

Sexual Difference and Development in Hegel's Encyclopedia in their Logical, Natural, and  
Spiritual Aspects

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# I. Introduction

## ***Geschlechtsdifferenz* in Hegel's *Encyclopedia*: a systematic approach**

Few if any scholars have acknowledged Hegel as a feminist. But it is easily forgotten how like many of the aspirations projected by feminist theories of sexual difference, Hegel's work presents the consummate relationship between man and woman as a relationship between two equal but different beings. Patricia Mills calls this "the ideal relationship of identity-in-difference between man and woman" (Mills 1996, p. 63). In the *Phenomenology*, this ideal relationship is to be found only between brother and sister, which is for Hegel a bond of rest, equilibrium and blood, a bond devoid of desire. In the less discussed texts of the *Encyclopedia* system, the problem of the ideal relationship between the sexes does not arise as such, a very interesting fact in itself. And yet in the *Encyclopedia* books marriage is the relationship laying claim to reciprocal "recognition" (broadly construed) and symmetry between man and woman. Marriage in Hegel's texts is not, however, all it's cracked up to be; from the earlier work by scholars such as Mills to the more recent work of such thinkers as Elaine Miller and Alison Stone, the critiques by feminist readers of Hegel have clearly demonstrated how Hegel's account of sex difference (*Geschlechtsdifferenz*) depicts a less than ideal relationship between the two sexes (for Hegel, there are only two sexes), even by Hegel's own standards.

However, almost all of the feminist critiques of Hegel concentrate on his accounts of the family in the *Phenomenology* and in the *Philosophy of Right*, on the *spiritual* accounts of sex difference. While some scholars like Miller and Stone have incorporated relevant sections of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* into their feminist readings, none to my knowledge treat the *Philosophy of Nature* extensively in this regard, and none treat the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic* in their own right, on the topic of sex difference. Moreover, none to my knowledge have considered sex difference in Hegel from a systematic point of view, together in its logical, natural, and spiritual aspects. If only in outline, this is how I propose to consider sex difference in Hegel in this dissertation, throughout its iterations in logic, nature and spirit, using the *Encyclopedia* and the related works (with an appendix addressing the *Phenomenology*). Not only does this comprehensive approach have the advantage of deepening and broadening our understanding of the widely held feminist conclusion, that despite Hegel's claims he does not offer a viable account of the ideal "identity-in-difference" relation between man and woman. This approach also requires us to grapple with some of the most interesting and tricky problems in Hegel scholarship at large, such as the question of the "transitions" between logic and nature and between nature and spirit: in order to understand the relationship between the moments of logical sex difference, natural sex difference, and spiritual sex difference, we must first interpret more generally the relationship between the three primary moments of Hegel's entire system, logic, nature, and spirit.

In the first part, I establish that sex difference is a logical determination for Hegel in the logic texts and that conceptual sex difference anticipates *animal* sex difference in the *Philosophy of Nature*. I discuss the significance of this fact looking forward to the implications for reading the *Philosophy of Nature* and the *Philosophy of Spirit*, the second and third books of the *Encyclopedia* outline. In the second part, I summarize Hegel's accounts of sex difference and its

analogue in organic nature in the plant nature and in the animal organism. I point out that Hegel did not deduce plant life in his speculative logic, and I show why this is important. In the last part, I argue that there is no co-equal, adult feminine counterpart to man in love and marriage in *Philosophy of Spirit* and the related sections of *Philosophy of Right*. This is because despite Hegel's intentions the relationship between man and woman is not the ethical culmination of the connection between two differently sexed but "equal" animals. Rather, the sex relation between man and woman is analogous to the relationship between animal and plant, a relationship of consumer to the consumed and (self-) sacrificed. As it turns out in light of the prerequisite consideration of the logic and nature texts, the sex relation in its spiritual aspect is not only one of two incompatibly different beings, but also and moreover it is a relationship that Hegel did not properly deduce, even on his own terms, in the first place.

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## II. Sexual Difference and Development in Hegel's Encyclopedia in their Logical, Natural, and Spiritual Aspects

“...and in common with him he nurtures the newborn; such people, therefore, have much more to share than do the parents of human children, and have a firmer bond of friendship, because the children in whom they have a share are more beautiful and more immortal” (Plato, *Symposium*, Diotima’s Speech, pg. 57 209c).

“What got me by during that period was conceiving of the history of philosophy as a kind of ass-fuck, or, what amounts to the same thing, an immaculate conception. I imagined myself approaching an author from behind and giving him a child that would indeed be his but would nonetheless be monstrous.” (Deleuze, “I Have Nothing to Admit,” pg. 12).

“Stirner descends from Hegel, he is haunted by the author of *The Phenomenology of Spirit* and he cannot stand it...he does not comprehend Hegel as well as another one of the descendants, guess who. The latter, just as persecuted by the shadow of their great father who comes back every night, ready also to betray him or to avenge him (it is sometimes the same thing), is busy giving a lesson here in Hegelianism to brother Stirner...this unworthy heir has not understood the essentials of the will and testament, he has not read very well *The Phenomenology of Spirit*...” (Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pg. 152).

“Strife among thinkers is the ‘lovers’ quarrel’ concerning the matter itself” (Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*, pg. 239).

### Philosophy and the Inheritance of Daughters

What is possible between a “man” and a “woman”? What, together, might they accomplish? And why “between”? How “together”? *And are these even the two with which to begin?*

Famously, in Plato’s *Symposium* Diotima asserts that the best to happen between a man and a woman is a child. The child is the *most* between the two. In the child, the man and the woman chase immortality. Through this pursuit, in the reproduction of flesh, their own bond takes place and is strengthened. But the immortality and the bond achieved by way of the merely *mortal* child pale in the light of those bonded in real friendship. *Their* lovely and godlike children are not human offspring, but ideas, thoughts, arguments (*logoi*). These are the philosophers and,

according to the priestess Diotima, they are men. More is possible between these men, the philosophers – more beauty, more immortality.

Over two thousand years after Plato, Deleuze conceives the history of philosophy as “a kind of ass-fuck”. Deleuze’s “ass-fuck” is not so far off from Diotima’s notion of philosophical intercourse between men. Like Diotima, Deleuze suggests that some kind of intercourse between men is essential to philosophizing; with both Diotima and Deleuze, men can give birth without women’s involvement (Deleuze’s “immaculate conception”). Perhaps the difference lies in that Deleuze is a philosopher-necrophile – he approaches *dead* men from behind. And, as one might imagine, if they are also “more”, Deleuze’s philosophical children are probably more *ugly* and more *monstrous*.

In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida speaks of battles between philosophical brothers (like Marx and Max Stirner) who do not necessarily recognize one another as such. The brothers have it out over the legacy of their father (“guess who”!), relentlessly chasing after one another. It is as if this is what philosophizing is, its “logic” and “dynamic” laid bare in “brotherly spats” over the inheritance of the father. Once more, philosophy (a less tranquil version) is what is possible... between men. But while Derrida does not explicitly elaborate his thoughts on this topic in *Specters*, he hints at a different way of inheriting, one which might not push the brothers (or others) into that vicious circular haunting/hunting frenzy. What if the inheritors were not (only) sons, but daughters? And if so, from whom would they inherit? *Amongst* whom would they inherit? *With* whom?

In the “lovers’ quarrel” passage from “Letter on Humanism”, it’s doubtful whether Heidegger had questions of sexual difference in mind. Nevertheless, of the three previously mentioned passages, Heidegger’s “lovers’ quarrel” might be the one to leave open the greatest possibility for a different way of inheriting the philosophical tradition. *However unwittingly*, Heidegger does not delimit the gender or even the species of the lovers. Even more importantly – because perhaps it is this which allows the first openness – “the matter itself” is at issue in the quarrel, not, ultimately, this or that particular thing. Inspired by Heidegger, I’d like to venture that “the matter itself”, what Hegel also knows under the same name, touches on thinkers not “above and beyond” sexual difference but rather “before” sexual difference (see, for example, Derrida’s first *Geschlecht* essay).

In two ways, then, I begin with Heidegger’s remark about “lovers’ quarrels”. First, as a “daughter” engaging the ghosts of one of the patriarchs of the philosophical canon, the ghosts of Hegel, in a certain spirit of Heidegger I will say this. My dialogue with Hegel is possible because what there is to touch on in conversation – call it, perhaps, *die Sache selbst* – this that there is, is neither mine nor Hegel’s and it belongs to none of the sexes. Although I know Socrates (another

father figure perhaps, though a rather strange one at that) said something remarkably similar in the face of the good in the *Republic*, I will allow you to take my word for it, that when it comes to the “matter itself” I also know that it is there, though I can’t and won’t say *what it is*. How is it possible for women to “do philosophy”, to do it with, between, amongst their male counterparts, to inherit it from the fathers who do not recognize them? – this is an important question which demands our response. It is a question at issue for me, even haunting me throughout my work here. And while I do not offer any specific answers to it, I do not want to conjure it away. It will keep returning at the margins of my writing and it does not leave.

But what I will attest to, from the outset, is that “the tradition” is “survivable” precisely because it harbors experiences and insights which are not reducible to this or that explicit philosophical item of concern, instead – *die Sache selbst*. If Hegel touched on it he did so not because he was a privileged white man and not even because he was *human*; if we think that way, Hegel is dead with nothing new to say to any of “us” and no one need approach him at his grave let alone *justify* approaching him.

Secondly, prompted by Heidegger again, I’m thinking about *quarrels*. The word “quarrel” suggests squabbling over things, usually everyday things, which are most trivial. And lovers’ quarrels are reputed to be *laughably* trivial (that is, we think this if the lovers are genuine lovers, if they truly love one another all along, throughout the quarrel). Heidegger, on the other hand, believes that if a thinker is engaged, when she quarrels she is not quarreling over this or that particular everyday thing but about the thing itself, the matter itself. Maybe if she and her quarreling interlocutor would realize this they would discover that they are not only not quarreling about what they think they’re quarreling about: *they’re not even quarreling at all*. This is one way to understand Heidegger’s remark, but I want to work with the following interpretation instead. Lovers or thinkers *do* actually quarrel. They truly quarrel about everyday, particular things and specific passages in specific texts pertaining to specific, explicitly expressed issues. These things are in themselves important. But in recognizing that their quarrel is made possible by a deeper kinship, a deeper more persistent concern making possible all other particular concerns, the lovers and the thinkers also recognize that everyday quarreling is no laughing matter but, perhaps, “about” the matter itself. This recognition is partially constitutive *of* that very matter.

So I’m not on the hunt for the usual sexist “mishaps” that seem to befall every man philosopher and even many a woman philosopher and maybe others in between and otherwise. Although, to be sure, we will find plenty of those familiar “mishaps” in Hegel. I am instead hoping to touch on what Hegel touches on – if we’re to speak German and Hegel for now, call it *die Sache selbst*.



I'm also not out to pick any fights, at least not without remembering what Heidegger writes on "lovers' quarrels". I only end up picking *one* fight and I would want to insist, hypocritically enough, that this quarrel is no "lovers' quarrel." If I were less schooled, I might also insist that I didn't "cause" or "start" this fight. (I will leave it to my reader to decide which "fight" this is and maybe even "who" started "it").

One last prefatory note. Why Hegel? Because he interests me and haunts me to no end (a hopelessly subjective, decidedly "un-Hegelian" answer). But...*why Hegel?* I can't answer this question at the beginning (a better "Hegelian" answer). The reasons are unfolded throughout. Perhaps we will touch on something essential.

## Summary

My approach to Hegel's *Encyclopedia* is guided by my topic, which is sexual difference (*Geschlechtsdifferenz*), but my consideration of sexual difference is embedded in a more comprehensive interpretation of Hegel's text. In the following three chapters I track sexual difference in each book of Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, in its logical, natural, and spiritual aspects. In an addendum to the third chapter, I address sexual difference in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Each chapter will include its own introduction, so there is not so much need here to give an overview. Each chapter will also begin by engaging the literature on the relevant *Encyclopedia* book, particularly the feminist literature.

Following Hegel, I let things show themselves in the course of the work. But, to give the sketch of my argument: in the first chapter, on Hegel's speculative logic, I explain what it means for Hegel that sexual difference is a conceptual determination deduced from pure thought. Hegel's account of logical sexual difference determines what counts as veritable sexual difference in both nature (my second chapter) and spirit (my third chapter). In my second chapter, I point out that *animal* sexual difference manifests sexual difference as a logical determination in the *Philosophy of Nature*. Meanwhile, plant nature, which attains only to a mere analogue (*Analogon*) of sexual difference, is treated in the *Philosophy of Nature* even though no corresponding conceptual determination is deduced in the logic texts. On the *Philosophy of Mind* and on one of its attendant texts, the *Philosophy of Right*, my third chapter examines spiritual sexual difference, specifically sexual difference in marriage. I conclude that Hegel's account of marriage fails for the following reason. Hegel's (reconstructed) account of girlhood development demonstrates that girls do not grow up to be the different but equal counterparts of men. Instead, they grow like plants. Because of this, they are disqualified from participating in the spiritual sex relation as determined by the account of sexual difference in the *Science of Logic*. The fact that plant nature lacks conceptual, logical determination reinforces this conclusion.

“*Hic Rhodus, hic saltus*” (Hegel, *PR*, Preface, pg. 21).

## Notes

1. Hegel cites this line from one of Aesop’s fables in the Preface to *Philosophy of Right*.

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### III. Speculative Logic: *Geschlechtsdifferenz* as a thought determination

#### Friends and foes of Hegel's logic

Hegel's logic is explicated in the *Science of Logic* (*Wissenschaft der Logik*)<sup>1</sup> and the *Encyclopedia Logic* (*Enzyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse*)<sup>2</sup>. Hegel meant the *Encyclopedia Logic* as a (very) condensed version of the *Science of Logic*. The *Encyclopedia Logic* is the first phase of the outline of his system, the two further phases being the outlines known respectively as the *Philosophy of Nature* (*Philosophie der Natur*) and the *Philosophy of Mind* (*Philosophie des Geistes*). Since the two texts supposedly treat the same material, I will alternately cite from both texts in this chapter. I will emphasize the use of one source over the other when I feel that the difference in the sources is philosophically relevant.

Philosophers, Hegel included, are well rehearsed in lamenting the disrepute into which philosophy or one of its members has fallen, always “in recent years”<sup>3</sup>. Perhaps in a certain way I ironically renew this practice – *as if* it were prerequisite to any “serious” reevaluation of a philosophical work – with the following comments on the reception of Hegel's speculative logic.

There are scholars such as Robert Pippin and Terry Pinkard (proponents of the so-called non-metaphysical interpretation of Hegel) as well as Allen Wood, who are, all three, “friends of Hegel”<sup>4</sup>. But these friends seem embarrassed by Hegel's supposedly audacious (allegedly metaphysical) claims in his logic books. Most strikingly, in the book *Hegel's Ethical Thought* Allen Wood writes:

“We must admire the boldness of Hegel's methodological conception in the *Phenomenology*, but we must also admit that Hegel's hopelessly ambitious project proves utterly unconvincing in its execution...”

Viewed from a late twentieth-century perspective, it is evident that Hegel totally failed in his attempt to canonize speculative logic as the only proper form of philosophical thinking. Many of the philosophical paradoxes Hegel needs in order to make his system work are based on shallow sophistries; the resolution to paradoxes supplied by his system is often artificial and unilluminating...philosophical sanity now usually judges that the most promising way to deal with the paradoxes that plague philosophy is the understanding's way (Hegel turns in his grave: JP). Hegel's system of dialectical logic has never won acceptance outside an isolated and dwindling tradition of incorrigible enthusiasts (Wood, *Hegel's Ethical Thought*, pgs. 4-5).

All of this is written under the heading: “Speculative logic is dead; but Hegel’s thought is not” (4). Aware of the scorn heaped on any “incorrigible enthusiasts” of Hegelian logic, not to mention the scorn heaped on *card-carrying* “incorrigible enthusiasts”, by the Anglo-American philosophical community, Wood distances himself from the definitely “dead” part of the Hegelian corpus, speculative logic – albeit in a friendly way (“we must admire the boldness...”). (Like a foe) Wood assures us he knows that “speculative logic is dead”<sup>5</sup>, but (like a friend) he holds open the possibility that Hegel’s thought is survivable. So he aims to animate just these survivable parts of the Hegelian enterprise. And this is why he is counted among the “friends of Hegel” by Stephen Houlgate.

In an earlier book called *On Hegel’s Logic: Fragments of a Commentary*, John Burbidge acknowledges the ire awaiting defenders of Hegel’s logic. He cites an array of passages from the works of J.N. Findlay, Charles Taylor, J.M.E. McTaggart, G.R.G. Mure, Bertrand Russell, and Karl Popper at the beginning of his introduction. These passages express dissatisfaction and even disgust with Hegel’s logical procedure. Furthermore, Burbidge observes that when “one turns from friends to foes (of Hegel), the criticism becomes more strident” (Burbidge, *On Hegel’s Logic*, pg. 3). Now, is Burbidge himself a friend or a foe of Hegel? This is perhaps a question impossible to settle in the given framework. Unlike Wood, Burbidge thinks Hegel’s logic is viable. But like Wood, Burbidge distances himself from less popular interpretations of Hegel’s logic: in line with Pippin and Pinkard, Burbidge furthers a non-metaphysical reading of Hegel’s logic<sup>6</sup>. We will shortly see what is entailed by a metaphysical as opposed to a non-metaphysical reading of speculative logic. We will not, however, venture to decide once and for all which is a “friendlier” reading.

For now: Burbidge’s assessment is consonant with Houlgate’s in his article “Hegel’s Logic”. There, Houlgate also stresses the fact that not only foes but friends too are disenchanted with Hegel’s speculative logic. Houlgate responds throughout his piece by arguing in support of Hegel’s logic. In Houlgate’s view, Hegel’s *Science of Logic* is not a sham of a work but is rather a text that ought to be “counted together with Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* as one of the two greatest works of modern philosophy” (Houlgate, “Hegel’s Logic”, 134).

While I will show how my reading of Hegel’s logic is much closer to Houlgate’s metaphysical reading than it is to the non-metaphysical readings just mentioned, in contrast to Houlgate I will not argue in favor of Hegel’s logic as if it were “truer” than other logics or somehow best amongst competing philosophies. I neither aim to resuscitate Hegel’s logic *as such* for contemporary (especially logical or epistemological) purposes, nor do I think that if Hegel’s logic is immediately “useless” for contemporary philosophical projects then interpreting his logic amounts to an “antiquarian” undertaking (Beiser, “Puzzling Hegelian Renaissance”, 6-8<sup>7</sup>). Instead, I would like to proceed in the spirit of the discussion about reading the tradition in my

Introduction, specifically about reading the tradition as a would-be “daughter” of that tradition (see above). But in addition to this, I want to begin approaching Hegel’s logic texts and indeed his entire *Encyclopedia* system with a modest hypothesis: if we are to take Hegel most “seriously” at the end of the day, we ought to start by taking the way he himself tried to begin and tried to continue and tried to finish *most “seriously”*.

To approach Hegel in all “seriousness” is to be open to reading his work on the terms his thinking sets out for itself, even when these terms seem to discount and efface what from a certain standpoint is most valuable to us today (for example, the value of a feminist sensibility). Otherwise, if we begin with a dismissive attitude or even with an affirmative attitude rooted in preconceived standards, we *stop up our ears*<sup>8</sup> to the way in which Hegel’s texts might already be questioning themselves, amongst themselves – we would be refusing to listen to the unquellable quarrels between Hegel’s ghosts. We would threaten to drown out the philosophical polyphony with our self-certain statements about the viability or deadness of this or that member of Hegel’s body of work<sup>9</sup>.

This doesn’t mean we ought never to decide what is at stake in reading Hegel and reading different passages in Hegel in a particular way as opposed to another particular way. But this also doesn’t mean we should adopt an “anything goes” attitude to reading Hegel, or to reading any thinker for that matter. While necessary, asserting a particular reading needn’t be a silencing once and for all of other “opposed” readings. Debates amongst disagreeing thinkers can welcome disagreement in the midst of disagreeing – and perhaps here we are moving towards a more “*transcendental*” account of philosophical friendship. Maybe sometimes the only difference between merely squabbling friends and friends who are friends *in* their very disagreement is that the former see nothing but the either/or positions of the squabble, while the latter understand that a deep, essential relationship makes the appearances of the squabbles possible in the first place. In what follows, I hope not to squabble (it is difficult to avoid) with Hegel and others. I rather hope to touch on again and again a deep kinship in the face of disagreement, however high the stakes of the disagreement might be.

