to direct attention to just two of those sites which in turn imply two related basic characterizations of this transformation: they characterize it as the *transformation of a reflective turn* (spirit as life knowing itself as such) and that of a *redoubling of life* (spirit as realizing itself in the mode of a second nature). The first characterization can be articulated with regard to the passage in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in which consciousness, facing a living object, grasps itself as self-consciousness; the second one can be elaborated by reference to the Anthropology chapter in the *Encyclopaedia* where Hegel describes the living nature of the human as the first stage of subjective spirit.³⁷ I will not be able to give a full analysis here, but I would like to indicate the type of turn that Hegel is interested in.

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* life appears at a famous “*turning point*”: consciousness attains a new level when it grasps its object as alive—namely the level of self-consciousness. Hegel attempts to show how what is living (as object) lays bare the fundamental structure of spirit in the relationship between the single organ and the overarching organism, between the exemplar and its general species, the separate shape and the universal fluidity of life. However, the living only manifests this structure *in* itself without yet possessing the structure *for* itself. In its

³⁴ PR §44: “The free will is consequently that idealism which does not consider things [*Dinge*], as they are, to be in and for themselves, whereas realism declares them to be absolute, even if they are found only in the form of finitude. Even the animal has gone beyond this realist philosophy, for it consumes things [*Dinge*] and thereby proves that they are not absolutely self-sufficient.” See on this point also Pinkard, *Hegel’s Naturalism*, p. 18f.

³⁵ EPG §379Z: “For whereas [...] the seed produced is not identical with the seed that produced it, in self-knowing spirit the product is one and the same as that which produces it.”

³⁶ For more on the sense in which spirit is aware of itself at once as life and as more than life see Frederick Neuhauser, “Life, Freedom, and Social Pathology,” in: A. Honneth and G. Hindrichs (eds.), *Freiheit: Stuttgarter Hegel-Kongress 2011*, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann 2013.

³⁷ Further important sites of transition are to be found in Hegel’s *Science of Logic* where the idea of life gives way to the idea of cognition (WL 6:487/775); in the *Philosophy of Right* where Hegel describes a transition from natural to ethical will (PR §§4ff.); and in Hegel’s *Lectures on Aesthetics* in the discussion of natural and artificial beauty (VA 13:157ff./1:116ff.).

result, life points beyond itself “to something other than itself, viz. to consciousness, for which Life exists as this unity, or as genus” (PhG 3:143/109). The structure of spirit (*Geist*) presents itself to (self-)consciousness in the living, but it does so in a way that escapes the living itself. This does not, however, make (self-)consciousness something altogether different in kind, but rather—as Hegel explicitly formulates it—“this other Life” for which the structure of first life becomes recognizable. (Self-)Consciousness is, so to speak, a reflexive life, a life that knows itself as life.³⁸ This has a twofold implication: (self-)consciousness continues to manifest itself as something living, but as a something living whose relation to its own life is transformed, because it knows itself to be alive and relates to itself as such. The possibility of this self-relation is ultimately conceived as a social relation among various living beings (in terms of their recognition of one another). This “other Life”—human consciousness—is not then simply an instantiation of its kind, but rather a participant in a form of life, a self-conscious subject of its practices that possesses a relation both to itself and to the manner in which it exemplifies the universal: “this other Life [...] for which the *genus* as such exists and which is the genus for itself” is “*self-consciousness*” (PhG 3:143/109; translation modified). Self-consciousness is the reflexively articulated form of a self-grounded order which manifests itself for this self-consciousness in the living in its most elementary form. The actuality of spirit is, in this sense, for Hegel not made possible by rational animals existing in another, intelligible world beyond the sensible world. It is rather made possible by their relating and accommodating themselves to their own nature, which they transform in a social process of experience and enculturation.

³⁸ For more on this “self-application of the concept of life” cf. Axel Honneth, “Von der Begierde zur Anerkennung,” in: K. Vieweg and W. Welsch (eds.), *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2008, pp. 187–204, here 193.

The way in which this program could be unfolded in articulating how a living self-consciousness might come about, can be seen in Hegel’s conception of a “second nature.” Hegel describes the emergence of this “second nature” on its most basic level in the first part of his *Philosophy of Mind*, in a section called “Anthropology”³⁹ (EPG §§388–412) and returns to this concept time and again to specify the mode of being of ethical life.⁴⁰ The Anthropology deals with what Hegel calls “soul” and mediates between Hegel’s account of animal life on the one hand and his accounts of developed forms of subjective spirit on the other. Systematically, this section characterizes the slumber and the awakening of spirit in nature and describes the very passage, as Hegel explicitly says, “from necessity to freedom” (EPG §381Z). This passage is accomplished in the soul in some basic respects by means of the “mechanism of habit” that establishes a ‘second’ or an ‘artificial’ nature (EPG §410A). This mechanism of habit is especially interesting to the extent that it has a double aspect: on the one hand, it creates an *artificial, self-produced* nature and thereby frees the soul from some determinations of its first nature; on the other hand, it does so only by using a *mechanism* and by establishing a second *nature*. The soul cannot attain its freedom by means of an arbitrary act

³⁹ The far-reaching implications of this section are often overlooked. Recently, however, the text has been brought to renewed attention by Catherine Malabou, *The Future of Hegel: Plasticity, Temporality and Dialectic*, London and New York: Routledge 2005, Part I: “Hegel on Man: Fashioning a Second Nature,” pp. 21–76. See also: Michael Wolff, *Das Körper-Seele-Problem: Kommentar zu Hegel, Enzyklopädie (1830)*, §389, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann 1992, especially pp. 171–187.

⁴⁰ The general form of habit, articulated in the Anthropology, does not remain restricted to primitive forms of spirit’s activity, but on the contrary “is a form that embraces all kind’s and stages of mind’s activity” (EPG §410A), from man’s posture and his perceptual capacities up to the ethical (“the habit of right”) and thought (EPG §410A). For Hegel’s characterization of ethical life in terms of a second nature see especially PR §4 (“the realm of actualized freedom, the world of spirit produced from within itself as second nature”) and PR §151 (“the ethical [...] appears as *custom*; and the *habit* of the ethical appears as a *second nature* which takes the place of the original and purely natural will and is the all pervading soul, significance, and actuality of individual existence”).

of will, by just abstracting from its first nature. It can attain freedom only by transforming its nature, and this means, on the elementary level, *repeating* or *redoubling* nature. Habit is the basic form of such a redoubled nature: “Habit has rightly been called a second nature: *nature*, because it is an immediate being of the soul, a *second* nature, because it is an immediacy *posited* by the soul.” (EPG §410A) In this self-positing immediacy, spirit is on the one hand free since it produces the very immediacy it displays; yet at the same time it constrains itself insofar as its ‘legislations’ take on the form of immediate nature for it, manifesting themselves as habits or customs.

But why does this form of second nature become necessary and how does it arise? Hegel describes the situation of the soul in such a way that on its way to freedom it faces the danger of an internal split, described by Hegel as a derangement or madness, which can only be overcome by means of habit.⁴¹ The soul “struggles with the immediacy of its substantial content in order to rise to simple subjectivity relating itself to itself” (EPG §408Z), and in this struggle the second stage it reaches is one of derangement: it is split between the fixed particularity it tries to overcome and its subjectivity which is free for itself (EPG §408A). Its free subjectivity takes the shape of “a purely *formal, empty, abstract* subjectivity” (EPG §408Z) and thus possesses only abstract freedom. In the stage of derangement the soul tries to unify its particular determinations and its free subjectivity, but succeeds only in the form of a *subjective* identity of the subjective and the objective. The self identifies itself subjectively with a particular determination and thereby falls short of its own generality and of the task of *objectively* realizing this

unity. The mad person regards “an *empty abstraction* and *mere possibility*” as “something *concrete* and *actual*” (EPG §408Z). For example, the man who takes himself to be king, without objectively being in a position anywhere near to this, does so only on the basis of an “*indeterminate universal possibility*” (EPG §408Z): since a man in general can be king, the man in question could be one.⁴²

In this sense madness embodies a first, although unsuccessful attempt at a ‘free’ self-determination—the production of a certain unity of the particular determination of the soul and its general being as an I. The failure resides in the fact that madness falls short not only of the objective reality that doesn’t correspond to the mere possibility; it falls short even of the abstract freedom of the I itself, as the mad person, in deploying this indeterminacy, over-identifies with a particular determination: In the attempt to grasp itself in a particular and arbitrary determination, the deranged agent “forfeits the ability [...] to remain *perfectly present to itself* in each of its representations” (EPG §408Z).