Before proceeding, however, a quick word about “seriousness”. I suggested we begin approaching Hegel’s logic (or any part of his work, or the work of any thinker) “in all seriousness”. But, whether or not we will come out of our encounter with such a straight face is yet to be seen. Is there a right way to laugh, at a thinker, at a would-be friend? Sifting through the literature on Hegel, it is not difficult to come away with the impression that Hegel is the most ridiculed, laughable philosopher in history<sup>10</sup>. It’s worth thinking, then, what it would mean to call on others to suspend their laughter in order to listen and think. But could there then be a different way to come out laughing, from out of this careful listening and thinking? After listening, after

thinking, could we be in fact laughing at something other than the ridiculousness of an idea, of a figure?

### **Feminist friends and foes of Hegel's logic?**

I've hopefully conveyed something of the broad debate in the mainstream literature over Hegel's work on logic. There are those, like Wood, who dismiss the logic more or less out of hand. Then there are those, like Burbidge, Pippin, and Pinkard in their respective ways, who hold a non-metaphysical interpretation of Hegel's logic (I will explain what this means in the next section). Finally, there are those like Houlgate who argue for a metaphysical interpretation of the logic (my reading will come closest to the metaphysical interpretations). But what is the significance of logic for self-professed *feminist* readers of Hegel<sup>11</sup>?

Undoubtedly, feminist readers are often attentive to the conceptual trappings of a particular dialectical movement: for example, that of ethical life in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (*Phänomenologie des Geistes*). In Patricia Mills' well-known article, "Hegel's *Antigone*", Mills observes how the "Aufhebung of the familial particular and the political universal that results in concrete or universal individuality is possible only in death in the pagan world" (Mills, "Hegel's *Antigone*", 61). Mills pays heed to the dialectical dynamic between the particular and the universal (logical moments, it would seem) in her account of the relationship between man and woman in the *Phenomenology*. She doesn't rip the phenomenological movement entirely out of its context, in other words. Furthermore, in her article "Hegel's Dialectic and the Recognition of Feminine Difference", Alison Stone focuses on the "big picture" Hegel, which is the movement of dialectic and its implications for feminist criticism. One might say, rightly but somewhat loosely, that in that article Stone concentrates on the "logic" of Hegel's system.

But to my knowledge, no sustained, explicitly feminist treatment of Hegel's *Science of Logic* and of his *Encyclopedia Logic* exists in the English language scholarship. Even a cursory glance at the table of contents of the two major volumes of feminist readings of Hegel<sup>12</sup> from the last twenty-five years or so suggests the absence of the logic books from the feminist literature on Hegel. Why do the members of the (predominantly male) community of mainstream Anglo-American Hegel scholars rush to take positions on Hegel's speculative logic (are you friend or foe?), while feminist readers of Hegel have been reluctant to sort out their relationship to the *Logic*? Or, recalling Derrida's "Choreographies" interview, how is it that these readers don't dance in *that* direction of Hegel's system?

Indeed, the majority of the English-language feminist literature on Hegel focuses on the relation between the sexes in its spiritual aspect, and, more specifically, on the accounts of the family in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and the *Philosophy of Right* (which is itself an elaboration of the second moment, "Mind Objective", in the *Encyclopedia Philosophy of Mind*). There are

few feminist readers who work with the passages *in an explicitly feminist way* in the spirit texts beyond, for the most part, the accounts of family life. There are very few scholars who read the material in *Philosophy of Nature* with a feminist approach (Elaine Miller being a notable exception; see the next chapter). It is, then, not particularly surprising that the logic books are even less discussed in feminist interpretations of Hegel.

It is not my aim in this chapter to deliver a “feminist reading” of the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic* if rendering a “feminist reading” involves imposing extraneous standards (from a school of thought, or method, or finite list of pre-formed concerns) on these texts. As I mentioned earlier, I aim to listen to the text on its own terms as much as possible (admittedly, an incredibly difficult task with an especially difficult thinker like Hegel). I am, however, reading the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic* with an eye towards the logical moment of sexual difference. And to the extent that sexual difference is a topic of interest in feminist readings of Hegel, so too is my work relevant to feminist work on Hegel. In other words, I am assuming an object of feminist interest as a guiding thread. I do follow this thread, however, only in the context of a more comprehensive investigation of the structure and movement of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* (in the case of this chapter, the movement of the logic texts). My reading of the relation between the sexes in this work then begins with sexual difference (*die Geschlechtsdifferenz*) as a *thought determination* in the logic books. How sexual difference (*die Geschlechtsdifferenz*) shows up as a thought determination in the logic and the significance of this fact for the sex relation (*das Geschlechtsverhältnis*) in the nature and spirit texts, as well as for marriage (*die Ehe*), these will emerge through my reading of the *Encyclopedia*, beginning with the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic*. For now, I will not say more about the outcome since I am tracing Hegel’s own way of proceeding:

A preliminary attempt to make matters plain would only be unphilosophical, and consist of a tissue of assumptions, assertions, and inferential pros and cons, i.e. of dogmatism without cogency, as against which there would be an equal right of counter-dogmatism (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 14, Paragraph 10).

### **Hegel’s speculative logic: the content of pure thinking**

Before the ambiguous (a)sexual life of the plant, before animal copulation fails to reconcile the individual to the universal, and well before the virtuous maidens eschew romance for marriage, sexual difference – *die Geschlechtsdifferenz*<sup>13</sup> – first appears in Hegel’s system as a *thought determination*. Sexual difference as a thought determination is then to be distinguished from the relation between two animal individuals in the genus process (*der Prozeß der Gattung*) in the *Philosophy of Nature*, and from the relation between man and woman in marriage (*die Ehe*) in the *Philosophy of Mind*. We will want to understand what difference it makes for the most

discussed relation between the sexes (marriage) and the less frequently discussed forms of the relation between the sexes (the plant analogue of sexual difference and animal copulation), that sexual difference is first deduced in “the abstract medium of thought” (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 25, paragraph 19). Of course, to understand this we need to become better acquainted with Hegel’s overall project of speculative logic. To that end, let’s turn to the beginnings of the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic*.

There are two basic ways to draw on the logic texts (or, really, any of Hegel’s “mature” texts) in order to communicate their result. Alongside Hegel, we could scientifically demonstrate the result of the logic. We could render a scientific proof by exhibiting the dialectical unfolding of the categories from pure thought, in other words. If we were to do this, a recapitulation of the entire system of logic would be required. Alternatively, we could turn to the oftentimes scattered, merely anticipatory writing of Hegel’s Prefaces and Introductions. Since the aim here is neither to “prove” speculative logic (thanks to Hegel, that task is out of the way!) nor is it to provide a commentary on the entire system of logic, I will focus attention on the Prefaces and Introductions of the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopedia Logic*. This way has its disadvantages, to be sure. One of these disadvantages is, as Hegel is fond of noting, that the scientific proof of the matter can only be had in the dialectical movement of the system itself:

What is anticipated in this Introduction, therefore, is not intended to ground as it were the concept of logic, or to justify in advance its content and method scientifically, but rather to make more intuitable, by means of some explanations and reflections of an argumentative and historical nature, the standpoint from which this science ought to be considered (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 23, Introduction, 21.27).

Hegel stresses that the Introduction to the *Science of Logic* is not and cannot be scientific. As we will see, genuinely philosophical proof can only be had through the immanent unfolding of pure thought (in the case of logic). Having read the Introduction we will hopefully come to the beginning of the science proper with less prejudice and more receptivity: however, it remains that the *proof is in the pudding*<sup>14</sup> for Hegel – here, and elsewhere in his “mature” works.

Nevertheless, despite their unscientific character, the Prefaces and Introductions contain the comparatively few reflections there are in Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* on his project “as a whole”, in this case, the logic by itself and the logic in its relation to *Realphilosophie* (the philosophies of nature and spirit) and even in its relation to the *Phenomenology*. For this reason, I focus on the introductory material and in doing so shed some preliminary, “unscientific” light not just on the logic, but also on the relation of the logic to the other moments of speculative science, especially to the nature. In this way, I begin to bring into sight the metaphysical stakes of Hegel’s account of *das Geschlechtsverhältnis* in the *Philosophy of Nature*.



In the Prefaces and Introduction to the *Science of Logic*, Hegel oftentimes emphasizes the historical conditions of the recent past which have, perhaps up until contemporary times, made unlikely the hospitable reception of speculative logic, or the science of metaphysics. On the one hand, Kant's philosophy, which "exoterically" prohibits the understanding from "soar[ing] above experience" (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 7, First Preface, 21.5), and on the other hand, "modern pedagogy", demanding that "immediate needs" be met in the here-and-now (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 8, First Preface, 21.5), conspire to make metaphysics a laughingstock, something of the past no one bothers with today. "With science (*Wissenschaft*) and common sense (*der gemeine Menschenverstand*) thus working hand in hand to cause the downfall of metaphysics, the singular spectacle came into view of a cultured people (*ein gebildetes Volk*) without metaphysics – like a temple richly ornamented in other respects but without a holy of holies (*Allerheiligstes*)" (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 8, First Preface, 21.6). Logic has fared only a bit better than metaphysics. It has continued to be taught in schools, if only out of a hackneyed respect for tradition and out of a vague sense of its "formal utility" (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 8, First Preface, 21.6). Nonetheless, the new spirit – which has begun to break out in the world and in the other sciences – has as of yet hardly touched logic. Logic and metaphysics or, better, "the science of logic that makes up metaphysics", have been neglected up until now, but that is about to change with Hegel's "completely fresh start" – his speculative logic (pg. 9, 21.7).

Towards the end of the first Preface to the *Science of Logic*, Hegel sketches the relationship between the "parts" of his system: the *Phenomenology* (whose status I will discuss later), is in some sense the first part of the system, and the second part (projected, at this point in 1812) will contain "the Logic and both the two real sciences of philosophy, the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Spirit" (pg. 11, 21.9). From here it is clear that logic makes up the first part of the second part of his entire system, according to the 1812 Preface, the first part of what we think of today as the *Encyclopedia* system proper. But what is Hegel up to in this logical phase of the project? Or, better, what is *thought itself* in its pure thinking medium doing in the science of logic?

To put it rather "abstractly" indeed, the science of logic is the dynamic, immanent, and necessary deduction – the only proper and properly critical deduction – of the categories or determinations of pure thought as an activity<sup>15</sup>. The "deduction" of these categories or determinations is at least in one sense presuppositionless, and this movement of the deduction proceeds without external reflection, opinion, or everyday prejudice. The categories or thought-determinations unfold from out of the activity of pure thought by itself, without reference to any sensible content (without, for example, Kant's pure forms of intuition, space and time. Space and time are not "deduced" until the beginning of the *Philosophy of Nature*). Speculative logic famously begins with being (bare, indeterminate, not even a thought), and it results in what in another sense comes to have been presupposed all along: the absolute idea (the soul of science, the

living unity of form and content). The general “point” of the logic by itself is to deduce the categories in the *right way*, thereby demonstrating their legitimacy (exhibiting their proper “certificate of birth” [Kant, *CPR*, pg. 122, A86/B119]) and, through the attainment to the concept or notion (*Begriff*) and its concretion in the Idea (*Idee*), securing the path of/to science<sup>16</sup>.

Let’s take a closer look at several passages from the Introduction to the *Science of Logic*. At the very beginning of the Introduction, Hegel writes:

In no science is the need to begin with the fact itself (*Sache selbst*), without preliminary reflections, felt more strongly than in the science of logic (*der logischen Wissenschaft*). In every other science, the matter (*Gegenstand*) that it treats, and the scientific method (*Methode*), are distinguished from each other; the content (*Inhalt*), moreover, does not make an absolute beginning (*nicht einen absoluten Anfang macht*) but is dependent on other concepts (*andern Begriffen*) and is connected on all sides with other material (*Stoffe*) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 23, Introduction, 21.27).

The first sentence of this passage suggests that the *logischen Wissenschaft* is a presuppositionless science<sup>17</sup>. One is compelled to begin this science with the “fact itself” (*Sache selbst*) because only with the science of logic are form, the “method” of proceeding, and content, the *Sache*, implicitly united from the start. In contrast, in all other sciences<sup>18</sup> the form and the content, or the matter (*Gegenstand*) and the method (*Methode*), are divorced; moreover, the deficient content (deficient because “dependent on other concepts”) of these other sciences requires that content to be supplemented by other extraneous *Stoffe*, making an “absolute beginning” impossible. In the first paragraph of the Introduction to the *Science of Logic*, we have already come upon Hegel’s claim that form and content must be one in science and cannot be otherwise. This announces what is perhaps the most striking feature of speculative logic – all the determinate content of that science (for there is such content) comes out of the “absolute beginning” made at the presuppositionless start. In other words, all the (determinate) content is already implicitly harbored in the initial content, in the “absolute beginning”.

A few sentences later, Hegel continues:

Logic, on the contrary (in contrast to the other sciences: JP), cannot presuppose any of these forms of reflection (*Formen der Reflexion*), these rules and laws of thinking (*Regeln und Gesetze des Denkens*), for they are part of its content (*Inhalts*) and they first have to be established (*begründet*) within it. And it is not just the declaration of scientific method (*wissenschaftlichen Methode*) but the *concept* itself (*Begriffselbst*) of *science* (*Wissenschaft*) as such that belongs to its content and even makes up its final result. Logic, therefore, cannot say what it is in advance, rather does this knowledge of itself only emerge as the final result and completion of its whole

treatment. Likewise its subject matter (*Gegenstand*), *thinking* (*das Denken*) or more specifically *conceptual* thinking (*das begreifende Denken*), is essentially elaborated within it; its concept (*Begriff*) is generated in the course of this elaboration and cannot therefore be given in advance (original emphasis) (Hegel, SL, Introduction, pg. 23, 21.27).

Since logic is the only science whose content necessitates and allows the science to make an “absolute beginning”, even its rules and laws must be internally generated from out of the initial content. Indeed, these “rules and laws of thinking” are nothing other than this initial content itself, elaborated. Logic then deduces its own content and concept out of itself. Logic and the “rules and laws of thinking” belonging to it emerge in the science of logic. This science, its emergence, and its “final result” *is or has become* logic, concretized.

Thus far, what is most striking about Hegel’s logic is that it *harbors and develops its own content*, or at least it professes to do so (and ostensibly demonstrates *that* it does so). It is not my aim here to mediate the disputes which flare up around this claim of Hegel’s, apparently one of his most offensive. The suggestion that logic generates its own content, laws and rules, means that this science does not look to the outside – not even to the supposedly inviolable law of non-contradiction or to the law of identity – at or for its commencement, that it begins in part by having bracketed all but the barest of bare assumptions (that thought and abstract, indeterminate being are with one another at the start). From Kantians<sup>19</sup> to “traditional” logicians of all stripes (mostly of the Anglo-American variety), scholars tend to be scandalized – or, if they are “friends” of Hegel, embarrassed – by the notion that logic unfurls its own content, the content of pure thought itself. What is scandalous in this idea is that speculative logic, beginning as it does with bare being, constitutes an ontology or a metaphysics – and not just any ontology or metaphysics, but ontology or metaphysics in a post-critical age<sup>20</sup>!

In contrast to scholars like Pinkard and Pippin and in basic agreement with Houlgate, I hold a so-called “metaphysical” interpretation of Hegel’s logic. Rather than define my view in contrast to the competing views in the literature, however, let me attempt to sketch this view directly with reference to Hegel’s logic texts. First, in the “Preliminary Notion” in the *Encyclopedia Logic*, in a note to Paragraph 24 Hegel says the following about logic.

Logic is the study of thought pure and simple, or of the pure thought-forms (*In der Logik haben wir es mit dem reinen Gedanken oder den reinen Denkbestimmungen zu tun*). In the ordinary sense of the term, by thought we generally represent to ourselves something more than simple and unmixed thought; we mean some thought (*ein Gedachtes*), the material of which is from experience (*dessen Inhalt ein Empirisches ist*). Whereas in logic a thought is understood to include nothing else but what depends on thinking and what thinking has brought into existence. It

is in these circumstances that thoughts are pure thoughts (*So sind die Gedanken reine Gedanken*). (original emphasis) (Hegel, *EL*, “Preliminary Notion”, pg. 39, Paragraph 24, *Zusatz*).

It is clear from this passage that logic studies pure thought by itself, not thoughts mixed indiscriminately with empirically determinate thoughts, those thoughts we ordinarily think of when we think of thoughts (for instance, the bare, indeterminate being with which Hegel begins speculative logic is not to be confused with this or that particular being – my hat or my laptop). Instead, logic pertains to determinate thoughts “brought into existence” from out of *pure* thought. It is important to note that this passage does not suggest that logic is without content. Rather, the passage states that logic does not contain *empirical* content.

But if speculative logic contains content, the question is, what content is proper to speculative logic on Hegel’s account? With this theme in mind I cite yet another passage from the *Science of Logic*:

But what is commonly understood by logic is considered with a total disregard of metaphysical significance (*metaphysische Bedeutung*). This science, in the state in which it still finds itself, has admittedly no content (*Inhalt*) of the kind which ordinary consciousness would accept as reality (*Realität*), or as a genuine fact (*Sache*). But it is not for that reason a formal science void of any material truth (*Aber sie ist nicht aus diesem Grunde eine formelle, inhaltsvoller Wahrheit entbehrende Wissenschaft*). Besides, the region of truth is not to be sought in that material (*Stoffe*) missing in it – a lack to which the insufficiency of logic is usually attributed. More to the point is that the emptiness of the logical forms (*das Gehaltlose der logischen Formen*) lies rather solely in the manner in which they are considered and dealt with. Scattered in fixed determinations and thus not held together in organic unity (*organischer Einheit*), they are dead forms (*tote Formen*) and the spirit which is their vital concrete unity (*lebendige konkrete Einheit*) does not reside in them. Therefore they lack proper content (*Inhalts*) – a matter (*Materie*) that would in itself be substance. The content (*Inhalt*) which is missed in the logical forms is nothing else than a fixed foundation and a concretion of these abstract determinations (*eine feste Grundlage und Konkretion dieser abstrakten Bestimmungen*), and such a substantial being is usually sought for them outside them. But logical reason (*die logische Vernunft*) is itself the substantial or real factor (*das Substantielle oder Reelle*) which, within itself, holds together all the abstract determinations and constitutes their proper, absolutely concrete unity (*absolut-konkrete Einheit*). There is no need, therefore, to look far and wide for what is usually called a matter (*Materie*); it is not the fault of the subject matter of logic (*des Gegenstands der Logik*) if the latter seems empty but only of the manner in which this subject matter is grasped (Hegel, *SL*, Introduction, pgs. 27-8, 21.31-32).

In the first sentence of this passage, Hegel refers to the *common* understanding of logic. That common understanding ignores the “metaphysical significance” of logic. The “metaphysical significance” of logic is ignored in the usual way of thinking about logic because logic proper has no content which would commonly be regarded as such. But just because it overlooks the “metaphysical significance” of logic and fails to recognize its content *as* content, the common understanding is not truthful in thinking that logic is merely a “formal science” lacking metaphysical import.

As we saw just above, logic does indeed lack material if material is (mis)construed as *empirical* material. But the assumption that the only content that counts is empirical content is gravely mistaken in Hegel’s view. This assumption, along with assumptions about the (abstract) nature of substance and its determinations, and the usual treatments of logic (the attempts at logic which work with “scattered”, “fixed determinations”) leave one the impression that logic is devoid of content. And yet logic has content, “logical reason itself”, or pure thought unfurled into its concrete totality. The (as it proves to be, *dialectical*) unfurling of the genuine “substance” of the otherwise abstract thought determinations is the proper deduction of these determinations. This is the concrete “substance”.

In this way, Hegel makes it clear that his logic is not an *abstractly* formal logic. And in contrast to Kant, for Hegel logic can have content without reference to the pure forms of intuition, space and time: “the necessary forms of thinking, and its specific determinations, are the content and the ultimate truth itself” of logic (Hegel, *SL*, Introduction, pg. 29, 21.34).

I cite one more passage focused on the content of the logic, again from the Introduction to the *Science of Logic*:

...far from being formal, far from lacking the matter required for an actual and true cognition, it is its (the “objective thinking” of the “pure science” of logic: JP) content which alone has absolute truth, or, if one still wanted to make use of the word “matter,” which alone is the veritable matter – a matter for which the form is nothing external, because this matter is rather pure thought and hence the absolute form itself. Accordingly, logic is to be understood as the system of pure reason, as the realm of pure thought. *This realm is truth unveiled, truth as it is in and for itself.* It can therefore be said that this content is *the exposition of God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of nature and of a finite spirit* (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, Introduction, pg. 29, 21.34).

From the previously quoted passage, it is clear that Hegel thinks logic has content. In this passage he points out that the content of logic is not only rightly regarded *as* content but is the sole

content which is “absolute truth” or the “veritable matter”. This “veritable matter” is a *living* matter because of the unity in and through it of content and form<sup>21</sup>.

Then there is a slight but important turn in the passage whereby Hegel begins to look forward to the next two stages of his system, the philosophy of nature and the philosophy of spirit (or mind). In calling logic “the system of pure reason, as the realm of pure thought”, Hegel is alluding to his view that logic is the “all-animating spirit of all the sciences”, a view I will elaborate momentarily with reference to the *Encyclopedia Logic* (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 40, Paragraph 24, *Zusatz*). The sentence where Hegel refers to logic, “the realm of pure thought”, as the realm of “truth unveiled, truth as it is in and for itself” seems to be an allusion to the *Phenomenology*, the result of which is presupposed by the *Logic*. It also points forward to further “contents”, or even further *developments* of the *logical* content in nature and finite spirit (treated in the *Philosophy of Nature* and the *Philosophy of Mind*, respectively).

A great difficulty is announcing itself. Before turning again to the text, let me discuss the problem in an anticipatory way. The problem is this: if speculative logic has content which is properly its own, what is the relationship between the content of logic and the ostensible content of nature and spirit? And are the “categories” in the philosophies of nature and spirit natural and spiritual categories, or are they in fact purely logical?. If logic is the explicit determination out of pure thought of all the determinate categories circling closed with the organically encompassing “category”, the concept (*Begriff*) as idea (*Idee*), are categorial determinations simply applied to the “material” of nature and of finite spirit in the philosophies of nature and spirit? In other words, is it the task of the logic to provide the categories and the further task of the nature and the spirit to somehow “flesh out” these categories? But if so, logic already has its own content. Why would it need to get involved with other content, the content of nature and spirit? It would seem to be a degrading misunderstanding of logic to think that it deigns to consort with the “material” of nature and spirit since, as Hegel never tires of telling us, logic pertains to *pure* thought.

If, on the other hand, the categorial determinations of the logic are not simply “applied” to nature and finite spirit, then it is likely that the unfolding determinations of pure thought continue with unfoldings peculiar to nature and spirit. Or, in other words, the system would need to continue “after” the logic because nature and spirit have their own “categories” to contribute. But in that case, if there were newly deduced categories to be had “after” logic, it would be difficult to see how these categories would not be in some sense logical. And yet if they were in some sense logical, logic would no longer be the science of pure thought.

These are just some thoughts on the tip of the iceberg in what might very well be the most difficult exegetical problem for Hegel readers: the “relationship” between logic, nature, and spirit.

And few commentators venture into the murky depths which are the beginnings and endings of each *Encyclopedia* “book”, the transitions from one to the next.

In elaborating this difficulty with reference to the texts, we will be projecting forwards, especially to the *Philosophy of Nature*, specifically to the relationship of logic to nature and also to the relationship of logic to Hegel’s entire system of philosophy. To get clearer on the difficulty and on the passage recently cited from the *Science of Logic*, consider this, the aforementioned passage from the *Encyclopedia Logic*:

If in pursuance of the foregoing remarks we consider Logic to be the system of the pure types of thought, we find that the other philosophical sciences, the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Mind, take the place, as it were, of an Applied Logic and that Logic is the soul which animates them both (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 40, Paragraph 24, *Zusatz*).

Here again is the allusion to logic as the pure system enlivening the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Mind. Thinking of logic as the *soul* of these latter two sciences is striking because, as Hegel points out, logic is commonly thought to be dead and inert, while to the everyday understanding the variegated materials of Nature and Mind appear to be most lively and soul-like.

Also noteworthy is Hegel’s (qualified) comparison of Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Mind to “Applied Logic.” This is probably a reference to Kant, that is, if by “Applied Logic” Hegel means *transcendental* logic. In that case, it would seem that the task of Kant’s metaphysical deduction would be analogous to the task of Hegel’s speculative logic. The task of Kant’s transcendental deduction(s) would in turn be analogous to the Philosophies of Nature and Mind (with some major discrepancies: for example, Absolute Spirit would be “nothing” to Kant!)<sup>22</sup>. But to think of the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Mind as weakly analogous to “Applied Logic” is still not very elucidating.

I continue quoting the passage:

Their problem (the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Mind: JP) in that case is only to recognize the logical forms under the shapes they assume in Nature and Mind – shapes which are only a particular mode of expression for the forms of pure thought. If for instance we take the syllogism (not as it was understood in the old formal logic, but as its real value), we shall find it gives expression to the law that the particular is the middle term which fuses together the extremes of the universal and the singular. The syllogistic form is a universal form of all things. Everything that exists is a particular, which couples together the universal and the singular (Hegel, *EL*, pgs. 39-40, Paragraph 24, *Zusatz*).

Let's take Hegel's example, the syllogistic form. The syllogism is a thought determination deduced in Hegel's speculative logic (more specifically, in the Doctrine of the Concept [*Begriff*] or Doctrine of the Notion [*Begriff*], the syllogism appears as the third moment of the first moment of that Doctrine – the first moment being the concept as such). We can only understand the syllogism properly, as a phase in the unfolding of pure thought, if we have followed the “proof” of the logic thus far (and beyond, to the “end”), to the moment of the syllogism. The passage is rather vague in this respect, but the idea seems to be something like this. If, coming out of the logic, we were to consider the material of nature and spirit, our philosophical task in respect to nature and spirit is simply to recognize the form of the syllogism (to use Hegel's example again) in natural or spiritual garb. We would not be able to do this properly without having gone through the proof that is the movement of speculative logic. But anyone who has taken a glimpse at the *Philosophy of Nature* and the *Philosophy of Mind* can report that there appears to be a bit more going on in those texts than the recognizing of logical determinations in natural and spiritual clothing. That is not to say, however, that this recognition isn't part of what is happening and at stake in the philosophies of nature and spirit. It is indeed an all-important part.

The passage continues:

But Nature is weak and fails to exhibit the logical forms in their purity. Such a feeble exemplification of the syllogism may be seen in the magnet. In the middle or point of indifference of a magnet, its two poles, however they may be distinguished, are brought into one. Physics (this is a reference to what Hegel will call in the *Philosophy of Nature*, “rational physics.” It is not a reference to the second moment of the *Philosophy of Nature*: JP) also teaches us to see the universal or essence in Nature: and the only difference between it and the Philosophy of Nature is that the latter brings our mind the adequate forms of the notion in the physical world (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 40, Paragraph 24, *Zusatz*).

As we will see in the next chapter, for Hegel nature is replete with contingent existences: Venus fly traps (a plant which ingests animal matter!), pink dolphins, two-headed turtles, (allegedly) legged snake(s) (to give some examples from organic nature), and all manner of “monstrous births” (indeed, Hegel seems vaguely alarmed by the onslaught of “monstrous” contingencies in nature) (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 24, Paragraph 250, Remark). It's easy to stand before nature in wonder given its “brilliant display of fireworks” in the form of countless phenomena and creatures that shock, delight, and terrify (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 2, Introduction, *Zusatz*). But the point, rather quite literally, is to “see” the “logic” in nature despite its “brilliant display”. In the philosophy of nature we mustn't get carried away with the particularity of each new thing we find; rather, we should seek to exhibit nature in accordance with the necessity of the conceptual determinations deduced in speculative logic. From the standpoint of philosophy of nature, what counts with the pink dolphin is not anything particular about it – not that it is a dolphin and



certainly *not* that it is *pink* (although that is what people with their everyday consciousness would seem to care most about, the *color*). What matters with the pink dolphin is that it exemplifies the animal organism, the third moment of organic nature, and *as such* the animal exhibits in natural guise the determinations of the Idea as (logical) life.

Now we are in a position to address the object of this chapter – sexual difference (*Geschlechtsdifferenz*) as a thought determination in Hegel’s speculative logic. The object of the following section will not be to elucidate the significance of sexual difference for and within the logic texts themselves. That merits another project. Instead, my goal in the following is simply to locate sexual difference in the logic texts in context, and to prepare the reader for a discussion of the sex relation in the *Philosophy of Nature* and beyond. My assertion is that we cannot understand the full significance of the most frequently discussed instance of sexual difference in Hegel’s mature system, the relationship between man and woman, without having considered sexual difference as a thought determination in the logic. Besides the fact that Hegel wrote the two logic texts first and thought of them as prerequisite to the subsequent phases of his system, Hegel speaks of the logic as the animating soul of the philosophies of nature and spirit. In Hegel’s view, without the logic our treatment of nature and spirit is dead and merely mechanical. So it would also seem that in Hegel’s view a lively comprehension of natural and spiritual sexual difference presupposes an understanding of logical sexual difference.

### ***Geschlechtsdifferenz in the Encyclopedia Logic and the Science of Logic***

In the *Encyclopedia Logic* and in the *Science of Logic*, *Geschlechtsdifferenz* appears in the Doctrine of the Concept as the third moment of the Idea as life. The three moments of the idea as life foreshadow Hegel’s account of the three moments of animal life in the *Philosophy of Nature*. In this section, I anticipate the significance of this fact for a reading of the “Organics” moment in the *Philosophy of Nature*.

Curiously enough, there is also a passing reference to the sex relation (*das Geschlechtsverhältnis*) in the Chemism section of the *Science of Logic* (which is also in the Doctrine of the Concept). This is odd because in his principal discussions of sexual difference or the sex relation throughout the *Encyclopedia* and even in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel associates sexual difference with life, not with any chemical relationship, be it logical or natural.

I conclude this chapter with thoughts on reading the *Philosophy of Nature* in light of the *Encyclopedia Logic* and the *Science of Logic*, specifically with reference to sexual difference and the sex relation.

Once again, in this section I do not pretend to interpret logical *Geschlechtsdifferenz* in its logical significance. This would require a painstaking exegesis of the dialectical movement of speculative logic, especially the developments in the “Doctrine of the Concept” – something for which I have not prepared in the foregoing. This reading of logical *Geschlechtsdifferenz* would be an important project in its own right. But for now, it is sufficient for a subsequent reading of the account of the sex relation in the *Philosophy of Nature* and beyond to point out that sexual difference *does* appear as a thought determination, and to indicate *where* it appears in Hegel’s logic.

### **Prefatory remarks on the concept**

Since *Geschlechtsdifferenz* appears first in the Doctrine of the Concept (*Die Lehre vom Begriff*), let’s begin by considering, at least in outline, the position of the Doctrine of the Concept relative to the rest of the *Science of Logic* (and to the *Encyclopedia Logic*). To this end, I turn to Hegel’s prefatory remarks to the Doctrine of the Concept.

In the *Science of Logic*, the Doctrine of the Concept or the system of subjective logic was published separately from the other two “Doctrines”. The two preceding stages of the *Science of Logic*, published together, are the Doctrine of Being (*Die Lehre vom Sein*) and the Doctrine of Essence (*Die Lehre vom Wesen*). These two together make up the system of objective logic and the three together make up the entire system of speculative logic.

In his prefatory comments on the concept, Hegel asserts that “the *concept (Begriff)* is at first to be regarded simply as the *third to being and essence (das Dritte zum Sein und Wesen)*, to the *immediate* and to *reflection (zum Unmittelbaren und zur Reflexion)*” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 509, 12.11). It would seem, then, that the system is proceeding *linearly*. In the case of the logic it would proceed from being to essence to concept (and, in the case of the entire system, from logic to nature to spirit). In some sense this “linear” understanding of the system’s unfolding is correct: at first the system *does* develop linearly, or sequentially<sup>23</sup>. However, in the course of its so-called linear procedure, there emerges a non-linear turn, a curvature which on Hegel’s view in the logic gestures towards the circular completion of the first circle in his tricycle system of science<sup>24</sup>. Hegel continues in that same passage: “Being and essence are therefore the moments of its (the concept’s) *becoming*; but the concept is their *foundation* and *truth* as the identity into which they have sunk and in which they are contained” (original emphasis) (pg. 508, 12.11). At first, it would seem that being is followed by essence and essence is followed by the concept. Or, we get from the concept by first going through being and then going through essence. But if this is in any sense accurate, that very sequential movement by which we proceed from being to essence to the concept overcomes its own initial “linearity”. In emerging third, the concept shows itself to be the veritable *first*, the “foundation” and “truth”, the living “substance”

in which being and essence have come to acquire the status of concrete determinations. In the following chapters, we will see how the emergence of the veritable first marks the opening and closing of the circles of philosophy, of the transition from logic to nature and from nature to spirit and, finally, to the close of absolute spirit itself. In other words, the concept marks the inception of the first circular turning in Hegel's system, the first major indication that the system does not proceed sequentially, in "linear" fashion. To proceed linearly is the way of storytelling, not of science<sup>25</sup>. And Hegel does not think he is telling a story<sup>26</sup>.

In the *Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel calls the dialectical movement belonging to being "transition", the dialectical movement belonging to essence "reflection", and the dialectical movement belonging to the concept, finally, "development" (Hegel, EL, pg. 224, Paragraph 161 and Zusatz)<sup>27</sup>. In logical development, the beginning implicitly contains the result, and the result explicitly contains its preceding ("conditioning") moments sublated within it as a would-be organic unity. This roughly holds true for the other modes of development Hegel comes to discuss. For example, the seed is an implicit plant, the plant an explicit seed, and the boy infant is an implicit (old) man, the (old) man an explicit boy infant (see the succeeding chapters). For now it is enough to point out that with the emergence of the concept comes the explicit emergence of development, which is circular – not linear – in shape or, better, in movement. The circular trajectory of returning into self is indeed the hallmark, infinite movement of Hegel's system of science. The Doctrine of the Concept marks an important turn then, the beginning of the *narratively* first return into self in the entire system and the explicit onset of developmental, circular movement which will repeat itself in the transition from nature to spirit and in absolute spirit's completion of the system. The concept is in part this circular, developmental return into self which is the characteristic gesture of Hegel's philosophy.

### ***Geschlechtsverhältnis in Chemism***

Without saying more about the concept of the concept (this is, again, a task for another project), let me abbreviate by noting the three primary moments the concept exhibits: the concept as such, the concept in its objectivity, and, finally, the concept as idea. Roughly put, while the relationship between each set of "three" moments to every other set of "three" moments in the system raises all kinds of complicated questions, we might say that there seems to be a correspondence between the three moments exhibited in the Doctrine of the Concept and the three moments of the system as an organic whole. Culminating in the logical Idea, the Idea in its abstraction, logic would seem to correspond to the concept as such; the concept in its objectivity, with its differentiation into Mechanism, Chemism, and Teleology, would seem to correspond to nature; and the concept become adequate to reality, the concept as Idea, would seem to correspond to spirit, completing itself as it does in the Absolute Idea ("analogous" to Absolute Spirit at the end of *Philosophy of Mind*). But, as I will show, this neat schema, while compelling, does not

quite map onto the system in its tripartite entirety. For now, let's focus on the second moment of the doctrine of the concept.

The concept as such comes out of its immediacy and, in its "singularity" (the sequentially third moment "after" universality and particularity), the concept "posits itself as *something real, an existent*" (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 626, 12.128). This positing of itself as "an existent" is the concept in its objectivity, the second moment of the Doctrine of the Concept. This becoming real of the concept is somewhat analogous to the going over of logic into nature, nature being the *Idea* in its externality. Moreover, the concept in its objectivity differentiates itself into three moments: Mechanism, Chemism, and Teleology. These moments seem to "correspond" (for want of a better term) to the three principal moments of the *Philosophy of Nature*, which are Mechanics, Physics (the culminating moment of Physics is the chemical process), and Organics (which features the emergence of the teleological process, or natural life). Sexual difference is not deduced in Chemism, but, oddly enough, there is a reference to the sex relation (*Geschlechtsverhältnis*) in that section. For that reason, I turn to Chemism.

Here is how Hegel initially describes the "chemical object":

The chemical object (*das chemische Objekt*) is distinguished from the mechanical in that the latter is a totality (Totalität) indifferent to determinateness (*die Bestimmtheit*), whereas in the chemical object the determinateness, and hence the reference to other (*die Beziehung auf anderes*), and the mode and manner of this reference, belong to its nature (*Natur*). – This determinateness is at the same time essentially a particularization (*Besonderung*), that is, it is taken up into universality (*Allgemeinheit*); thus it is a principle (*Prinzip*) – a determinateness which is universal, not only the determinateness of the one singular object (*Objekts*) but also of the other (*des andern*) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 645, 12.148).

The mechanical object is a totality in a merely external way; the mechanical object is not "involved" with "its" determinations. But the chemical object is in its very nature "involved" in its determination. It is defined in and by its reference to its other, and vice versa. Since the concept contains within it the determinations which are implicit members of a totality – universality, particularity, and singularity – in perpetually going over to its other, into determinateness, the chemical object is the particularization of a universality which (because it belongs to the concept) does not lose itself in this particularization. This is what Hegel calls the principle of the chemical object. This principle necessarily pertains to both the one object and its other since, again, the particularization of the chemical object remains in universality. It is also noteworthy that for Hegel, Chemism "constitutes the moment of judgment", which is the second moment of the concept as such (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 645, 12.148). Looking ahead to the *Philosophy of Nature* the

plant, whose sex life is essentially ambiguous, is, like the chemical object, analogous to the moment of judgment.

In the next paragraph, Hegel makes an unusual, passing reference to the sex relation (*Geschlechtsverhältnis*) in nature, and to the spiritual relation of love (*die geistigen Verhältnisse der Liebe*).

Regarding the expression “chemism” for the said relation (*Verhältnis*) of the non-indifference of objectivity (*Objektivität*), it may be further remarked that the expression is not to be understood here as though the relation were only to be found in that form of elemental nature (*elementarischen Natur*) that strictly goes by that name...In animate things, the sex relation falls under this schema, and the schema also constitutes the *formal* basis for the spiritual relations of love, friendship, and the like (*Im Lebendigen steht das Geschlechtsverhältnis unter diesem Schema, so wie es auch für die geistigen Verhältnisse der Liebe, Freundschaft usw. die formale Grundlage ausmacht*) (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pgs. 645-46, 12.148-49).

The first reason this reference is surprising is that in the *Science of Logic* Hegel is ostensibly dealing with pure thought by itself, but this passage seems to make an untoward leap towards nature (and spirit). Hegel seems most concerned with where in nature (and then in spirit) the chemical relation might be found, as opposed to its place in the unfolding deduction from pure thought. Indeed, as we will see again momentarily, it seems increasingly difficult for us – and perhaps for Hegel – to maintain the distinction between the pure thought determination and its natural “instantiation” once the *Science of Logic* begins to address concepts, like life, that will explicitly reappear in the *Philosophy of Nature*.

The second reason this passage is surprising is that Hegel almost always associates the (animal) sex relation and the (human) love relation with *life*, whether natural or spiritual. In the *Encyclopedia* system, this is the only reference to the connection between the chemical relation and the relation between the sexes, animal and human, of which I’m aware. The description of the chemical relation and, for example, the love relation in the *Philosophy of Right* are indeed very similar. Of love, Hegel writes “Love means in general the consciousness of my unity with another, so that I am not isolated on my own, but gain my self-consciousness only through knowing myself as the unity of myself with another and of the other with me” (Hegel, *PR*, pg. 199, Paragraph 158). So too in chemism, though initially indifferent and seemingly independent, the chemical object is actually inextricably bound to its particularization in which, however, it does not lose itself but *remains* itself in its universality. The difficulty is, then, not in the implausibility of the reference to the sex and love relations in the context of Chemism. The difficulty is rather that this reference seems to contradict the overwhelming number of associations of the love and sex relation to life (almost always, these relations presuppose at least *organic* life). Hegel is meticulously careful to

avoid “applying” categories inappropriately. He is concerned to deduce the categories properly in his speculative logic in part because without a proper deduction one set of categories risks being “applied” indiscriminately to inappropriate areas of nature and spirit (for example, for Hegel a quantitative theory of the state would neither understand the proper meaning of “quantity”, nor would it truly understand the state). If the sex relation and the love relation presuppose life – and in the vast majority of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* reference they *do* – then it is inappropriate to associate these relations with logical chemism. The reason for this apparent misapplication of logical chemism is unclear. However, in the next chapter on the Philosophy of Nature, it will become relevant that with its ambiguous sex life, the plant “hovers between the chemical and animal spheres” (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 321, Paragraph 345, *Zusatz*).