Now, habit is supposed to offer a different attempt at attaining self-determination. It offers a way for the soul to determine itself and nevertheless sustain its generality in this determination. It avoids both failures of madness: (i) it does not confine itself to a merely subjective identity of the subjective and the objective, but instead strives to realize such a unity objectively (it trans-

⁴¹ With regard to the relation of habit and madness see Malabou, *The Future of Hegel*, pp. 28ff and Žižek’s essay “Discipline between Two Freedoms—Madness and Habit in German Idealism,” in M. Gabriel/S. Žižek, *Mythology, Madness and Laughter: Subjectivity in German Idealism*, London: Continuum 2009; for an extended version see also Žižek, *Less than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism*, London: Verso 2012, pp. 327–358.

⁴² That the self is at all capable of fixing itself to such an abstract possibility finds its basis in the fact that the I as such is a “*wholly abstract*, completely indeterminate I, an I thus *standing open to any content whatever*” (EPG §408Z). This abstract I indeed marks a genuine capacity of the mind to make itself indeterminate. Cf. PR §5, in which a certain aspect of the will is defined, namely “this *absolute possibility of abstracting* from every determination in which I find myself or which I have posited in myself, the flight from every content as a limitation.” The fact that madness draws from this capacity turns it into a “*privilege*” of man EPG §408Z: “Only *man* gets as far as grasping himself in this complete *abstraction of the I*. This is why he has, so to speak, the *privilege* of folly and madness.”

forms the objective body).⁴³ (ii) Secondly, it establishes a genuine mediation of the particular and the general, the singular being and its genus. In habit, the soul transforms particular determinations in such a way that they are situated in its general dispositions and capacities, and it articulates its generality in such a way that it takes on a particular shape (in the guise of specific habits). As concrete acts and sensations are transformed by means of repetition and practice into acts instantiating and articulating a general disposition that outlives the mere actualities, the soul realizes itself as a concrete and specifically articulated general being. Habit supersedes the mere collapsing of the general and the particular and enters the work of mediation, which allows one to relate to a “universal mode of action which constitutes one’s individuality” (EPG §410Z).

The prime variants of habit in which this happens are (i) the hardening against external sensations and distress, (ii) a dulling of desires by the habit of their satisfaction and (iii) the establishment of dexterity. In the hardening against sensations and the dulling of desires, the soul gains distance and liberty from particular, external determinations and determinations of its first nature, whereas in the establishing of dexterity it transforms itself (its body) “into an instrument” (EPG §410A) for its own particular actions and determinations: it incorporates purposiveness into the body. The establishment of dexterity is described in a way *analogous to the living process of the articulation of shape*: the living being turns its parts into means and thereby constitutes them as moments of a purposive whole. The mechanism of habit repeats this type of articulation in a ‘free’ mode. Hegel generally understands this process in such a way that by means of habit the soul “has made itself so at home in the content, that it moves about in it with *freedom*” (EPG §410Z). By

means of repetition and practice a form of concrete generality is engendered over time in such a way that an accidental particular determination becomes essential, whereas the essential is determined as acquired and thus contingent.⁴⁴ By means of habit the accidental and the essential intersect in order to constitute a certain form of *contingent necessity*, characteristic of the posited immediacy of second nature: they constitute a ‘necessity’ (EPG §410Z) and ‘naturalness’ (EPG §410A) that is distinct from the type of external necessity characteristic of inanimate nature.

Due to the process of habituation, the particular determinations do not appear as merely contingent individual sensations anymore, but as articulations of *one’s own self*. Habit in this way becomes a primitive articulation of freedom in the Hegelian sense of “being at one with oneself in the other.” In its habitual activity the subject relates in its acts and sensations to itself, insofar as the determinations that are appropriated by means of habit formation are not merely external but exist as posited by the activities of the subject. Habit is, in this sense, not just a mechanism of determination, but a basic form of *self-determination*. Habit enables the soul to take possession of its determinations and to be with itself in these determinations. That the soul is with itself in its determinations however does not mean that the soul is just identical to its determinations or completely immersed in them. Habit has the remarkable feature that the soul is with itself in its determinations without being fully absorbed by these determinations. The soul has reduced these determinations to features of its own being: it has reduced them to something that belongs to its very being, without however exhausting it.⁴⁵ Thus Hegel understands habit as a means

⁴³ Hegel’s concept of habit in this sense is not identical with the notion of custom that he attributes to Hume and criticizes harshly. Habit in Hume, it seems to Hegel, is thought as a merely subjective necessity—see VGP 20:278ff./3:372ff.