### ***Geschlechtsdifferenz in the logical Idea as Life***

The third moment of the logical concept is the Idea. Influenced by but not content with Kant’s notion of the Idea, Hegel understands the Idea to be the “adequate [*adäquate*] concept, the objectively true, or the true as such” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 670, 12.173). In the Idea, the concept and reality (or objectivity) are reconciled. Hegel remarks that “we must... regard everything *as being* actual only to the extent that it has the idea in it and expresses it...a reality that does not correspond to the concept is mere *appearance*, something subjective, arbitrary, something which is not the truth” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 671, 12.174). Furthermore, for Hegel, the idea is *vital* – all which exists without its concept and reality united is “dead” (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 672, 12.175). These comments recall the *Encyclopedia* passage naming logic the “all-animating soul” of the sciences. Here again Hegel suggests that without the logical Idea we would not be able to recognize what is actual in the midst of existence, which includes “mere appearance”, the “subjective” and the “arbitrary”. Without this recognition which knowledge of the logical Idea makes possible, the philosophies of nature and spirit would themselves be subjective and arbitrary – they would be *dead*<sup>28</sup>.

The culmination of speculative logic, the Idea exhibits three moments: the Idea as life, the Idea of cognition, and the Absolute Idea. I focus on the Idea as life because *Geschlechtsdifferenz* is deduced as a determination of the Idea as life.

The Idea as life is the Idea in its immediacy. And immediately, Hegel acknowledges the seeming strangeness of treating life in the course of speculative logic. He gives two brief, related defenses of addressing life in speculative logic. First, he points out, given that we assume the ultimate subject matter of logic to be truth, and given that truth “lies essentially *in cognition*”, then in logic *cognition* at least would be an appropriate thing to consider (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 676, 12.179). But cognition, a phase of the concrete concept, itself presupposes life, and so

life too would be an appropriate subject matter for speculative logic. This defense of the treatment of life is, however, not primary for Hegel because of the presuppositions on which it depends.

The second defense of his treatment of life in speculative logic is more properly philosophical. Hegel claims that “the necessity of considering the idea of life in logic would be based on the necessity, itself recognized in other ways, of treating the concrete concept. But this idea has arisen through the concept’s own necessity...” (Hegel, *SL*, pg.677, 12.179-80). In other words, the deduction of thought determinations or categories – the “proof” of logic – has necessarily led to this deduction of the Idea as *life*. This is the most philosophical defense Hegel offers of the Idea as life in speculative logic. If considered in isolation from the rest of the system, however, the defense is hardly convincing. Only if we agree that Hegel has up until now and throughout exhibited properly the necessary determinations of abstract thought from being to Idea will we philosophically embrace the “topic” of life in the logic texts.

In a less direct effort to allay our concerns about the appearance of life in speculative logic, Hegel distinguishes between “the logical view of life” and other scientific views of life, namely the natural and the spiritual. Hegel points out that natural life, “exposed to the *externality of existence*”, presupposes inorganic nature (this will be demonstrated in the *Philosophy of Nature*), whereas logical life only presupposes the concept in its subjective and objective aspects (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 677, 12.180). Meanwhile, spiritual life differs from logical life in that the former presupposes “mere life”, or natural life, but the latter comes “before” even natural life (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 677, 12.180).

At times, it is difficult to see how Hegel maintains the distinction especially between logical life and natural (specifically animal) life. Indeed, the three moments of the Idea as life – the living individual, the life-process, and the genus process – correspond to the moments of sensibility, irritability, and reproduction in animal life in the *Philosophy of Nature* (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 281, Paragraph 218, *Zusatz*). Indeed, in the *Encyclopedia Logic*, Hegel’s notes on the Idea as life are full of references to the animal organism as if by way of illustration. Once again, as in the Chemism section, Hegel appears inappropriately eager to “illustrate”, as it were, the logical idea of life with more “concrete” examples from nature.

This looking ahead to nature may remain questionable given Hegel’s remarks on the purity of logic. But it does not mean that Hegel himself thinks he is borrowing the logical determinations of the idea as life from the determinations of the animal organism in nature. As we’ve discovered, it is illegitimate to the project of the logic to “borrow” its categories from nature (or from spirit). Rather, these categories must be properly deduced from out of the movement of pure thought, beginning with the bare assumption of the abstract relationship between being and thought. In other words, we don’t get the determinations of the idea as life from the animal organism existing

in nature; rather, we are only able to determine properly the moments exhibited by the animal organism insofar as we have properly deduced the logical categories that will enable us to recognize what is necessary and actual (if anything) in the animal organism. The proper understanding of the animal organism depends on a proper deduction having been carried out in speculative logic, not the other way around. The “soul” of the animal, so to speak, shines through the guise of the animal in nature *as* the determinations deduced in *speculative logic*. This, at least, is Hegel’s view. And on the face of it, it is consistent with this view that the logic contain illustrative references to the animal in nature. Strictly speaking, this “looking ahead” is not scientific, but as long as the determinations specific to nature are not used to *deduce* logical determinations there is no reason, by Hegel’s lights, why references to the natural determinations corresponding to the logical determinations might not be made, especially in the notes (added subsequently, by Hegel’s successors, to the main outline of the *Encyclopedia* books). In fact, given what Hegel claims about the relationship between logic (as the “all-animating soul”) and the other sciences, it would be problematic if there were natural determinations in the *Philosophy of Nature*, for example, which did not have their actuality determined by categorial distinctions in speculative logic. We would then expect the determinations of logical life to correspond to some set of determinations in natural life (apparently, those of the animal organism). This is, of course, a generous, general interpretation of the issue, but one which I don’t find implausible.

It is in the third moment of the Idea as life, the genus process, that Hegel deduces *Geshlechtsdifferenz* – sexual difference or, as the Wallace translation has it, “the Affinity of the Sexes” (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 281, Paragraph 220). Of this third moment, Hegel writes:

The living individual, which in its first process comports itself as intrinsically subject and notion (*Begriff*), through its second assimilates its external objectivity and thus puts the character of reality into itself. It is now therefore implicitly a *Kind* (*an sich Gattung*), with essential universality of nature. The particularizing of this *Kind* (*Gattung*) is the relation of the living subject to another subject of its *Kind* (*die Beziehung des Subjekts auf ein anderes Subjekt seiner Gattung*): and the judgement is the tie of *Kind* over these individuals thus appointed for each other (*und das Urteil ist das Verhältnis der Gattung zu diesen so gegeneinander bestimmten Individuen*). This is the Affinity of the Sexes (*die Geschlechtsdifferenz*) (original emphasis) (Hegel, *EL*, pgs. 281-282, Paragraph 220).

The attainment to universality in the life-process (the second moment) unfolds into universality in particularity in the genus process (the third moment). The living subject in its universality particularizes itself in its universality and in doing so confronts another subject of its kind (this will, in nature and in spirit, be the female subject) which stands in particularity to the “first” living subject and vice versa. The problem of the genus process, Hegel describes, is that these two individuals stand merely in a relationship of particularity to one another. But while each



is a particular individual to the other, there is a longing to sublimate this particularity into universality (Hegel, *SL*, pgs. 687-88, 12/190-91). And so the genus (*Gattung*) process ends in “copulation” (*Begattung*). In copulation, the universality of the genus becomes explicit, while the “immediacy” of the two particular subjects facing one another “perishes” (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 688, 12.191). This is the transition to the idea of cognition.

### **Conclusion: from logic to nature**

In this chapter, I have prepared for a discussion in the following chapter of the natural sex relation in light of the references to logical *Geschlechtsverhältnis* and *Geschlechtsdifferenz* in Hegel’s speculative logic<sup>29</sup>. If logic indeed deduces the determinations which vivify the scattered and contingent material in nature; if logic enables us to recognize what is actual in nature, that which accords with the concept as idea; if the *Philosophy of Nature* in some sense presupposes speculative logic; then whatever determinations appear in the *Philosophy of Nature* should be recognizable with the logical determinations to which they correspond. Otherwise, without the vivifying distinctions properly deduced in the logic, the *Philosophy of Nature* would be a dead and merely “empirical” undertaking. More specifically for our purposes, if sexual difference appears in the *Philosophy of Nature*, we should expect to recognize in it the thought determination to which it corresponds (presumably logical *Geschlechtsdifferenz*).

### **Notes**

1. The *Science of Logic* was published first between 1812 and 1816. Its first part, the “Doctrine of Being”, was posthumously republished in revised form in 1832.

2. The *Encyclopedia Logic* was first published in 1817. It was revised and republished in 1827.

3. For example, see the preface to Hegel’s *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (*Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*), where he writes: “...*philosophy* in general has incurred all kinds of contempt and discredit...No other art or science is treated with this ultimate degree of contempt, namely the assumption that one can take possession of it outright” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *PR*, pg 15, Preface). Also worth noting is Hegel’s upset over the downfall of metaphysics in the first preface to the *Science of Logic*: “With science and common sense thus working hand in hand to cause the downfall of metaphysics, the singular spectacle came into view of *a cultivated people without metaphysics* – like a temple richly ornamented in other respects but without the holy of holies” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 8, Preface, 21.6). There are many other examples, but to give one more from Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* project, take the case of another

prefatory remark this time from the *Philosophy of Nature*. Hegel opens this second stage of the *Encyclopedia* project with these sentences:

It can be said perhaps that in our time, philosophy does not enjoy any special favor and liking. At least, it is no longer recognized, as it was formerly, that the study of philosophy must constitute the indispensable introduction and foundation for all further scientific education and professional study. But this much may be assumed *without hesitation* as correct, that the *Philosophy of Nature* in particular is in considerable disfavor” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 1, Introduction, Z).

Of course, Hegel’s dismay on behalf of philosophy is perhaps most directly an echo of Kant’s reflections on the contemporary (sorry) state of metaphysics. In the famous first preface to the *Critique of Pure Reason* (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*), there is this passage:

Time was when metaphysics was entitled the Queen of all the sciences: and if the will be taken for the deed, the preeminent importance of her accepted tasks gives her every right to this title of honour. Now, however, the changed fashion of the time brings her only scorn; a matron outcast and forsaken, she mourns like Hecuba (in the preface to *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel mentions Penelope in a comparable if not entirely similar manner [Hegel, *PR*, pg. 10, Preface]: JP. I will return to Penelope in the chapter on the *Philosophy of Right*: JP): *Modo maxima rerum, tot generis natisque potens – nunc trahor exul, inops* (Kant, *CPR*, pg. 8, Aviii).

It is noteworthy that in many such passages (here the *Philosophy of Right* passage and the *Critique of Pure Reason* passage) philosophy is compared to an abandoned woman hounded by illegitimate, unworthy suitors. She (philosophy) is at risk of dishonoring herself in keeping company with such rowdy and lascivious men. She (philosophy) must be married appropriately to a proper husband (a Kant, perhaps [but by Hegel’s lights, most certainly *not* a Kant, a Fichte, or a Schelling.]). How is it, such that thinkers come to cast themselves as protectors of the woman Philosophy against the multitude of despicable suitors? It is as if these thinkers envision the history of philosophy as a contentious, squabbling fraternity (see my *Introduction* above, and my discussion of marriage below). In any case, bemoaning the besmirched philosophy-maiden seems to have begun with Plato, the first thinker, as far as we know, to define “philosophy” and to coin the word as we think we know it. Even in his *Republic*, where men and women can equally be rulers of the ideal state, Plato has Socrates remark:

When these men, for whom philosophy is most appropriate, fall away from her they leave her desolate and unwed, and they themselves lead lives that are inappropriate and untrue. Then others, who are unworthy of her, come to her as to an orphan deprived of the protection of kinsmen and disgrace her. These are the ones who are responsible for the reproaches that you say

are cast upon philosophy by those who revile her, namely, that some of those who consort with her are useless, while the majority deserve to suffer many bad things (Plato, *Republic*, pg. 169, 495b-c).

What would it be, then, for a woman (a “daughter” reading the tradition) to seek to restore philosophy, or a particular branch of it, to its proper place? (What would it be for me, a woman, to urge others to give Hegel’s logic works their due?) This might not be the best way to think the question. Perhaps, as Derrida suggests in the “Choreographies” interview, it is that we are dangerously in lockstep with the European philosophical tradition when we neglect to question the very “law” of the “proper place” in our movements, in our readings (Derrida, *C*, pg. 28). As I suggested previously, questions of lineage, inheritance, place, and sexual difference are at stake for me in this writing, so that through my work here, the hope is to begin to let a rethinking and a transformation happen to the structure, frame, presuppositions, and history underlying questions such as these, as they occur in my engagement with Hegel: how ever can a non-legitimate would-be daughter – as David Farrell Krell tells it: “spirit can only have sons” (Krell, *Son of Spirit*, ix), either legitimate like Immanuel and Karl, or illegitimate, like Ludwig – inherit from father Hegel? Would this “daughter” even be so lucky (or so doomed) as to be visited by the father’s ambiguous ghost, to be blessed (or cursed) with the apparition that starts it all (see Derrida, *SM*, pg. 2)? If these questions are themselves so difficult, who on earth can “she” even be, reading the tradition? And who are all the “she’s”, together, attempting to read philosophy, the one’s, human and otherwise, who are not even “yet” *illegitimate* inheritors of the tradition(s)?

4. This is how Stephen Houlgate calls such scholars in his article “Hegel’s Logic”, in the 2009 *Cambridge Companion to Hegel and Nineteenth Century Philosophy* (Houlgate, “Hegel’s Logic”, 111). Though isn’t it *friends* who are in a position to inflict the most damage? As Hegel remarks in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Nature*: “it (the *Philosophy of Nature*) has been brought low not so much by its opponents as by its friends” (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 1, Introduction, Z). But maybe, having brought the *Philosophy of Nature* into disgrace, these friends (of the *Philosophy of Nature*) are not genuine friends. Is Hegel calling Schelling and company “friends” in order to show them up as even worse “enemies”? Who, then, is a friend of the *Philosophy of Nature*? Who is a friend of Hegel’s? (Also see Derrida’s *Politics of Friendship* on the question of friendship).

5. “Speculative logic is dead” reads almost like a prohibition: “speculative logic is unthinkable except as dead, so don’t think or act as if speculative logic is anything other than dead”. This might be an occasion to cite the opening epitaph – or rather epigraph – of *Hegel’s Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?*, edited by Kimberly Hitchings and Tuija Pulkkinen. It is an excerpt from a work by Werner Hamacher, *Pleroma – Reading in Hegel*. It reads:

But every exegesis of Hegel's writings which tries to catch hold of him and keep him risks gripping his neck and closing around him like a rope Hegel's reader becomes his gallows, his sarcophagus: his reading becomes a sepulchre of stone on Hegel's tomb (Hamacher quoted in Hegel's *Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?* Edited by Kimberly Hutchings and Tuija Pulkkinen, pg. 1).

Would I be burying Wood if I suggested that in his pronouncement "speculative logic is dead" he were burying (one or many) Hegel(s)? Also, a specter is lurking here, (one of) the specter(s) of Jacques Derrida who speaks of the attempt to be over and done with the remains of the other (thinker) by "ontologizing" his (mostly "his") remains: "mourning...consists always in attempting to ontologize remains, to make them present, in the first place by *identifying* the bodily remains and by *localizing* the dead" (original emphasis) (Derrida, *SM*, pg. 9). Might one imagine Wood as saying (am I now *ventriloquizing* Wood's remains?): "Here lies Hegel's speculative logic, dead at the hands of the new (logical: JP) theory (which: JP) was built upon precisely those features of traditional logic that Hegel thought most dispensable" (Wood, Hegel's Ethical Thought, 4-5). Let's carry on."

6. Is Burbidge then an *embarrassed* friend, distancing himself like Wood from the more extreme moments of Hegel's philosophy? What sort of friend is an *embarrassed* friend, a friend who takes his distance even in (carefully) maintaining his association?

7. Beiser's position is discussed in the Introduction to Hutchings and Pulkkinen's edited volume, *Hegel's Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?*.

8. I have in mind, in Plato's *Apology*, Socrates' pleas to the jury, urging them to "listen" for the truth in his speech rather than to "cry out at what I say" (Plato, *Apology*, pg. 35, 30c). Indeed, the stakes are rather high in Socrates' trial: the jury, refusing to listen to what Socrates is saying through his speech, sentences him to death so that the Athenians might continue to "sleep on for the rest of" their days (31a).

9. Certainly, Hegel himself dreamt of different kinds of interlocutors/readers/listeners. In the second Preface to the *Science of Logic*, Hegel refers to his writing as a "plastic discourse" which "requires a plasticity of sense also in hearing and understanding" (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 20, 2<sup>nd</sup> Preface, 21.18). He continues:

...but youths and men (indeed, he does not anticipate women and others reading and listening: JP) of such a temper who would calmly suppress their own reflections and opinions in which original thought is so impatient to manifest itself, such listeners attentive to the facts as Plato portrayed them, could hardly be imagined in a modern dialogue; and even less could one

count on readers of a similar disposition. On the contrary, all too often and all too vehemently have I been confronted by opponents incapable of the simple consideration that their opinions and objections imply categories which are presuppositions and themselves in need of being criticized first before they are put to use (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 20, 2<sup>nd</sup> Preface, 21.18).

Of course it is offensive, even grating, to our ears today to hear, perhaps without really hearing, that our independence of thinking and our own cleverness count for nothing. We are suspicious of being told to “calmly suppress [our]...own reflections and opinions” so that we might instead listen to the matter itself, *die Sache selbst*. But what if we needed to listen quietly to our interlocutor, to Hegel, precisely in order to be more open? To listen more carefully for the sake of a more robust, even a more “honest” critical stance, and beyond that? As Houlgate points out (Houlgate, “Hegel’s Logic”, 126), there is something sometimes “Heideggerian” about Hegel’s way. The passage just quoted is perhaps re-echoed in spirit in Heidegger’s 1962 *On Time and Being* (where, listening or not, Heidegger takes issue with Hegel’s treatment of being in the *Science of Logic*). There, Heidegger reflects that the point of listening or reading is not to translate everything into propositional, argumentative form, but rather to “follow the movement of showing”. This is a “middle-voiced” gesture akin to that of Hegel’s in his letting the categories unfold out of the dialectic of pure thought (Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, pg. 2). Heidegger says: “Let me give a little hint on how to listen. The point is not to listen to a series of propositions, but rather to follow the movement of showing” (Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, pg. 2 ).

10. In the upcoming chapters, I will provide more evidence for this (laughable?) statement.

11. To be clear, this question pertains only to the explicitly feminist works scholars have written on Hegel, not other works they might have written which may or may not work on the logic texts. For example, Alison Stone has written on feminist topics in Hegel, and she has dealt with Hegel’s *Science of Logic* in her work on the *Philosophy of Nature*. But she does not take an explicitly feminist stand in relation to the logic, which is the question at issue right now.

12. These are *Feminist Interpretations of G.W.F. Hegel* (edited by Mills and published in 1996) and *Hegel’s Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?* (Edited by Hutchings and Pulkkinen and published in 2010).

13. In his translation of the *Encyclopedia Logic* Wallace renders *die Geschlechtsdifferenz* as “the Affinity of the Sexes.” This is odd and rather misleading. I will refer to *Geschlechtsdifferenz* as “sexual difference” in English, although this too does not convey the resonances of the German (*das Geschlecht* can mean sex, gender, race, and generation). “Sexual difference” has the further disadvantage of recalling the so-called “sexual difference” branch of feminism – the disadvantage because it would be misleading to give the impression that Hegel

was thinking *la difference sexuelle, avant la lettre* (and yet since I am in conversation with contemporary feminists, the resonance is not without fortune). The advantage of the translation “sexual difference” as opposed to “the affinity of the sexes” is simple: it marks the *difference* in *die Geschlechtsdifferenz* (whence Wallace’s “affinity”?).