⁴⁴ For more on this “becoming essential of the accident” and a “becoming accidental of essence,” see Malabou, *The Future of Hegel*, p. 160.

⁴⁵ “In habit man [...] is free in so far as the natural determinacy of sensation is by habit reduced to *his* mere being.” (EPG §410)

of possessing one's determinations that implies neither that the soul stands in relationship with them as distinguishing itself from them, nor is absorbed in them, but *has* them and *moves in them*: is with itself in the other.

It is precisely the need to take into account this basic form of freedom and the correlative different sense of necessity—a 'free,' a 'self-constituted' necessity—that gives habit such a paradigmatic status for Hegel. In habit the soul not only establishes its second nature and new forms of mechanical necessity, it simultaneously establishes *a new relation to this necessity*. This is why this repetition or redoubling of nature is relevant to the passage from merely animal to a self-conscious life: An organization instituted and formed by habit opens up the possibility of a reflexive grasp of this form of organization. Remarkably enough, it is precisely the ambiguous mechanical character of habit that allows for the establishment of this self-relation: The habitual necessities establish such an automatic character that the soul is not totally occupied with them, but co-exists with and relates to them. The soul is in a sense detached from or "free" of the particular determinations it is accustomed to because by the very habituation and appropriation of them the soul reaches a state in which it is not "interested in or occupied with them": "while it exists in these forms as its possessions, it is at the same time open to other activity and occupations." (EPG §410) If sensations or activities become habitual, they become a necessity that at the same time does not absorb and put the subject into bondage: in a given habit consciousness is simultaneously "*present*" and "*absent*," "*interested*" and "*indifferent*"—it "just as much *appropriates* the matter-in-hand as, on the contrary, it *withdraws* from it" (EPG §410Z). In realizing them, the soul detaches itself from these actual expressions, these real possibilities, and keeps something in reserve. This detachment has a peculiar character because it does not occur as an explicit stepping back from an inclination, a process of

distancing oneself from a tendency by means of an act of reflective deliberation. As Hegel points out explicitly, the soul does not stand in a relationship with its determinations "as distinguishing itself from them." The detachment or reserve manifests itself in the soul, not by placing its determinations before and opposite to itself to evaluate them, but rather in the subtle form of the soul's not fully coinciding with these determinations, but instead *having* or *moving in* these determinations. As the soul is not dealing with something other—an opposed object—in these determinations but with itself, it thereby establishes and maintains a difference from itself. Only insofar as habit includes this detachment, this self-relation of the soul, can it avoid the failures of the deranged soul that completely identifies itself with a particular determination and thereby manifests its freedom only arbitrarily. Habit is a liberating form insofar as it sets the soul free to detach itself from the necessities it has become. On Hegel's account, this is, however, a precarious achievement that is always in imminent danger of being lost. The ruse of habit—the fact that it manages to establish the realm of spirit by taking on the form of nature and mechanism and turning it against the determinations of first nature—can reveal itself as the curse of habit: To the extent that habit becomes mechanical through and through and absorbs the whole soul, it can end up establishing spirit only at the cost of turning spirit into nature again. Hegel underlines this deep ambiguity of habit explicitly: "[A]lthough, on the one hand, by habit a man becomes free, yet, on the other hand, habit makes him its slave." (EPG §410Z)

The danger that habit might absorb the whole soul and thus eliminate the peculiar detached self-relation it enabled in the first place is especially highlighted by the way in which habit can become deadening. Pointing to this danger, Hegel says that the habit of living "brings on death," or to be more precise: that the habit of living if it becomes totally abstract "*is death itself*"