14. Especially since “the proof is in the pudding” is an English saying, and especially since Hegel was often rather ruffled by the English (take, for example, the Englishman Isaac Newton whose theories he famously derides in the *Philosophy of Nature*; or take his eye-rolling remarks on the contemporary English notion of “philosophy”, which includes the preservation of hair in the face of male balding patterns [Hegel, *EL*, pg. 11, Introduction, Paragraph 7, footnote 1]), it is not clear Hegel would approve of this summary of his conception of scientific proof. This is not to mention further that “the proof is in the pudding” is an instance of mere picture-thinking, or representational thinking for Hegel (another reason he might scoff at it). However, a segment on National Public Radio (NPR) from August 2012 explains that the original saying was not “the proof is in the pudding”, but rather “the proof of the pudding is in the *eating*” (my emphasis) (<http://www.npr.org/2012/08/24/159975466/corrections-and-comments-to-stories>). Surely Hegel would be more comfortable with this version. Hegel’s tendency to compare the movement of thought (precisely the movement and content of speculative logic) to that of consumption is famous:

...thinking is always the negation of what we have immediately before us...we may be said to owe eating to the means of nourishment, so long as we can have no eating without them. If we take this view, eating is certainly represented as ungrateful: it devours that to which it owes itself. Thinking, upon this view of its action, is equally ungrateful (*Das Denken ist in diesem Sinne nicht weniger undankbar*) (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 17, Introduction, Paragraph 12).

The movement of consuming, unthankful (*undankbar*) thinking is exhibited in the logic texts along with the scientific proof of the logic, which is the very same thing as the former: the proof is certainly in the eating/thinking. But what about the pudding? NPR commentators also tell us that “pudding” was originally an English sausage ground in part from animal intestines. Hegel might very well prefer sausage to dessert, and he certainly admires animal entrails, specifically intestines (see, for example, his remarks on animal digestion in *Philosophy of Nature*, the *Zusatz* to Paragraph 365). Perhaps Hegel would have eased up on Newton, that mere minion of the abstract Understanding, if they could have shared an English sausage between them. It would have in any case *proven much*.

15. Hegel writes: “...the necessity of the connectedness and the immanent emergence of distinctions must be found in the treatment of the fact itself, for it falls within the concept’s own progressive determination” (Hegel, *SL*, Introduction, pg. 34, 21.39). In other words, all material or

content generated from out of the fact itself (*Sache selbst*) – the distinctions, concepts, laws, and rules of thought - will exhibit internal connectedness and will be sufficient unto itself. The science of logic only requires its own “progressive determination” in order to advance.

16. One might here interject to remind us that in his *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant already accomplished the aforementioned tasks. Indeed, in her incisive book *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, Beatrice Longuenesse devotes considerable resources to demonstrate how Kant’s *metaphysical* deduction (often dismissed) is successful (and needs to be successful) in establishing the *a priori* categories of the understanding, taking the table for the logical functions of judging as the guiding thread and starting point. Hegel, however, would simply beg to differ: “Kant, it is well known, did not put himself to much trouble in discovering the categories” (“*Bekanntlich hat es die Kantische Philosophie sich mit der Auffindung der Kategorien sehr bequemen gemacht*”) (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 68, Paragraph 42). Of course, Hegel’s issue with Kant’s deduction of the categories and his view on the finitude of the categories is more complicated than that. For example, Hegel also took issue with Kant’s one-sided subjective approach towards the categories. But Hegel’s critique of Kant’s first *Critique* is a vast territory we won’t be exploring just now.

17. In his article “Hegel’s Logic”, and in his engaging book *The Opening of Hegel’s Logic*, Stephen Houlgate argues that logic as a presuppositionless science means that “anyone can embark on the study of ontological logic...provided he or she is willing to suspend all assumptions about thought and being, start from scratch, and let the indeterminate thought of being unfold” (Houlgate, *The Opening of Hegel’s Logic*, pg. 144). This implies that the *Phenomenology* is an inessential moment in the system. Indeed, Houlgate says of the *Phenomenology* that it “does not provide the only possible route into speculative philosophy. Those who are prepared to suspend their ordinary certainties can bypass the *Phenomenology* and proceed directly to the *Logic*” (146). Since this question by itself is one of considerable proportions, I will not venture into it too far right now. Suffice it to say that I take issue with Houlgate’s reading. Hegel certainly claims that the *Logic* is a presuppositionless science. But he also claims that

The concept of pure science and its deduction is therefore presupposed in the present work in so far as the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is nothing other than that deduction. Absolute knowledge is the truth of all the modes of consciousness because, as the course of the *Phenomenology* brought out, it is only in absolute knowledge that the separation of the *subject matter* from the *certainty of itself* is completely resolved: truth has become equal to certainty and this certainty to truth (original emphasis) (Hegel, *SL*, Introduction, pg. 29, 21.33).

Not only does the *Logic* presuppose the *Phenomenology* in its presupposition of the “concept of pure science”, but more specifically in that truth and certainty have been reconciled: it is from this standpoint that the *Logic* commences, the standpoint of science, the necessity of

which was demonstrated by the *Phenomenology*. This is not to imply that Houlgate is wrong in insisting that the *Logic* is a presuppositionless science. Rather, I want to suggest (and *merely* suggest here) that both of these can be true for Hegel: that the concept of science arrived at by the *Phenomenology* is presupposed by the *Logic*, and that the *Logic* makes an absolute beginning and is a presuppositionless science. Given Hegel's understanding of mediation and immediacy, it would not be so far-fetched to think these both to be true. Whatever we might think of the *Phenomenology*, Hegel seems to believe in the Introduction to the *Science of Logic* that the *Phenomenology* was not dispensable, even if it does not quite belong to the system of philosophy proper.

18. The other sciences to which Hegel refers in this passage are not the *Philosophy of Nature* and the *Philosophy of Mind*, but rather empirical sciences such as anthropology or psychology. More on this in the next chapter.

19. Stephen Houlgate's article, "Hegel's Logic", contains a nicely succinct summary of Hegel's possible response to the Kantian who contends that Hegel abandons the spirit of the critique and the critical enterprise. Houlgate argues, in my opinion convincingly, that Hegel is actually more modest than Kant in the beginning he makes with logic (Houlgate, "Hegel's Logic", 121).

20. Again, since it is not my aim to become embroiled in the rather stimulating disputes regarding Hegel's alleged ontological or metaphysical ambitions after Kant with and between Kantians or with and between more "cautious" Hegelians, I simply refer the reader to Stephen Houlgate's work on this topic. He tends to oversimplify Kant's work on transcendental logic (Houlgate thinks the metaphysical deduction of the categories is "clear and logical" and, it would seem, that there's nothing more to be said on that topic [Houlgate, "Hegel's Logic", 116]). In contrast refer to *Kant and the Capacity to Judge*, by Longuenesse, which gives a much *longer* treatment of Kant's metaphysical deduction). Nevertheless, Houlgate's article contains, from a Hegelian standpoint, a brief and elucidating critique of Kant's notion that without *a priori* sensibility the best thought by itself can do is attest to the mere possibility of things. Houlgate points out that for Hegel "possibility" is a "complex concept" with much already built into it, and that in beginning with mere possibility Kant is already assuming too much (Houlgate, "Hegel's Logic", 121).

21. Karen Ng's research concentrates on logical form as *living* form. See her article, "Life, Self-Consciousness, Negativity: Understanding Hegel's Speculative Identity Thesis" in the forthcoming volume edited by Thomas Khurana, *The Freedom of Life: Hegelian Perspectives*.



22. Simply put, for Kant the task of the metaphysical deduction is to legitimately deduce the categories, to show that they belong to the understanding and to show which ones they are. The transcendental deduction(s) is to show that the categories actually have application.

23. Although it is most accurate to say (see below) that the system of logic begins moving by way of transition, continues by way of reflection, and culminates by way of development, which for Hegel is a circular movement.

24. I am alluding to Hegel's famous description of philosophy as a system of circles at the beginning of the *Encyclopedia Logic*:

Each of the parts of philosophy is a philosophical whole, a circle rounded and complete in itself. In each of those parts, however, the philosophical Idea is found in a particular specificity or medium. The single circle because it is a real totality, bursts through the limits imposed by its special medium, and gives rise to a wider circle. The whole of philosophy in this way resembles a circle of circles. The Idea appears in each single circle, but, at the same time, the whole Idea is constituted by the system of these peculiar phases, and each is a necessary member of the organization (Hegel, EL, pg. 20, Paragraph 15).

The passage is as vague as it is helpful. In it, we gather that philosophy moves in circles and, finally, comes to encircle itself as the circle of circles. It is also apparent that the Idea is to be found in all the circles of philosophy (logic, nature, spirit), including the circle of circles (philosophy as a whole system), but in each single circle the Idea appears in a specific "medium" (the medium of pure thought in the logic, the medium of nature in nature, and the medium of spirit in spirit). Each of these media limits the Idea, which must break through its limits in order to encompass all the media and all the circles at the end of the day. In this passage, then, Hegel is describing what we call the "transitions" between the "parts" of his system in the breaking out of the idea from one circle into a wider, more encompassing one. Of course this passage does not do much to elucidate the need for the out-breaking of circles; it does not shed light on the specific limitations of each medium of the Idea, or on why the Idea is such that it must appear in different media.

25. Later on in the prefatory remarks to the Doctrine of the Concept, Hegel explicitly differentiates philosophy from narrative. It's worth quoting the entire passage.

...the prevailing fundamental misunderstanding is that the natural principle, or the *starting point* in the *natural* development or the *history* of an individual in the process of self-formation, is regarded as the *truth* and *conceptually the first*. Intuition or being are no doubt first in the order of nature, or are the condition for the concept, but they are not for all that the unconditioned in and

for itself; on the contrary, in the concept their reality is sublated and, consequently, so is also the reflective shine that they had of being the conditioning reality. If it is not the *truth* which is at issue but only *narration*, as it is the case in pictorial and phenomenal thinking, then we might as well stay with the story that we begin with feelings and intuitions, and that the understanding then abstracts a universal or an abstraction from their manifold, for which purpose it quite understandably needs a substrate for these feelings and intuitions which, in the process of abstraction, retains for representation the same complete reality with which it first presented itself. *But philosophy ought not to be a narrative of what happens* (my emphasis), but a cognition of what is *true* in what happens, in order further to comprehend on the basis of this truth what in the narrative appears as a mere happening (original emphasis except where marked otherwise) (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 519, 12.21-22).

In the context of the above discussion about the move from being to essence to the concept, this passage reinforces the way in which, for example, being as the starting point is not *first*, philosophically speaking. As that which “resembles a circle of circles” (Hegel, *EL*, pg. 20, Paragraph 15), philosophy is not conditioned by its starting-point. While from the perspective of the starting-point it is as if the true presuppositionless beginning *is* that very starting-point, philosophy actually *attains to* its presuppositionlessness in sublating its starting-point, becoming absolutely unconditioned and eternal. If philosophy did not return into itself it would not be concerned with truth. Instead, it would remain mere narrative which, for Hegel, is to bad infinity what the genuine infinite is to philosophy.

It is important to note that although philosophical proof is not narrative for Hegel, the emergence of philosophy can be explained (narrated) empirically, historically, with a *story*. It is the case, however, that philosophy itself absorbs its empirical conditions of possibility in coming into its own. In other words, the conceptual development of philosophy assumes and sublates its historical origins and the possibility for narrative about those origins. For Hegel, no “story” can oppose itself to the system of speculative science since this system is first not itself a story, and, second, the system subsumes the possibility for storytelling within it. This is why Hegel is vehemently opposed to “external” critique (for example, see Hegel, *SL*, pg. 512, 12.14-15): the standpoint of philosophy is “higher” than that of narrative and therefore encompasses and accounts for narrative; it cannot, therefore, be opposed *by* narrative.

While it is crucial to keep in mind that Hegel is not *narrating* his system (many commentators seem to make this mistake), I am not foreclosing the question, whether Hegel is, after all, telling a story in exhibiting the system of philosophical science. But there is a difference between assuming that Hegel is narrating the system without question, on the one hand, and, on the other, demonstrating that despite his explicit intentions, Hegel is in fact narrating the system. To demonstrate by way of “internal” critique that Hegel’s thought admits of something like

“external” critique is in my view more powerful than to oppose Hegel’s standpoint right from the start with an arbitrarily selected “external” set of criteria (and in this way I am in agreement with Hegel himself). It is more faithful to betray a thinker within that thinker’s own conceptual space; it is perhaps more ethical to be faithful to a thinker in betraying the thinker than it is to be faithful in (professed) pure faithfulness.

26. In her book, *Petrified Intelligence: Nature in Hegel’s Philosophy*, Alison Stone notes how Hegel sometimes speaks of his system as if it were proceeding linearly and at other times as if it exhibited “a more complex and circuitous structure” (Stone, *Petrified Intelligence*, pg. 103). She favors the “circuitous” reading of Hegel’s philosophy, specifically as that reading applies to the notorious “transition” movements: “Hegel gets into...problems insofar as he describes and structures his system in a linear fashion...” (103). I have tried to demonstrate here, albeit briefly, that both readings are correct to an extent, while Stone seems to think Hegel holds both views at different times in an untenable way. On my reading, Hegel’s system begins as if it were proceeding “linearly”, “sequentially”, but in complex ways it reveals itself to have been moving in a circle all along. Hegel is aware of this. The goal is to make the eternal “movement” of the circle explicit.

27. From the *Zusatz* to Paragraph 161 in the *Encyclopedia Logic*:

Transition into something else is the dialectical process within the range of Being: reflection (bringing something else into light), in the range of Essence. The movement of the Notion is development: by which that only is explicit which is already implicitly present. In the world of nature it is organic life that corresponds to the grade of the notion...(Hegel, *EL*, pg. 224, Paragraph 161, *Zusatz*).

The reference to organic nature is becoming increasingly important, as we go over to the *Philosophy of Nature*.

28. Again in *Petrified Intelligence*, Stone writes:

on the nonlinear view the *Logic* only describes these (logical: JP) forms in abstraction from the material world. Its underlying presupposition is that these forms cannot really exist unaccompanied by, or prior to, the material world, but only as instantiated in the material structures of nature and mind. Nonetheless, the *Logic* describes these forms in abstraction – artificial isolation – from the concrete instantiations in which they are, in fact, always found (Stone, *Petrified Intelligence*, pg. 104).

I have endeavored to show in this chapter that for Hegel what Stone calls the “forms” of logic are not abstract, but rather concrete. Logic has its own concrete material. That material is, however, not empirical material, and it is not (yet) the material of nature and mind. Stone seems to me to be committing the error described above in the passage in which Hegel insists that whoever is caught up in thinking “material” in the “everyday” way will inevitably find the determinations of the logic in “artificial isolation”, abstracted from the “real” material (of nature and spirit, for example). I also do not agree with Stone’s related contention that the philosophy of nature is somehow prior to speculative logic. If Stone’s project is to point out the need to revivify and re-enchant nature in Hegel and beyond, in terms of Hegel’s own project I would point out that Hegel believes the philosophy of nature will remain hopelessly “petrified” unless logic, the “all-animating soul” of the sciences, is properly presupposed by these further sciences (of nature and of spirit). Logic, not nature by itself, is the animating principle for Hegel. Hegel is very clear that at least at the naive, would-be “presuppositionless” beginning to science, bare, indeterminate being, not *a particular* (natural) being, must be the starting-point. I am very sympathetic to Stone’s project, but I disagree with Stone’s reading of Hegel on these and other points. I would, however, reframe Stone’s concern in the above passage, because it raises some important questions, for example: why is the “medium” in which the Idea subsists in logic ultimately inadequate to the Idea, and how does the medium of nature at least proximately resolve the inadequacy of the Idea in the medium of pure thought?

29. In closing this chapter and moving to the next, a most glaring omission on my part is a discussion of what Hegel sometimes denies as being a “transition” (Übergang) between logic and nature (Hegel, *SL*, pg. 752, 12.253). I found that such a discussion is, first of all, not essential to the progress of the subsequent chapters: I have already established how I am understanding the relationship between logical determinations and the distinctions made in nature without having to decide just how the logic goes over (or doesn’t quite “go over” or “transition”) to the nature. But, more importantly, I don’t have anything original to say about this so-called “transition” yet. I am working on it, but I did not want to rush an interpretation. To me at least and to my knowledge, this is one of the most difficult things to understand in Hegel: why and how the Idea externalizes itself in the medium of nature. In his essay (originally an address) “Hegel’s Nature”, Donald Phillip Verene admits to being most troubled by the heart of this “transition” too. He writes “I wish to understand one sentence in Hegel’s corpus. It is a sentence that has bothered me since I first read it thirty-four years ago...” (Verene, “Hegel’s Nature”, pg. 212). Verene proceeds to quote from the troubling section at issue at the moment. Verene’s puzzlement is no excuse to avoid interpretation. In my revision, I hope to include such an interpretation. I simply didn’t want to “fake it” and rush it for now, and, like I said, an interpretation of this passage did not seem necessary for moving forward. I will take this note out in my “final” revision, and hopefully replace this hesitation with at least an initial interpretation of the difficult passage. This note is then a placeholder for the time being.

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## IV. Philosophy of Nature: The Ambiguous Sex Life of the Plant

### Friends and Foes of the *Philosophy of Nature*

“G.W.F. Hegel’s *Philosophy of Nature*, which forms the second part of his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* (1817, 1827, 1830), has long been the object of ridicule and disdain”: so begins Stephen Houlgate’s introduction to the edited volume, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Nature* (Houlgate, Introduction, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Nature*, pg. xi.). Meanwhile, the first essay in that same volume, by William Maker, starts on a funereal note: “If we speak of ‘what is living and what is dead’ in Hegel, it is probably safe to say that nowadays, nothing is more dead than Hegel’s philosophy of nature” (Maker, “The Very Idea of the Idea of Nature, or Why Hegel is Not an Idealist”, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Nature*, pg. 1)<sup>1</sup>. Maker concludes that Hegel’s *Philosophy of Nature* has been given a “premature burial” and that the death certificate ought to be rescinded (pg. 1). And on the first page of the Introduction to her book, *Petrified Intelligence: Nature in Hegel’s Philosophy*, Alison Stone remarks, “[e]ver since its initial publication in outline form in 1817, Hegel’s philosophy of nature has been dismissed, rejected, and ridiculed by most philosophers” (Stone, *Petrified Intelligence*, pg. xi.). One can then only imagine the scandal and the subsequent declarations of philosophical death following Hegel’s 1801 *Habilitation* thesis in which, in his early thirties (hardly yet a man of the world; see the following chapter), he demonstrates “*a priori* that there could only be seven planets<sup>2</sup>” (the *Habilitation* being just one reason Hegel has acquired such a bad reputation with the proponents of empirical science) (Houlgate, Introduction, *Hegel and the Philosophy of Nature*, pg. xi.).

Maybe none of these reactions are particularly surprising, especially given that the *Philosophy of Nature* starts off with Hegel reflecting on the science’s “lifeless” and ridiculous reputation (of course he proceeds to blame this reputation on his perverted peers, most notably Schelling) (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 1, Introduction, *Zusatz*): “It can be said perhaps that in our time, philosophy does not enjoy any special favour and liking...But this much may be assumed *without hesitation* as correct, that the *Philosophy of Nature* in particular is in considerable disfavour” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 1, Introduction, *Zusatz*). The general reactions in the literature are also unsurprising, of course, because of the awfully similar reactions (almost *verbatim*) to the status of Hegel’s speculative logic<sup>3</sup>.

Those “friends” of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Nature* in the mainstream literature include Michael John Petry, whose painstaking commentary on Hegel’s *Philosophy of Nature* helped to restore whatever it had of a good reputation in the 1970s and, more recently, Stephen Houlgate (also a “friend” of Hegel’s logic). Alison Stone and Elaine Miller are also important scholars of



Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*, and we will consider their work in detail – both in the next chapter, linking nature to spirit. Both these scholars write from a feminist standpoint, but each also writes on matters beyond the immediate scope of feminist concern in respect to the *Philosophy of Nature*.

Nevertheless, because of its “deader than dead” reputation, the *Philosophy of Nature* is relatively ignored in Hegel scholarship. For example, the 1993 edition of the *Cambridge Companion to Hegel* covers Hegel's philosophy from ethics, to logic, to aesthetics, to religion and method. It even features articles addressing the relationship between Hegel's philosophy and Marxism, Hegel and analytic philosophy – but no article in that edition addresses Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*. In that way, the *Cambridge Companion* is a rather *unfriendly* companion – at least to those who notice the slight in the first place. The 2009 *Cambridge Companion* is a little friendlier to the *Philosophy of Nature*. It includes an article by Kenneth R. Westphal which is, however, a little less concerned with the philosophical status of Hegel's text in terms of his overall project, and a little more concerned to defend Hegel against accusations of charlatanry in relation to the sciences (Westphal, “Philosophizing about Nature: Hegel's Philosophical Project”, pg. 285).