(EPG §410A; emphasis added).⁴⁶ Hegel adds in further remarks that by means of the “completed cultivation of [an] activity, the *vitality* of the activity expires” and man becomes *old man* (EPG §396Z), and that one only remains active in so far as one “has not yet attained something,” so that all activity can become blunt if one totally “habituates to life” (PR §151Z). Against this backdrop, it seems that we are facing the task of a constant process of acquiring *and challenging*, learning *and unlearning* our habits in order to maintain a self-relation through this mechanism of habit. It is in this self-relation, that of forming and actualizing a determination *and* the withdrawal from the actuality of the activity enabled by habit, that spirit is liberated. It is liberated by constraining itself and at the same time gaining distance towards its own constraints. This is the case not only for the soul and the basic habits it develops, but also on a different level for our ethical life that realizes itself in the mode of a second nature: “the realm of actualized freedom, the world of spirit produced from within itself as a second nature,” the practices, customs, and forms of life that are the embodiment of our self-determination.⁴⁷

Without entering the discussion of this more developed level of habituation at this point, it is already obvious that Hegel tries

⁴⁶ The German text reads: “[E]s ist die Gewohnheit des Lebens, welche den Tod herbeiführt oder, wenn ganz abstrakt, der Tod selbst ist.” (EPG §410) See also VPG 46E/160f.

⁴⁷ A full account of Hegel’s theory of freedom as self-determination would need to turn to the complex structure of this ethical life—this “realm of actualized freedom.” The articulation of the complex inner structure of this realm is, however, beyond the scope of this paper. Such an articulation would require: (i) an account of the systematic relation of Hegel’s descriptions of the subject as living individual, person, moral subject and participant of ethical life; (ii) an account of the inner complexity of the institutions of ethical life (family, civil society and the state) and (iii) the interrelations between individual and social freedom realized in these institutions and their interrelations. For far-reaching elaborations on these points see Axel Honneth, *Das Recht der Freiheit: Grundriß einer demokratischen Sittlichkeit*, Berlin: Suhrkamp 2011; Neuhauser, *The Foundations of Hegel’s Social Theory*; Pippin, *Hegel’s Practical Philosophy*, Part III. The special task for my own account of the structure of ethical life concerns the way in which the mode of self-production and self-organization of the living can be illuminating with regard to the different levels of the actualized realm of freedom.

to develop a peculiar and original concept of second nature that gives us an idea of the extent to which nature and spirit are both continuous and discontinuous and that makes intelligible that spirit opposes itself to life and yet poses itself as at one with it. In contemporary discussions, the category of “second nature” typically comes up as an idea that is supposed to explain how normative orders might become effective and that shall help to dissolve the appearance that normative orders are constantly vulnerable to challenge. And indeed, in Hegel too the notions of habit and custom come up as remedies against a form of abstract and arbitrary freedom that fails to transform nature consistently (be it the freedom of derangement in the self-feeling soul or the abstract freedom of the will that might lead to a “fury of destruction”). However, the capacity to re-naturalize the artificial order we establish in transforming our first nature is only one side of the coin. The other side is the detachment that the subject gains and maintains towards its nature if it is a self-positing and second nature.

The way the reference to second nature is employed in contemporary discussions not only runs the risk that the qualification (*second* nature) may be underestimated, it also faces the danger that the naturalness of this nature may be reduced to immediate givenness and unquestionability.⁴⁸ However, against the background of the self-groundedness of the vital order that I have tried to stress in my reading of Kant and Hegel, both (i) the naturalness and (ii) the secondariness of this form of nature can take on a deeper meaning. Second nature is (i) *natural* not

⁴⁸ For this danger compare e.g. Gadamer’s gloss on the second nature of *hexis*: “By *hexis* is meant not a capacity for this or that, like knowing and understanding are, but instead a mode of being like nature [*eine Seinsverfassung wie die Natur*], a ‘thus and not otherwise.’” (Hans-Georg Gadamer, “On the Possibility of a Philosophical Ethics,” in: *The Gadamer Reader*, ed. Richard E. Palmer, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press 2007, p. 286; translation modified) — For a critique of currently dominant conceptions of second nature, focusing on John McDowell, see Robert Pippin “Leaving Nature Behind” and his “Postscript” in: *The Persistence of Subjectivity*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2005, pp. 186–220.

only in the sense of its immediate givenness, but also in virtue of its open productivity: the inner purposiveness produced in second nature is not the consequence of some antecedent given idea, but is rather a vital formative process. Second nature is a variant of living nature, not a variant of non-living nature. (ii) Second nature is a *second* nature not only because it represents a *posited* immediacy, but in the deeper sense that those who are subject to this second nature stand in a detached relation to it. A minded creature does not merely fall under its respective form of life; it has a relationship to its form of life and to its membership in that form of life. It is only this relation, this difference between a form of life and its participant members, that prevents second nature from becoming merely mechanical. A second nature only remains 'lively' as long as it can be held open in the process of formation and reformation.

Against the background of the structural parallels between autonomy and life, it thus becomes clear that Hegel's concept of second nature implies a form of productivity (comparable to self-organizing living beings) and a socially articulated reflexivity (not reducible to the model of living beings). Only when we understand second nature in this manner does it become clear why Hegel tends towards the view that there is *simultaneously* a continuity and a discontinuity between life and spirit, naturalness and mindedness:⁴⁹ they are continuous insofar as spirit must also bring itself forth without being able to simply receive its form and laws as antecedently given or given from the outside; they are discontinuous insofar as spirit develops a relation to itself, which it can generate only as a complex social struc-

ture. It is precisely this self-relation which preserves a quality of the vital order that tends to be utterly forgotten in usual concepts of second nature: the specific *liveliness* of this order.

⁴⁹ Cf. here Pippin, *Hegel's Practical Philosophy*, pp. 36–64, esp. p. 42. On the difference between a phenomenological perspective (which tends towards overcoming) and a genealogical perspective (which emphasizes the insistence of life), cf. Christoph Menke, "Spirit and Life: Towards a Genealogical Critique of Phenomenology," *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 27:2 (2006), pp. 159–186; see also Christoph Menke, "Autonomie und Befreiung," in: Khurana and Menke (eds.), *Paradoxien der Autonomie*, pp. 149–184.

THOMAS KHURANA (ED.)

**THE FREEDOM OF LIFE
HEGELIAN PERSPECTIVES**

Freiheit und Gesetz III

With contributions by Matthias Haase, Thomas Khurana,
James Kreines, Catherine Malabou, Karen Ng, Sally Sedgwick

August Verlag

The book series “*Freiheit und Gesetz*” is dedicated to an idea that lies at the foundation of modern practical philosophy: the notion that being free and being obligated by norms (“the law”) do not stand in opposition to one another but instead bear on each other in an essential relation. This is the very idea of autonomy: laws are binding only to the extent that we have given them to ourselves. The series is devoted to the critical examination of this concept. It investigates the complexities and tensions presented by the idea of autonomy, the conditions upon which it is based, and the possible consequences of its political, juridical, and social realization.

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NORMATIVE ORDERS

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ABBREVIATIONS

Works by Hegel

All references to Hegel's writings in this volume will use the abbreviations listed below. The abbreviations will be followed first by the page or section number of a German edition (in most cases the *Theorie-Werkausgabe* edited by Eva Moldenhauer und Karl Markus Michel) and secondly, if it differs, by the page or section number of an English translation. The authors in this volume have sometimes altered the cited English translations where they regarded it necessary. The referenced texts and editions are the following:

- D: *Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems der Philosophie*, in: G. W. F. Hegel, *Jenaer Schriften 1801–1807, Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, vol. 2, ed. E. Moldenhauer and K. M. Michel, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1970 (cited by volume and page number) / *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, trans., ed. H. S. Harris and Walter Cerf, Albany: SUNY Press 1977 (cited by page number).
- EL: *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830): Erster Teil. Die Wissenschaft der Logik mit den mündlichen Zusätzen*, vol. 8 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* / *The Encyclopaedia Logic: Part I of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences with the Zusätze*, trans. T. F. Geraets, W. A. Suchting, and H. S. Harris, Indianapolis: Hackett 1991 (cited by section number).
- EN: *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830): Zweiter Teil. Die Naturphilosophie mit den mündlichen Zusätzen*, vol. 9 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* / *Philosophy of Nature: Part Two of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences (1830)*, trans. A. V. Miller, with foreword by J. N. Findlay, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1970 (cited by section number).
- EPG: *Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse (1830): Dritter Teil. Die Philosophie des Geistes mit den mündlichen Zusätzen*, vol. 10 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* / *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind: Translated from the 1830 Edition, together with the Zusätze*, trans. W. Wallace and A. V. Miller, rev. M. J. Inwood, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2007 (cited by section number).
- G: *Geist des Christentums und sein Schicksal*, in: vol. 1 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *The Spirit of Christianity and its Fate*, in: *Early Theological Writings*, trans. T. M. Knox, with an introduction, and fragments trans. Richard Kroner, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1948 (cited by page number).
- GW: *Glauben und Wissen*, in: vol. 2 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *Faith and Knowledge*, trans., ed. Walter Cerf and H.S. Harris, Albany: SUNY Press 1977 (cited by page number).
- PhG: *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, vol. 3 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller, with foreword by J. N. Findlay, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1977 (cited by page number).