Indeed, most of the debates in the literature surrounding Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* focus on the relationship between Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* and the empirical sciences. Even a flip through the sections of the *Philosophy of Nature* and a glance at its organization are enough to provoke incredulity at the author's ambition and arcane approach to the sciences. The incredulous feelings are only heightened when the reader actually begins to study the text, since Hegel seems to be privileging a logical<sup>4</sup> as opposed to an empirical approach to natural science. Stone nicely summarizes the problem preoccupying scholars:

The reason so many readers have given the *Philosophy of Nature* short shrift is that they have perceived it to present a speculative, *a priori*, theory of the natural world that competes with standard scientific accounts. Most of Hegel's readers agree that this presupposes an absurdly inflated assessment of the powers of pure *a priori* reasoning, which is in reality capable of generating only a tissue of fantastic imaginings about nature (an allegation Hegel levels against his own contemporaries: JP), as Hegel was inevitably left with (Stone, *Petrified Intelligence*, pg. xii.).

Stone herself guides Hegel scholarship in new directions in respect to Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature* (she contends that his *Nature* has important implications for ethics and environmentalism). But in this book she sketches her positions mostly in relation to the main debate in the literature, over Hegel's alleged hyper-rationalism (she furthers what she calls a “strong *a priori*” account of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*) (Stone, *Petrified Intelligence*, pg. 9).

Assessing Hegel's grasp on the science of his day and measuring his understanding against contemporary understanding of scientific phenomena is interesting (and it is the place most scholars seem to be talking), but it seems to miss the point of Hegel's *Nature* which, in my view, is more philosophical than scientific. Furthermore, while it is indeed philosophically relevant to demonstrate the scope and implications of Hegel's *a priori* approach, like Stone does, this will not be my primary aim in this chapter. It's not that the question of Hegel's so-called rationalism is not germane to my reading of the *Philosophy of Nature*. Rather it seems to me that in order to decide the very meaning of the debate over Hegel's "*a priorism*" (rationalism) one must first consider the status of Hegel's logic in relation to his account of nature. This I have done in part (the issue is much more complicated than I have presented) in the previous chapter. There it emerged that as the "all-animating soul of the sciences", logic gives to nature (and to spirit) the enlivening determinations which allow us to recognize the idea in natural guise amidst the literal and metaphorical flotsam in nature. And we will see momentarily how in the Introduction to the *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel carries out further the implications of the *Logic* in the *Philosophy of Nature*.

For now, let me state my own aim with the *Philosophy of Nature*, and that is to read the text with an eye towards the emergence of natural sexual difference or the natural sex relation. This happens in the third moment of the *Nature*, in the Organics, specifically, in analogical mode in plant nature and in a veritably pre-spiritual mode in the animal organism. In anticipation of a passage in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* on the education of women and plants – a passage which will be pivotal to my reading of marriage in Hegel's *Encyclopedia* – most of this chapter will be devoted to a careful reading of the plant nature.

There is something else to add to this brief sketch of the predominant scholarship on the *Philosophy of Nature*. Some scholars (for example, Houlgate) strive to give each of the parts of the *Encyclopedia* (despite their bad reputations) their equal due. But almost all Hegel scholars end up privileging one part of the *Encyclopedia* over the others, either because they decide without a hearing that the disreputable part is dead (like Allen Wood; see the previous chapter), or because they seem to have imposed another set of values or standards onto Hegel which are not quite Hegel's own (for example, Alison Stone; see note 28 in the previous chapter). In contrast, I am striving to read each part of Hegel's *Encyclopedia* with as much evenness as possible (given that I do admittedly have an "extraneous" object of interest, sexual difference, structuring my study).

### **Feminist friends and foes of the *Philosophy of Nature***

The scant number of references to the *Philosophy of Nature* in the feminist literature on Hegel is surprising, considering that philosophical accounts of "nature" have been a familiar object of feminist criticism for decades. Nevertheless, there is very little written in the English

language feminist literature on Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*. Citing again the example of the two principal volumes as indicators of the changing concerns in feminist scholarship on Hegel during the last twenty five years or so (a search through the additional literature indicates that these two volumes are not by any means unrepresentative), first, *Feminist Interpretations of G.W.F. Hegel* (1996) contains only some scattered references to the *Philosophy of Nature* in an essay by Mary O'Brien. According to O'Brien in a footnote, the *Philosophy of Nature* harbors a "more developed misogyny" which is "historicized in a romantic vision of prehistory" (O'Brien, "Man, Physiology, Fate", pg. 206). The reference is dismissive, and the claim that the

*Philosophy of Nature* constitutes a "romantic vision of prehistory" unsubstantiated. Meanwhile, *Hegel's Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?* (2010) contains one article by Alison Stone that focuses on the *Philosophy of Nature* (alongside the *Philosophy of Right*), and another by Susanna Lindberg which makes briefer and less systematic reference to the *Philosophy of Nature*.

Since Stone's approach to the *Philosophy of Nature* in her article on *Geshchlechtsdifferenz* in Hegel is similar to my own, I consider her account in greater detail in the next chapter. Also in the next chapter, I will have recourse to Elaine Miller's chapter on Hegel in her book, *The Vegetative Soul: From Philosophy of Nature to Subjectivity in the Feminine*. Miller's interests in plants and their associations with women are relevant to my project. It remains, however, as previously mentioned, that the vast majority of feminist scholarship on Hegel concentrates almost exclusively on Hegel's accounts of the family, of *human* sexual difference.

### **Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*: Metaphysics and the "so-called" empirical sciences**

Let's get situated in Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*. The book begins rather abruptly, with a series of introductory notes all of which are, of course, merely prefatory and unscientific by themselves (Hegel, *PN*, Introduction, pg. 2, *Zusatz*). Hegel quickly proposes that we determine "what Philosophy of Nature is" by separating it "off from the subject-matter with which it is contrasted" (Hegel, *PN*, Introduction, pg. 2, *Zusatz*). As it turns out, the "subject-matter" to which the Philosophy of Nature is to be contrasted is physics (*die Physik*), or the natural sciences. Hegel tells us that the Philosophy of Nature is not as far apart from physics as we might imagine.

Physics (*Die Physik*) and natural history (*Naturgeschichte*) are called empirical sciences (*empirische Wissenschaften*) *par excellence*, and they profess to belong entirely to the sphere of perception (*Warnehmung*) and experience (*Erfahrung*), and in this way to be opposed to the Philosophy of Nature (*Naturphilosophie*), i.e. to a knowledge of Nature from thought (*der Naturerkenntnis aus dem Gedanken*). The fact is, however, that the principal charge to be brought

against physics is that it contains much more thought than it admits and is aware of, and that it is better than it supposes itself to be; or if, perhaps, all thought in physics is to be counted a defect, then it is worse than it supposes itself to be. Physics and the Philosophy of Nature, therefore, are not distinguished from each other as perception and thought, but only by *the kind and manner of their thought (sondern nur durch die Art und Weise des Denkens)*; they are both a thinking apprehension of Nature (*denkende Erkenntnis der Natur*) (Hegel, *PN*, Introduction, pg. 3, *Zusatz*).

Physics and natural history profess to be and are reputed to be *purely empirical*. This is the origin of the notion that these empirical sciences are “opposed” to *Naturphilosophie*, which is in contrast, a “knowledge of Nature from thought”. So far, Hegel’s description mirrors the contemporary debates about his *Philosophy of Nature*, and the charges against it that it is an unacceptably *metaphysical* as opposed to an *empirical* approach to nature.

Hegel then turns the tables with his claim that the empirical sciences themselves harbor much more thought than is generally supposed. In other words, the empirical sciences are not purely empirical but rather smuggle in concepts, metaphysical presuppositions and everyday prejudices into their projects, thought for which the empirical sciences cannot account. Depending on one’s standpoint, the (unconscious) thought in the empirical sciences is a weakness or a strength. For Hegel, it is both.

The thought contained in the so-called empirical sciences is a weakness because this thought is *unclarified* thought, thought which cannot be thought through by the empirical sciences themselves. The thought on which the sciences unconsciously draw is not the metaphysics Hegel established in his speculative logic, but rather the confused and vulgar thinking of everyday life and of scientific life. To the extent that these sciences are not enlivened by Hegel’s properly deduced categories, they are not genuine sciences.

The strength of the thought contained in the “empirical” sciences is the very fact that it *is* thought. This thought, “prepared” by physics, awaits the intervention of *Naturphilosophie*. “The Philosophy of Nature takes up the material which physics has prepared for it empirically, at the point to which physics has brought it, and reconstitutes it, so that experience is not its final warrant and base” (Hegel, *PN*, Introduction, pg. 10, *Zusatz*). The Philosophy of Nature replaces the abstract universals which physics “prepares” with conceptually necessary determinations deduced by way of speculative logic. In plainer language, this means that the Philosophy of Nature is in the best position to comprehend what the empirical sciences think they know, because of the conceptual apparatus with which it comes equipped from speculative logic. Hegel then concludes that “[w]hat distinguishes the Philosophy of Nature from physics is, more precisely, the kind of metaphysics used by them both; for metaphysics is nothing else but the entire range of the universal determinations of thought, as it were, the diamond net (*das diamantene Netz*) into which

everything is brought and thereby first made intelligible (*verständlich*)” (Hegel, *PN*, Paragraph 246, pg. 11, *Zusatz*).

This metaphysical diamond net, “the entire range of the universal determinations of thought”, was deduced in the logic books, and without it we could not truly recognize the necessity and the genuine universality in protean (pink dolphin-infested) nature (Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*, Paragraph 246, pg. 9, *Zusatz*). In one of his more lucid moments, Hegel remarks that “in the progress of philosophical knowledge, we must not only give an account of the object *as determined by its Notion (Begriff)*, but we must also name the *empirical appearance* corresponding to it, and we must show that the appearance does, in fact, correspond to its Notion (*Begriff*)” (original emphasis) (Hegel, *PN*, Paragraph 246, pg. 6, Remark). The project in the *Philosophy of Nature* is, of course, more involved than this passage lets on, but a reading of this passage will nonetheless for our purposes put us on our way to the rest of the text. Hegel is here alluding to the circling of the philosophical systems (the “progress of philosophical knowledge”). The Idea in nature is no longer abstract and in the medium of pure thought. The Idea in nature is now in existence, in an external and foreign element. While in speculative logic, with the Idea in the medium of pure thought, the aim was to demonstrate the object in accordance with its concept (*Begriff*; above, translated as “notion”), in the *Philosophy of Nature* the aim is to properly consider what is given to us empirically and to recognize in it the conceptual, logical determinations<sup>5</sup>. The difficulty in doing this lies, of course, in the sheer variety nature presents to us. Not everything in nature will matter, for Hegel. Only that which manifests the concept counts as actual being.

If nature contains relations between the sexes (and speculative logic ostensibly tells us it does), if these relations are worthy of demonstration in the *Philosophy of Nature* then they will be shown to exhibit the thought determination of the sex relation as deduced in speculative logic. Indeed, we will come to see how the genus process of the *animal organism* (the third moment of the last part of the *Philosophy of Nature*, Organics) exhibits the thought determination of the logical genus process, as described in the previous chapter. As I’ve already hinted, however, the sex relation does not quite make its first appearance in nature in the animal organism. It rather first shows up in the plant nature, albeit as an *analogue (Analogon)* of the sex relation. The fact that plant sexual difference is not *veritable* sexual difference for Hegel is key, and I will explain why in what follows. However, that plant sexual difference is not veritable sexual difference raises the question: if the *Philosophy of Nature* only concerns itself with those appearances in nature which exhibit the conceptual determinations deduced in the logic, why then must the *Philosophy of Nature* refer to the “analogue” of sexual difference exhibited in plant nature in the first place?

To be sure, there is no conceptual determination in logic which corresponds to the “analogue” of sexual difference in plant nature. Unless, of course, we associate Hegel’s

comparison of the logical chemical relation to the natural sex relation, with the (non-)sex life of plants (see the previous chapter). Since the plant is, as we will see, an intermediate, ambiguous nature in general, between the chemical and the truly organic (the animal), it might make sense to associate with the analogue of sexual difference in the plant, the reference in the Chemism section of the logic. Coming out of this chapter I'd like to suggest that in his philosophy Hegel is unable to cope with ambiguities in sexual difference which blur the masculine-feminine distinction; his confusion with plants and with the passage in the Chemism section (see previous chapter) might be symptomatic of this inability to cope (philosophically and otherwise).

Let's return to the question just raised and towards a more general, related question: if the Philosophy of Nature is only concerned to exhibit those appearances in nature which manifest the conceptual determinations deduced in speculative logic, how are the determinations, specifically the Organic determinations, legitimated on Hegel's account? Let me unpack this question.

As I pointed out in the previous chapter, it would seem obvious that the divisions in the *Philosophy of Nature* are determined by the second section of the Doctrine of the Concept in the *Science of Logic*. The divisions of the concept in its objectivity in the *Science of Logic* are Mechanism, Chemism, and Teleology. The three primary divisions of the *Philosophy of Nature* are Mechanics, Physics (which culminates in the chemical process), and Organics (which culminates in Hegel's account of genuine teleological organism, the animal). The matter of the divisions is of course more complicated, but it is apparent that Hegel had these divisions from the *Logic* in mind in the *Philosophy of Nature*. Furthermore, as I also explained in the previous chapter, because the three divisions of the Doctrine of the Concept seem to correspond to each division of the entire *Encyclopedia*, the connection between the *Nature* and the second moment of the Doctrine of the Concept is even more plausible.

While this rough explanation of the relationship between the divisions would seem to be something very much akin to Hegel's own view of the divisions, there are some deep difficulties with this explanation. First of all, in the Philosophy of Nature, Hegel doesn't seem to make a distinction between teleology and life. Teleology as a logical determination manifests itself in the Organics section which treats life, specifically in the animal organism moment, in the *Philosophy of Nature*. In the *Science of Logic*, in contrast, teleology is the third moment of the concept in its objectivity, while life is the first moment of the concept as Idea. The relationship between the determinations in the *Logic* and those in the *Nature* becomes all the less clear.

Moreover, it is even more puzzling where Hegel gets the divisions to the Organics section of the *Philosophy of Nature* (I focus on this section in particular because this is where sexual difference appears). The divisions are the geological organism (life in its immediacy), the plant nature (the moment of particularity in life), and the animal organism (the veritable organic

subject). These divisions ought to be determined by the (logical) concept, by Hegel's lights, but they are not. Bracketing the fact that in the *Science of Logic*, "life" does not quite correspond to the so-called logical divisions of the *Nature*, recall that the three moments of life as the logical idea anticipate the three divisions of the animal organism in the *Nature*: life in its immediacy, the life process, and the genus process. Judging by the divisions of logical life, we would expect the entire section on life in the *Philosophy of Nature* to exhibit only the three moments of *animal* life. Instead, we have the geological organism and the plant nature preceding the animal organism. Even to our ears, this division does not sound too bizarre; but Hegel cannot justify his division of the Organics section on the basis of everyday familiarity with the division, nor can he justify it on the basis of some perception of external teleology (the earth is a means for the plant, the plant is a means for the animal). Hegel can only base this division, on his own account, in the determinations of the concept. It appears, however, that he does not do this. The conceptual determination corresponding to the plant nature (and that of the geological organism) is not deduced in the *Logic*. Strictly speaking then, as much as he loves a good plant metaphor (this should be problematic, in Hegel), Hegel ought not to be giving an account of the plant nature in the *Philosophy of Nature*. The plant does not manifest a moment corresponding to a conceptual determination in the *Logic* (and there seems to be no such moment in the relevant sections of the *Logic*), and therefore it should not be treated in the *Philosophy of Nature*. Rather it should be left to "fall out" of Hegel's professedly purely *rational* account of nature. He should not have to (and he should not be able to) deduce plant nature in the *Philosophy of Nature* any more than he should have to or be able to deduce the pink dolphin or Krug's pen. But he does deduce plant nature. The problem is not only about how Hegel is able to logically legitimate his account of plant nature (I don't think he can, given his writing as it is), it is also about why he felt the need to address plant nature at all, in the *Philosophy of Nature*. On Hegel's own terms, empirical reasons or historical reasons will not satisfy. I explore the implications of all of this in what follows. I now turn directly to Hegel's account of the plant.

### **Plant nature in the *Philosophy of Nature***

In *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel tracks the unfolding of nature from its initial appearance in utter asunderness and "complete abstraction" (differences without internal unity, subsisting in indifferent separation [barely if at all] in respect to one another) beginning with space and time in the Mechanics section (28 253), through the moment of particularity in the Physics in which reality acquires determinateness with difference contained within itself, to, finally, Organics, in which life appears, life being the most proximate harbinger and herald of spirit in *Philosophy of Nature*. Organics is itself divided into three moments, Geological Nature, The Plant Nature, and The Animal Organism. These three moments show life emerging in an increasingly organic unity (a unity in which differences as individual parts are, ultimately, sublated in the fiery soul of the animal, while retaining their independence in oneness; in a full-blooded [quite literally] {pg. 367,

Paragraph 354, *Zusatz*}] organism, the parts of the whole are its members held together in a mediated, subjective unity) (pg. 350, Paragraph 349).

The first moment of Organics, the geological organism, is life in-itself, merely as “immediate Idea” or “non-life” (pg. 273, Paragraph 337). From the standpoint of the plant at least, the geological organism is the ground of plant nature, while, from the standpoint of the animal, as Elaine Miller emphasizes, the plant is destined to “sacrifice itself to the higher organism and to be consumed by it” (pg.350, Paragraph 349, *Zusatz*)<sup>6</sup>.

The plant is between the geological organism and the animal organism and is in other ways a transitional, intermediary being. *Philosophy of Nature*, culminating with the emergence of the Idea into existence in the form of Life (pg.373, Paragraph 337), is at its penultimate dialectical movement with the plant. The plant is between the geometrical shape of the crystal and the “free” shape of the organism that supersedes it; it is between mineral and animal, between the Understanding, which hardly struggles to cognize the straight shapes prevalent in the merely mechanical sphere, and Reason, to which the whole *Philosophy of Nature* turns, with life, in its subjective aspect (pg. 320. Paragraph 345, *Zusatz*). Similarly, Hegel contends that the “plant’s juices” are “midway between chemical and animal matter” (the plant is, for example, bloodless) (pg. 321, Paragraph 345, *Zusatz*). The bond that holds together the fluid parts of the plant is not yet “spiritual”; “plant juices” have not yet developed beyond the stage at which chemistry and chemical analysis are adequate to their composition.

Hegel begins his section on plant nature with some general descriptive remarks. In Paragraphs 343-346 and in the corresponding *Zusätze*, Hegel not only presents an overview of plant nature from the standpoint of the plant, but he also (especially in the *Zusatz* to Paragraph 344) anticipates the standpoint of the animal organism by expounding the nature of the plant with reference to the animal. In this way, throughout this section, I with Hegel anticipate the animal organism. All but one (349) of the remaining paragraphs in this section (346a-348) detail three processes peculiar to the plant: the process of formation (346a), the process of assimilation (347), and the genus-process (348). Hegel remarks that here, as in other aspects of the vegetable organism, these processes have not yet attained to the separation, distinction, and independence from one another they achieve in the animal organism: “these processes are not so distinguished as they are in the animal, but coincide” (pg. 322, Paragraph 346, *Zusatz*). The hazy overlap of these processes is “the source of the difficulty in expounding the nature of the vegetable organism” (pg. 322, Paragraph 346, *Zusatz*).

While in general, as the *Philosophy of Nature* unfolds, the Understanding finds itself less and less at home in Nature, the emergence of plant being is the most acute moment of this un-homeliness in the text: while with the plant, life comes into existence most properly for the



first time and the Understanding all the more falters in its ability to comprehend this being, on the other hand, the genuine transition to Reason is yet to come with Nature's destruction or

liberation at the completion of the explication of the animal, and so the task of comprehending plant being cannot easily be handed off to Reason (pg.444, Paragraph 376, *Zusatz*). It is because the plant is in general between the chemical and the animal, between the geometrical and free shape, and between Understanding and Reason that its nature is elusive.

"The plant" is "subjective vitality" in its immediacy (pg. 303, Paragraph 343). Unlike the geological organism from which in one sense it proceeds, the plant *lives* (pg. 273, Paragraph 337), but unlike the animal organism, plant being is not (yet) subjectivity proper and is not the "veritable organism" that is the animal. This is because "the process whereby the plant differentiates itself into distinct parts and sustains itself, is one in which it comes forth from itself and falls apart into a number of individuals, the whole plant being rather the basis for these individuals than a subjective unity of members; the part – bud, branch, and so on, is also the whole plant" (pg. 303, Paragraph 343). In coming forth from itself, the plant does not return into itself from out of itself as does the animal organism. It instead merely multiplies its parts which are not, strictly speaking, members of an organic whole, but are rather themselves only additional individuals. Plant nature has not developed genuine organs which would be both wholly pervaded by life (pg. 300, Paragraph 342, *Zusatz*) and able to subsist in unity in mutual independence. Instead, plant "parts" can indifferently pass over into one another: the leaf in particular seems to harbor all other forms, parts, or stages of the whole plant (pg. 316, Paragraph 345, *Zusatz*). For example, the heart of an animal is not interchangeable with its intestines. But plant a tree upside down and its branches will become roots while its upended roots will grow into branches. Hegel does not consider the latter an "advantage" of the plant. Rather, it is a defective characteristic of plant being (reminiscent of the way dioecious plants switch sex; see below), one which must be superseded in the form of the animal organism. Loosely speaking, it is as if the plant cannot decide definitively, once and for all what it is, and Hegel neither lauds nor rests with this vegetative ambivalence (and he does so even less when it comes to the ambiguity of plant "sexual difference").

Hegel habitually compares plant life to the life of human infants. Indeed, in the "Anthropology" section of *Philosophy of Mind* he analogizes the life of the child in the womb to life in a vegetable state (see the next chapter). In *Philosophy of Nature*, I cite two of these passages.

First, in the *Zusatz* to Paragraph 343, Hegel states, "the plant, as the first self-subsistent subject that still has its origin in immediacy, is, however, the feeble, infantile life that has not yet developed within itself the moment of difference" (pg. 304, Paragraph 343, *Zusatz*). The plant

itself does not develop “the moment of difference” within itself (it does not harbor genuine organs). Instead, the “moment of difference” comes forth with the transition to the animal, or the “sacrifice” of the plant to this “higher organism” (pg. 350, Paragraph 349, *Zusatz*). Hegel can only speak of the plant as being “infantile life that has not yet developed within itself the moment of difference” by anticipating the animal organism, which does in fact contain the “moment of difference” (particularly the moment of *sexual* difference) the plant lacks. Similarly, the plant is “feeble” because its subjective vitality lacks the power to hold together in unity the different members of the plant which, as mentioned, are not quite members but are rather only parts which have no independent identity of their own.

Secondly, in Hegel’s description of the potent seed lodged in the earth, there is another important analogizing of plant life to infant (human) life:

This hiding of the seed in the earth (*Dies Bergen des Samenkorns in die Erde*) is therefore a mystical, magical act (*mystische, mahische Handlung*) which signifies that in it there are secret forces (*geheime Kräfte*) which are still slumbering, that, in truth, the seed is something quite other than what it is as it lies there: just as the infant (*das Kind*) (note the neuter noun: JP) is not only this helpless human shape which gives no indication of Reason, but is in itself the power of Reason (*die Kraft der Vernunft*), something quite other than this creature which cannot speak or perform any rational action; and baptism is precisely this solemn recognition of fellowship in the realm of spirits. The magician (*Der Magier*) who endows this seed, which I crush in my hand, with quite another significance – he for whom a rusty lamp is a mighty spirit (*mächtiger Geist*) – this magician is the Notion of Nature (*Begriff der Natur*); the seed is the power (*das Korn ist die Macht*) which conjures the earth to serve it with *its* power (original emphasis from the English translation) (pg. 323, Paragraph 346a, *Zusatz*).

In this passage, Hegel stresses that though the “helpless human shape” of *das Kind* appears utterly bereft of any rational capacity or feature, still, like the seed, the infant is not all it appears. The infant (as I will explain further in my exegesis of “the ages of man”; see below) already harbors within itself the power to overcome its merely implicit form and to grow to achieve its full maturity. Through the ceremony of baptism, the infant is acknowledged, not in his immediate, fettered and feeble state, but rather as what he has the potential to become (what he already is in himself). Insofar as the human infant is (implicitly) a rational being, he belongs in fellowship with other rational beings, and baptism recognizes this tacit fellowship. It is as if baptism protects the merely implicit status of the infant as (potential) rational being by forestalling attempts in the meantime to treat the infant as if it were only ever what it is in itself, as if it were *only* ever like a feeble plant. Baptism admits the infant into community with its spiritual fellows before it can *actually* enter into this community. The seed apparently does not require baptism.

This observation is not entirely facetious because, curiously, Hegel also analogizes plants to men in society with one another: “In the plant, therefore, the body with its members is not yet the objectivity of the soul; the plant is not yet objective to itself. Therefore for the plant, the unity is something external, just as the process of the organism falls outside of it; and this outer, physical self of the plant is light towards which it strives, in the same way that man seeks man” (pg. 306, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). This analogy is misleading.

Because the plant does not make a veritable return into itself (as does the animal, from the standpoint of Nature) but rather grows by reaching outwards from itself in a mere increase of its being, it is not directly in “community” with other plants. The plant does not strive towards other plants because its unity is not within itself but is rather in light, in the sun, which is something external to it. In contrast, men seek other men directly (for example, in civil society), not through an external godlike source. Men seek recognition in other men because not only, unlike the plant, are men *selves*, but they are also self-conscious (in this way, men supersede the natural standpoint).

Nevertheless, on this analogy it would seem that since plants are indirectly together in a sun-community, there would then be an analogue of baptism – a baptism which would by way of anticipation acknowledge seeds as in implicit (and indirect) sun-community with one another. Such an analogue would serve to acknowledge the plant as more than what it immediately is – as what it will become. The absence of the baptism analogue is therefore striking. It is as if, in light of the lack of a baptism analogue, tacit membership in the sun-community of plants does not require protection “prior” to actual initiation into this community as does implicit membership in rational, human society. The sun-community of plants is a merely *immediate* community<sup>7</sup>. This is not, of course, surprising from a more comprehensive view of Hegel’s philosophy: plants, after all (and animals too), cannot be members of community in the more robust, “spiritual” sense in which human beings can because they are *unthinking*, merely natural beings. Unsurprisingly, for Hegel plants (and animals) are without right. And this renders the seedling: infant human analogy all the more asymmetrical.

Looking ahead (something Hegel himself seems to be unable to avoid), it is noteworthy for an additional reason that Hegel, in analogizing the seed to the human infant (*das Kind*), refers to baptism. As I will show and as feminists such as Mills and Ravven have well explained, membership in human community is in its strictest sense restricted to men. If, then, girls do not grow up to enter into spiritual fellowship of any kind with boys grown into men, then they need not be baptized (or their baptism cannot have the meaning it does for boy *Kinder*).

I just indicated that there is no analogue of baptism for seeds and that in this respect the analogy to human infant boys does not hold. But in the (sun)light of the fact that girls and the

feminine more generally are repeatedly associated with plants in Hegel's work<sup>8</sup>, I would suggest in a preliminary manner that an unwitting reason for Hegel's reference to baptism in the context of a complex seed-infant analogy which bears no analogue to baptism is that, now like girls (rather than like men in community with one another), plant life need not be baptized. It is then perhaps for the sake of consistency with the more or less unconscious but persistent analogization of women to plants that Hegel refrains from providing an analogue of baptism for plants, or includes a reference to human baptism when there is no plant analogue. Baby girls, like seeds, need not be baptized. Seeds, like baby girls, need not be baptized. But baby boys, unlike girls and seeds, must be baptized. With its neuter connotations, the German *das Kind* covers over this problem. In this respect, the analogy of girls to plant life seems more consistent in Hegel than the one of (boy) infants to plant life. These claims and their implications will be developed in my discussion of Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* and *Philosophy of Mind*.

To continue, Hegel in the *Zusatz* to Paragraph 344 details four characteristics of the plant in general which follow from the fact that the plant is not properly a self. I briefly recount these here.

First, because the plant is not a veritable self, because it is not self-related but is rather "negative selfhood", it is not yet a "purely non-sensuous being" (pg. 306, Paragraph alpha 344, *Zusatz*). For the plant, this means that it cannot negate and posit anew its place but is instead bound, unlike the animal, to a specific place of which it cannot rid itself (pg. 307, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). The space of the plant is still an "abstract space", and the plant cannot therefore voluntarily move<sup>9</sup> (307 *Zusatz* 344).

Secondly, the plant has an uninterrupted relationship with the "outer world", which means that the plant does not "work up" and create its environment in the way that the animal can (pg. 308, Paragraph beta 344, *Zusatz*). The elements act on the plant. The plant does not, Hegel quips, "take sips of water" (pg. 308, Paragraph beta 344, *Zusatz*).

Third, the plant has no internalized heat, because plants are "devoid of this internal inflammatory process, this interior fire which constitutes animal life" (pg. 309, Paragraph gamma 344, *Zusatz*). In contrast, the animal has its own heat, "the principle of which resides precisely only in the blood" (pg. 309, Paragraph gamma 344, *Zusatz*). This reinforces the previous reference to the fact that "plant juices" are not yet spiritual, but rather retain something more chemical than not.

Fourth and finally, Hegel contends that the plant, unlike the animal, has no feeling (pg. 309, Paragraph delta 344, *Zusatz*). This is again "a consequence of the fusion of the subjective One with the quality, the plant's own particularization" (pg. 309 Paragraph delta 344, *Zusatz*). And, conversely, because the plant has no (self-)feeling, the plant cannot confront itself (or, to put it another way,

cannot confront its fellow plants) as other(s) (a prerequisite for genuine sexual difference). The plant cannot, furthermore, because of its lack of self-feeling, “assimilate it (its other: JP) and venture into conflict with other individualities” (pg. 309 Paragraph delta 344, *Zusatz*). There is then no analogue of war amongst plants, since war (or at least its analogue) presupposes the kind of (exclusively male) self-relatedness that would enable symmetrical conflict between like self or within the (selfsame) self (so it would also seem that plants would at least need to be sexed beings in order to be able to war with one another). This is consistent with what was said above about plants living in indirect community with one another through the sun, and once again undermines the analogy of plants to men in civil society.

Hegel’s fourth point is noteworthy also because in contrast to *Philosophy of Nature*, in *Philosophy of Right* Hegel tacitly attributes feeling to plants in his discussion of women and plants.

To return to the three processes belonging to the plant, or more accurately to the threefold process of plant life, the moments of which are more indistinct than not, Hegel discusses first the process of formation, then the process of assimilation, and finally the genus-process none of which, recall, correspond to those described in their logical aspect in the *Science of Logic*.

The process of formation exhibits two sides. There is the “substantial process”, or the process’ immediate side, and then there is the self-mediated side of the process which itself contains three moments (pg. 322, Paragraph 346a). The “substantial process” is on the one hand the “immediate transformation” by the plant of “absorbed nutriment” into the fleshy matter that constitutes the “specific nature of the plant species”, and on the other hand the “immediate transformation” by the plant of the plant’s “vital sap” (which is not quite animal fluid but something more than chemical) into its so-called “organs” (pg.322, Paragraph 346a).

The first moment of the self-mediated aspect of the process is a process of diremption which itself splits up in a twofold way. There is an “outward diremption” into “root and leaf” and then an “inner diremption of the general cellular tissue” into “woody fibre” (which relates the plant directly to the outer world) and the “vital vessels” which pertains to the plant’s “internal circulation” (without, however, constituting anything as developed as the circulatory system in animals) (pg. 322, Paragraph 346a).

The second moment of the self-mediated aspect as the “preservation of the plant in this self-mediating process” is growth (pg. 322, Paragraph 346a). The plant grows “fresh formations”, the wood hardens (in bamboo, in fact, it *petrifies*, Hegel notes) and other parts also harden (pg. 322, Paragraph 346a).

The third moment of the process of formation in Hegel is “the unification (of the moments) of self-preservation” (pg. 322, Paragraph 346a). Importantly, this unification “is not a union of the individual itself but [is rather] the production of a fresh plant-individual – the bud” (pg. 322, Paragraph 346a). In other words, unlike the animal, the plant does not return into itself to develop itself internally (acquiring self-feeling and viscera, for instance), but remains in immediate relationship with the outer world: the plant grows by multiplying its members which are all immediately related to the outer world, instead of bringing them into spiritual unity with one another as veritable organs in the “inner” side of the plant.

The second process (or the second moment of the process peculiar to plant being), the process of assimilation, is “directly connected” to the previous process, the process of formation (pg. 336, Paragraph 347). By the process of assimilation, Hegel refers to the plant entering into relationship with Nature not as “individualized” but with Nature as the Elements (introduced earlier in the “Physics of the Universal Individuality” [Paragraph 281]), or at least with the processes of light, air, and water<sup>10</sup>. The relations of the plant to light, air, and water, are already implicated first in the process by which the plant dirempts itself into root and leaf (with the former, the plant reaches towards earth and water, with the latter towards light and air), while the plant’s return-into-self is a drawing of the plant further and further outside of itself, towards the sun (pg. 336, Paragraph 347).

This relation of the plant to light is not only the supposed basis of Hegel’s analogy of plants to men in civil society (and, likewise, the reason for his allusion to Schelling’s description of plants as would-be light or sun-worshipers [pg. 306, Paragraph 344]). It is also the case that the plant develops its unique inward energies by the light – its hue differentiated past neutral green, and its fragrance. The plant’s relation to light culminates in the production of the flower-bud (a manifestation of the plant’s particular as opposed to general relation to light). From one standpoint, the flower-bud is an aspect of the process of formation. But from another standpoint, it is an aspect of the third process (the forthcoming genus-process) because the flower-bud “indicates” “sexual difference” (pg. 338, Paragraph 347, *Zusatz* 1.).

Hegel writes by way of transition to the third moment of the process of plant life (the genus-process) that in the flower-bud “the plant takes hold of itself, returns into itself; the blossom itself is just this moment of return, of being-for-self, although the plant can never really develop into a self” (pg. 342, Paragraph 347, *Zusatz*). Hegel suggests that while the plant does not return into itself from the standpoint of the animal (the plant does not develop into a self), there is a sense in which the plant does return into itself because the bud and blossom arrest plant growth. The climax of the blossom is “an image of the self generated in the plant itself, which brings itself into relationship with the self”, that is, the flowering of sexual difference in plant life (pg. 342, Paragraph 347, *Zusatz*). So while plant life does not result in a veritable self even from the

standpoint of Nature, there is nonetheless an image of the self that imprints itself on plant nature, the “differentiation into [“sexual”] organs which have been compared to the genitals of the animal” (pg. 342, Paragraph 347, *Zusatz*). In this way, sexual difference or at least its image, emerges in Hegel’s *Encyclopedia*, in plant nature.

The genus-process “arrests the growth of the plant as an unrestrained sprouting from bud to bud” (pg. 348, Paragraphs 342-3). This arresting of growth marks the plant’s return into itself which, as indicated above, does not count as a veritable return into itself since the plant does not attain to selfhood. Because the plant does not achieve – as will the animal from the standpoint of Nature – a genuine return into itself, the plant “does not attain to a relationship between individuals as such but only to a difference, whose sides are not at the same time in themselves whole individuals, do not determine the whole individuality; therefore the difference, too, does not go beyond a beginning and an adumbration of the genus-process” (pg. 348, Paragraph 343).

For Hegel, since each plant is not an organic individual but is instead a living being containing many parts which are each themselves individuals, sexual difference and the genus-process (merely adumbrated in plants) do not occur between two individual plants, one male, the other female. As Hegel proceeds to explain, there are, strictly speaking, no male plants and no female plants even amongst the *Dioecia*: all plants are in a certain sense “asexual” (pg. 348, Paragraph 345, *Zusatz*). On the one hand, the genus-process of the plant in its positive significance is the plant’s positing of its parts as separate existences, and the plant’s subsequent “actualization” of these abstract moments of the plant in an internal process by which the plant posits these parts “as a unity again through contact [of the anthers and the pistil in fertilization]” (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). On the other hand however, Hegel declares that the genus-process in plants is “superfluous since the process of formation and assimilation is itself already reproduction as production of fresh individuals” (pg. 348, Paragraph 343, *Zusatz*). This last remark prompts Hegel to initially raise and respond to three questions (to which he ends up adding two more) about sexual difference in plants, questions which are “notorious” amongst his botanist contemporaries. Hegel takes these three questions as directives for his explication of the plant’s genus-process in the notes. They are, first, whether there is in fact sexual difference in plants and if so in what sense; secondly, whether impregnation occurs in plants; and, thirdly, if impregnation takes place in plants, whether impregnation is necessary.

To the first question, Hegel responds that the difference to which the plant attains “exists only as an analogue of the sexual relationship (*ein Analogon des Geschlechtsverhältnisses*)<sup>11</sup>” because “the sides of the relation are not two individuals” (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). At first what this seems to mean is that sexual difference is not a determination which is distributed between two distinct plants. There are no male plants and there are no female plants. The difference which is a mere analogue of the sexual difference exhibited between animals is a

difference *within the plant itself*, not a difference between two truly separate plant organisms. Immediately, Hegel anticipates a possible objection (ostensibly coming from the botanists' camp) to this claim. The class of plants which are called *Dioecia* are plants in which "the difference of sex occurs in such a manner that the separate sexes are distributed in two separate and distinct plants" (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). Plants like palm, hemp, and hops appear to differentiate themselves into male plants and female plants. However, even dioecious plants do not exhibit sexual difference in the most rigorous sense. While these plants are still growing, as Hegel points out, "a plant will show, for example, an early disposition to be female and yet subsequently become male" (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). It could equally happen that a plant shows an early disposition to be male and yet subsequently become female. In either case, a dioecious plant's sex is not fixed since its sexual growth is *ambiguous*. This supposedly "sexual" difference in plants Hegel describes as "only a quite partial one (only a quite partial difference: JP)" (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). "The different individuals cannot therefore be regarded as of different sexes because they have not been completely imbued with the principle of their opposition – because this does not completely pervade them, is not a universal moment of the entire individual, but is a separated part of it, and the two enter into relation with each other only in respect of this part", Hegel concludes (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*).

Even the dioecious plants are not thoroughly imbued with the principle of sexual difference because it is possible for such a plant to develop as if it were a plant of the opposite sex (to speak as if a plant had a genuine sex). For Hegel, genuine sexual difference entails that an organism's development will happen strictly in accordance with the principle of its (adult, mature) sex: there must be, as there is with the animal, "something which is...sexual right from the beginning", a principle directing sexual development in accordance with one and only one of two alternatives (male, female) (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*). Infant males grow up to be adult males, and infant females grow up to be adult females, the twin goals of sexed organic development. Since it is not "right from the beginning" subordinated to a principle which will determine the trajectory and end of the plant as either male or female, the plant's "sexual development" *is not true sexual development*. To recall the *Logic*, we might say that any "sexual relation" which does not manifest the logical determination of the genus-process is only an approximation of that relation and in its mere approximation, lacking full rationality and justification. "The sexual relationship proper must have for its opposed moments entire individuals whose determinateness, completely reflected into itself, spreads through the whole individual. The entire habit (habitus) of the individual must be bound up with its sex" (pg. 348, Paragraph 344, *Zusatz*).

While in *Philosophy of Nature*, the individual animal's habit is completely bound up with its sex (it is either male, or it is female, always already, "right from the beginning"), it is the sequel to *Philosophy of Nature* and its addendum (*Philosophy of Mind* and *Philosophy of Right*)



which ostensibly demonstrate the fullest expression of sexual difference distributing itself between two individuals pervaded by the principle of this difference (man and woman). In these latter works lies the fullest expression of this difference because in *Philosophy of Mind* and *Philosophy of Right* habit or “habitus” gains spiritual significance – habit is no longer mere nature but becomes “second nature”. Therefore, in the *Philosophy of Mind* and the *Philosophy of Right* we should be looking forward to a human expression of sexual difference (in marriage) which manifests the logical relation of sexual difference and which culminates the natural instantiation of that relation in the animal organism. Instead, in the next chapter we will come to see how the contrary marriage reflects the relationship between animal and plant which is not even a relationship between the sexes, neither logically nor naturally speaking.

The second question, whether copulation occurs in plants, is answered succinctly in the affirmative by Hegel, who cites a botanical study by Willdenow in support of his response (348 Paragraph 345, *Zusatz*).

Hegel’s response to the third question, whether copulation is necessary in plants given that it occurs, echoes the main text of Paragraph 348. Hegel contends in the *Zusatz* that the production of a new individual through the union of the two sexes – generation – is a play, a luxury, a superfluity for propagation; for the preservation of the plant is itself only a multiplication of itself. Fertilization by sexual union is not necessary, since the plant organism, because it is the whole individuality, is already fertilized on its own account even without being touched by another plant (pgs. 344-45, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*).