- PP: *Texte zur philosophischen Propädeutik*, in: vol. 4 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *The Philosophical Propaedeutic*, ed. M. George and A. Vincent, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford: Blackwell 1986 (cited by page number).
- PR: *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts oder Naturrecht und Staatswissenschaft im Grundrisse. Mit Hegels eigenhändigen Notizen und den mündlichen Zusätzen*, vol. 7 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* / *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. A. W. Wood, trans. H. B. Nisbet, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991 (cited by section number).
- SF: “Systemfragment von 1800,” in: vol. 1 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / “Fragment of a System,” in: *Early Theological Writings*, trans. T. M. Knox, with an introduction, and fragments trans. Richard Kroner, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1948 (cited by page number).
- VA: *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, vols. 13–15 of *Werke in 20 Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T. M. Knox, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1975, 3 vols. (cited by volume and page number).
- VGP: *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie*, vols. 18–20 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E. S. Haldane and F. H. Simson, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press 1995, 3 vols. (cited by volume and page number).
- VL: *Vorlesungen über die Logik (Berlin 1831)*, nachgeschrieben von Karl Hegel, ed. U. Rameil and H.-Ch. Lucas, vol. 10 of *Vorlesungen: Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*, Hamburg: Meiner 2001 (cited by page number).
- VPGE: *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte (Berlin 1822/1823)*, ed. K.-H. Ilting, K. Brehmer and H. N. Seelman, in: vol. 12 of *Vorlesungen: Ausgewählte Nachschriften und Manuskripte*, Hamburg: Meiner 1996 (cited by page number) / *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, vol. 1: *Manuscripts of the Introduction and the Lectures of 1822–1823*, eds. and trans. R. F. Brown and P. C. Hodgson, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011 (cited by page number).
- VPGE: *Philosophie der Weltgeschichte. Einleitung 1830/31*, in: vol. 18 of *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Walter Jaeschke, Hamburg: Meiner 1995 (cited by page number) / *Introduction 1830–1*, in: *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, vol. 1: *Manuscripts of the Introduction and the Lectures of 1822–1823*, eds. and trans. R. F. Brown and P. C. Hodgson, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011 (cited by page number).
- VPR: *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, vols. 16–17 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion*, trans. Rev. E. B. Speirs, B. D. and J. Burdon Sanderson, New York: Humanities Press 1895, 3 vols. (cited by volume and page number).
- WL: *Wissenschaft der Logik*, vols. 5–6 of *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (cited by volume and page number) / *Science of Logic*, trans. A. V. Miller, Amherst: Humanity Books 1969 (cited by page number).

Works by Aristotle

- DA: *De Anima*, Books II and III, trans. D. W. Hamlyn, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1993.

Works by Kant

- EE: *Erste Einleitung in die Kritik der Urteilskraft*, in: *Kant's gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften, vol. 20, ed. Gerhard Lehmann, Berlin: de Gruyter 1942 / First Introduction to the *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, in: I. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. P. Guyer and E. Matthews, ed. P. Guyer, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000 (cited by volume and page number of the German edition).
- GMS: *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, in: vol. 4 of *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften / Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans., ed. M. Gregor, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997 (cited by volume and page number of the German edition).
- KpV: *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, in: vol. 5 of *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften / Critique of Practical Reason*, trans., ed. M. Gregor, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997 (cited by volume and page number of the German edition).
- KrV: *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in: vol. 3 of *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften / Critique of Pure Reason*, trans., ed. P. Guyer and A. Wood, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998 (cited according to the pagination of the first two editions, A (1781) and B (1787)).
- KU: *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, in: vol. 5 of *Kant's Gesammelte Schriften / Critique of the Power of Judgment*, trans. P. Guyer and E. Matthews, ed. P. Guyer, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000 (cited by volume and page number of the German edition).