This is an iteration of Hegel’s claim that plants grow by way of the production of new individuals which are at the same time the plant’s parts. The genus-process is already bound up and is in many ways indistinct from the formation and growth of the plant.

Hegel elaborates by raising a fourth question (to which he adds a fifth) in the second “moment” in his account of the genus-process: “how ought this process [the genus-process] to be understood since it is not necessary for the ripening of the seed; and also whether it is to be taken as the complete analogue of the genus-process in the animal” (pg. 346, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*). The genus-process in plants is to be understood as a merely formal process. This is because by the previous two processes the plant already reproduces itself. Furthermore, the plant’s reproductive process is doubly a digestive process. Digestion by itself is production of the individual. But the plant grows by multiplying itself into more individuals (which are likewise the parts of the plant; this is what Hegel calls the “immediate digestion of growth”), this being the process of “bud-formation” and, consequently, in a certain respect, it is already the genus-process (pg. 346, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*).

For the buds of the plant to develop and ripen, all that is needed “is the arrest of luxuriant growth” (for example, through the pruning of the plant) (pg. 346, 348, *Zusatz*). This is how the plant “returns into itself”. Fertilization itself, on the other hand, is not necessary to the nature of the plant or for the production and ripening of buds: “all that is necessary for the production of individuals is merely the negation of growth” (pg. 347, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*). In contrast, with the animal, negation is necessary but insufficient to its life. With the animal, “each sex negates its being-for-self, [and] posits itself as identical with the other” (pg. 347, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*). The animal accomplishes its identification with the other through the product of the copulation of the male and the female, but this affirmative identity in difference is not necessary to the plant; the plant only requires the negation. The affirmative identity is not necessary because in the plant the germ or “product” “is already everywhere in principle in the plant itself” (pg. 347, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*). The plant’s identity is merely immediate or “original”, and it need not and indeed could not recognize itself in its sexual other through its offspring because plants are not genuinely sexed beings and have no true sexual others.

What is this negative side of the genus-process which is necessary and sufficient to plant nature? Hegel identifies it as the “turning to dust of the pollen which goes together with the withering of the pistil” (pg. 347, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*). Or, as botanists like Schelver have conceived it, the negative side of the (merely formal) genus-process in plants is actually “a poisoning of the pistil” (pg. 347, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*). However it is conceived, the result is the culminating moment of the plant: the fruit (which “benefits” from injury to itself, for example, its “injury” in caprification) and its ripening. This is also its “downfall” (plants which don’t produce fruit and seeds articulate the genus-process otherwise, with the digestive growth of the previous two processes) (pg. 349, Paragraph 348, *Zusatz*).

Finally, with the maturation of the fruit comes the transition to the animal organism, the truth of the philosophy of Nature and Nature’s own transition to spirit. The following passage depicts the former transition:

The plant is a subordinate organism whose destiny it is to sacrifice itself to the higher organism and to be consumed by it. In the same way that light in the plant’s colour is a being-for-other, and the plant in its airy form is an odour-for-other, so the fruit as etheric oil concentrates itself into the combustible salt of sugar and becomes a fermented liquid. The plant now reveals itself here as the Notion which has materialized the light-principle and converted the watery nature into a fiery one, proceeds to ferment; but the heat which it gives out from itself is not its blood but its destruction. This animal process which is higher than that of the plant is its ruin (pgs. 350-1, Paragraph 349, *Zusatz*).

In this passage, the notional transition from plant to animal being exhibits a curious twofold character. On the one hand, Hegel demonstrates the notional necessity of this transition, but on the other hand the transition seems reminiscent of Kant's account of means-end relationships in his discussion of external teleology in the third *Critique*. Given Hegel's vehement critique of Kant's conception of external teleology, it seems that what Hegel hopes to accomplish is to amend Kant's account by giving it necessary, notional grounding. The transition consists in the plant's "sacrifice" of itself to the animal in consumption. The consumptive relationship between the superior animal and the subordinate plant thus appears as a means-end relationship. But dialectical, notional transitions are necessary, not merely contingent as are means-end relationships.

In what remains of this passage, Hegel offers an account of the transition from the plant to the animal by which Hegel wishes to avoid recourse and reduction to external teleology. The etheric oil of the plant is a further development of the light-principle (previously mentioned developments include the plant's color and odor) by which the plant unfolds its being as essentially a being-for-other. In its culmination, then, the plant has prepared itself for consumption by the animal to which it is subordinate in the context of the animal's environment, and to which it is in an inferior position in respect to the *Philosophy of Nature* itself.

### **The Genus Process in the Animal Organism**

While my focus is not on the animal organism in this chapter, since the important connection for Hegel is between logical sexual difference, natural sexual difference in the animal, and spiritual sexual difference in marriage, I briefly consider animal sexual difference in the genus process.

The genus-process is the third moment of the animal organism. It is itself differentiated into three moments<sup>12</sup>, the first of which is the sex relation (*Geschlechtsverhältnis*). Differentiated into three processes which don't quite form a unity, the animal genus process "in one way or another" ends in the death of the animal which is itself the immediate harbinger of the advent of spirit (pg. 410, Paragraph 367).

The description of the animal sex-relation is remarkably similar to its logical counterpart, which is to be expected by Hegel's own account. Hegel expounds

This first diremption of the genus into species and the further determination of these to the point of immediate, exclusive being-for-self of *singularity*, is only a negative and hostile attitude towards others. But the genus is also an essentially affirmative relation of the singularity to itself in it; so that while the latter, as an individual, excludes another individual, it continues itself in

this *other* and in this *other* feels its own self. This relationship is a *process* which begins with a *need*; for the individual as a *singular* does not accord with the genus immanent in it, and yet at the same time is the identical self-relation of the genus in one unity; it thus has the *feeling* of this defect. The genus is therefore present in the individual as a straining against the inadequacy of its single actuality, as the urge to obtain its self-feeling in the other of its genus, to integrate itself through union with it and through this mediation to close the genus with itself and bring it into existence – *copulation* (pg. 411, Paragraph 368/9).

The first diremption of the genus-process, the sex-relation, presupposes the rational supersession of the animal individual's instinctive and needful relationship to inorganic nature (the preceding moment). In the above paragraph, Hegel describes the three moments of the sex relation, one hostile and negative, one affirmative and positive, the third copulative. The first moment emphasizes the being-for-self of either side of the determination. This is the moment of "self-absorbed" opposition. The male and female animals as individuals are *different*. The second moment, however, emphasizes the feeling of one individual self in the other individual self and the feeling of the other individual self in the one. The one feels his universality in the other, and she feels her universality in the one. The male and female animals though individuals are the same. The problem is that each individual animal lacks the feeling of the universal genus by him- or herself. This problem, a problem of need, is solved in copulation, an effort to actualize the genus merely felt in the unity of the male and female animal. As with logical copulation, natural animal copulation ultimately fails because the product or offspring is also another individual with the same problem.

Let me point out about this paragraph first that the sex relation is a relationship between two different but *equal* individuals. The one would not be able to feel the genus or the universal in the other unless they were two beings of the same kind. But while Hegel describes the sex relation between animals in this passage as a relationship between two equals, we will see that in the spirit texts he seems to abandon this notion of two different but equal individuals in the sex relationship even though this different but equal relationship is what the concept rationally demands.

Even if it is the case that the *logic* of the sex relation calls for an instantiated relationship between two equal but different beings, the question arises how Hegel's philosophy more generally – given its ultimate reduction of the other to the self – can even momentarily sustain such a moment as the sex relation. Indeed, Hegel's early allusion to Adam and Eve at the beginning of the Nature (Stone mentions this too) seems to hint at a more accurate representation of Hegel's *de facto* view on the relationship between the sexes, which is not one of equality (see the next chapter). In that passage Hegel recalls Adam (the man, Spirit) looking upon Eve (the bride, Nature) and saying "This is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone" (pg. 13, Paragraph 246, *Zusatz*). Besides the fact that Adam is the one speaking and looking, without reciprocation by Eve,

the relationship expressed by Adam seems to describe an equal one. Eve is flesh, Adam is flesh, Eve is bone, Adam is bone. But as the biblical story has it (God *Genesis*, Chapter 2, verses 21-25), Eve is derivative of Adam, woman derivative of man (that is, if we ignore the pesky Chapter 1, verse 27 of *Genesis*). And if, moreover, we look back to the *Science of Logic* to recall that the other individual in the sex relation emerges from the particularization of the first, universal individual, even Hegel's *logical* account of sexual difference seems to be a conceptual rendering of the Adam and Eve story.

## Conclusion

The *Philosophy of Nature* ends with the death of the animal in the third moment of the genus process, the actualization of the genus frustrated. Meanwhile, spirit rises like a phoenix<sup>13</sup> from the ashes of the animal<sup>14</sup>. In emerging from nature, spirit reveals itself as always having been prior to nature: "Spirit, just because it is the goal of Nature, is prior to it, Nature has proceeded from spirit: not empirically, however, but in such a manner that spirit is already from the very first implicitly present in Nature which is spirit's own presupposition" (pg. 444, Paragraph 376)<sup>15</sup>. The task in the *Philosophy of Mind* will be to let spirit (or mind; *Geist*) recognize itself not in the medium of natural externality, but rather in the medium of thought made existent in the world.

In this chapter, we have seen the difficulty in rationally justifying the determinations of Hegel's *Philosophy of Nature*, specifically the determinations of the Organics section. This section was of special concern to us because there Hegel discusses sexual difference. The plant nature does not exhibit the logical sex relation deduced in the logic books because the sex relation rationally demands two individuals, and the plant nature has not yet achieved individuality. In contrast, the animal organism manifests the logical sex relation which ends in copulation. In the *Philosophy of Mind*, therefore, we can expect to find the spiritual actualization of the animal genus process, since it is in the animal genus process that sexual difference expresses sexual difference as a thought determination – not in the plant. We would expect to find the spiritual account of what was "previously" animal sexual relationship in Hegel's discussion of marriage and the family. This is not the case, however. As we will see in the following chapter, the relationship between man and woman in marriage is not like that between a male animal and a female animal but rather like that between plant and animal.

## Notes

1. Unless, of course, it's Hegel's logic.
2. Though with Pluto already "demoted" to the status of "minor planet", perhaps there is after all something to Hegel's *a priori* deduction. Or at least scientists might have more "*a priori*"

notions than they would like to confess. “[T]he principal charge to be brought against physics is that it contains much more thought than it admits and is aware of, and that it is better than it supposes itself to be; or if, perhaps, all thought in physics is to be counted a defect, then it is worse than it supposes itself to be” (Hegel, *PN*, pg. 3, Introduction, *Zusatz*).

3. It might be said that “foes” are quick to proclaim their enemies dead and buried, to avoid dealing with them (they don’t in general believe in ghosts), while “friends” like to begin with the death of a friend too (the resurrection will be all the more *spectacular*).

4. In the literature, this approach is called “rational” or “*a priori*”. It seems to me that “logical” is more fitting, given Hegel’s own lexicon.

5. Without elaborating this aspect of my interpretation further, I do not believe that Hegel “deduces” Nature in any “material” sense. In other words, I do not ascribe to the view that Hegel fails to recognize the sheer “thatness” and “givenness” of Nature, as Stone does in *Petrified Intelligence* (Stone, *Petrified Intelligence*, pg. 102). It seems to me that Hegel deduces that there must be a nature, that the Idea must have existence (granted, I am over-simplifying). But nature itself is not in any sense supposed to emanate from the speculative logic. If this were the case, everything (including Krug’s infamous pen [Hegel, *PN*, Paragraph 250, pg. 23, asterisked note]) would need to be deduced, which is not the case since there is much in nature which does not matter in respect to the concept (the veritable matter), like *pink* dolphins.

Nature is rather what confronts us in its overwhelming and roaring there-ness, as we triumphantly (?) emerge from the quiet of the logic. Having gone through the science of speculative logic, however, with our metaphysical diamond net properly purchased, we are well equipped in the face of the intimidating proteus, in Hegel’s view. It seems that Hegel recognizes well the naked givenness of nature and its dizzying cast of colorful creatures (and other phenomena). What Hegel doesn’t do so well with is *sticking with* the dizzy feelings at the teeming varieties in nature. Hegel isn’t comfortable with the unscientific disposition of *wonder*: “[w]hat we are engaged on here, is not an affair of imagination and fancy, but of the Notion, of Reason” (Hegel, *PN*, Introduction, pg. 2, *Zusatz*). Despite the copious notes indicating Hegel’s obsessions with everything phenomenal from electricity to sea slime, in the *Philosophy of Nature* which proceeds strictly “by the concept” much of what one might find irreducible, fascinating, and worthwhile in “nature” drops out (the pinkness of the pink dolphin a case in point). In short, the problem (from an “external” viewpoint) is not that Hegel reduces all of nature to the concept; it is rather that everything not amenable to the concept *does not matter*, for Hegel.

6. Since the “perfection” of the animal organism is the human organism (which is not for Hegel a distinct [fourth] moment in the “Organics” section), it would seem that human being

(even merely as animal organism) has greater claim to the fruits of plant sacrifice than do less developed animal organisms.

7. Perhaps if human girls and women were in community with one another (there is no feminine analogue of exclusively masculine civil society in Hegel), it might resemble the sun-worshipping community of plants.

8. See Elaine Miller's remarks in *The Vegetative Soul* (Miller, *The Vegetative Soul*, pg. 122).

9. In point alpha, Hegel cites seeming counter-evidence to cast doubt on the assertion that plants do not voluntarily move. But Hegel insists that though plants do move in a sense, their movement is not voluntary, the latter kind of movement being what distinguishes animals from plants (308). This move of Hegel's is typical in the section on plant nature. He continually cites apparent "exceptions" from contemporary scientific literature, and then rules them out *as* exceptions.

10. Earth is not considered, but it is one of the four elements Hegel names earlier in the "Physics."

11. The entire German sentence reads: "Die Differenz, zu der es die Pflanze bringt, von einem vegetativen Selbst zu einem vegetativen Selbst, so daß jedes den Trieb habe, sich mit dem anderen zu identifizieren, – diese Bestimmung ist nur wie ein Analogon des Geschlechtsverhältnisses vorhanden" (Hegel, *Philosophie der Natur*, pg. 421, Paragraph 348).

12. And thus the problem of legitimate determinations in the *Nature* arises again, but for the moment we bracket this problem.

13. Like an animal, then? No. Like a magical animal!

14. To my committee: as in the chapter on logic, in a future revision of this piece, I want to devote much more attention to the transitions between the texts. These are very obscure.

15. This passages again points to the compatibility of the so-called linear interpretation with the so-called circular interpretation of Hegel's system. Here Hegel acknowledges that while in some sense spirit presupposes nature, in another way, in its very presupposition it reveals itself as prior to nature. We begin as if we are proceeding in a line and then come to see that our beginning and end points touch.

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## V. *Philosophy of Mind*: The Plantlike Growth of Girls

### Feminist Approaches to Hegel's Antigone: Dead or Alive?

The Hegel (or Hegels) best known (if not best loved) in feminist scholarship belongs to the “spirit” texts. These texts include Hegel’s account of family life in *Philosophy of Right* (an elaboration of his account in *Philosophy of Mind*) and his rather different account of family life in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The history of this literature with its roots in the works of Simone de Beauvoir and of Luce Irigaray (both focus on the *Phenomenology*) is well rehearsed, especially in the two previously mentioned anthologies (*Feminist Interpretations of G. W. F. Hegel* and *Hegel's Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?*) and elsewhere (for example, in Kimberly Hutchings’ book *Hegel and Feminist Philosophy*). I refer the reader to these texts for a more comprehensive summary of that history. I will limit myself here to observations directly relevant to my task in this chapter, which is twofold – to foreground the problem of girlhood development in the spirit texts and to relate Hegel’s accounts of logical and natural sexual difference to his accounts of sexual difference in its spiritual significance.

The title of the most recent (2010) anthology on English language feminist scholarship is instructive: *Hegel's Philosophy and Feminist Thought: Beyond Antigone?*. As nearly any review of the feminist literature on Hegel during the last thirty years will reveal, most of the literature has focused less on Hegel’s accounts of spiritual sexual difference in the family and more on Hegel’s account of Antigone (the play and the figure) within those accounts, in the *Phenomenology*. Much of the work done on Hegel’s Antigone is invaluable, particularly that of Patricia Mills<sup>1</sup>. Mills is representative of much feminist work in the eighties and nineties. In general, she and her fellow thinkers were interested in Hegel’s confinement of women to the family and his exclusion of women from political life. They were also interested, of course, in the significance of Hegel’s (mis)reading of Antigone in the *Phenomenology*, with a focus on the disparities in the brother-sister relationship Hegel calls ideal (see the addendum to this chapter).

This literature is not in any way “out of date” or “dead” (especially not Mills’ work). But it does have its limitations. The main limitation is its almost exclusive focus on sexual difference in the spirit texts, more specifically on Antigone in these texts (the *Philosophy of Right* contains one reference to Antigone, and is relatively neglected in this literature compared to the *Phenomenology*). I will explain why this is a limitation in a moment.

The question mark in the subtitle, *Beyond Antigone?*, is even more revealing than the reference to Antigone. In more recent years (from 2000 onwards), it has remained a question whether we have gotten “beyond Antigone” in reading Hegel as feminists. Judith Butler’s work on Antigone in the early 2000’s is perhaps a case in point (see Butler’s *Antigone's Claim*). But what

are the stakes of getting beyond “Antigone” in feminist approaches to Hegel? Does the question announce a threshold – if we fail to cross over, past “Antigone”, is feminist scholarship on Hegel then dead? Why might we want to get “beyond Antigone”? In their introduction, Hutchings and Pulkkinen do not reflect what might be at issue in their subtitle and its attendant question mark.

In this and the preceding chapters, it might seem that I would agree that feminist scholarship on Hegel must get “beyond Antigone”. This is not quite my position. Instead, the existing scholarship on Antigone (and other topics) will be strengthened in embedding itself in a more systematic reading of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* project. Feminist scholarship experiences a deep flourishing when it remains open to *die Sache selbst* (not necessarily as Hegel defined it), refusing to delimit its scope of concerns in advance to a specific set of issues (updated and revised from time to time).

It might be said that the discussion and advancement of feminist issues does not and ought not depend on a comprehensive reading of Hegel’s *Encyclopedia*. Must we always be beholden to “father Hegel”, even when he is busy waking his *sons*, never the would-be *daughters*, in the middle of the night (Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 152)? But “women in philosophy” are even more haunted than the “men”<sup>2</sup> precisely because they are *themselves* made to haunt the tradition by their exclusion and marginalization. “Women in philosophy” as the community’s “eternal irony” (Hegel, PS, pg. 288, Paragraph 475), as the target of all sorts of exorcisms, historical, textual, institutional and social. The risk is exorcizing *in turn*; at the greatest extreme, in even announcing the death of philosophy “for us”, to announce an absolutely new, purer beginning for the excluded, without the interminable work of working through the past (which is never about being stuck in the past). This would be the inauguration of a mirror state of hierarchy and exclusion. But revolution is more complex than that.

There are of course many ways, other than exorcism, to “work through” the philosophical tradition, to work through the work of Herr Hegel. It seems to me, however, that there needs to be more “internal critique” rooted in exegetical work. Not because we ought to pay our respects to the great fathers for old time’s sake, but because, perhaps, “something” has touched and moved us “*prior*” to the tradition – the matter, the *Sache*, the “it” that can be traced running through that very tradition. *This* is what most radically shatters authority – not the merely oppositional stance, but attention to the “matter” the philosophers sometimes name but cannot ever reduce to their (often gendered, racist) ways of naming “it”. The gesture of internal critique carries with it the greater chance for twisting free freely rather than battling a thinker with reactionary opposition. I recall the epigraph from the introduction: “Strife among thinkers is the ‘lovers’ quarrel’ concerning the matter itself” (Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism*, pg. 239).

To return to the feminist literature on Hegel more specifically, in this chapter I all too briefly address three scholars contributing to that literature: David Krell with his novel, *Son of Spirit*, about Hegel's illegitimate son, Elaine Miller with her chapter on Hegel and plants in *The Vegetative Soul*, and, finally, Alison Stone in her essay "Matter and Form: Hegel, Organicism, and the Difference between Men and Women". I read Krell's novel as a tacit, and perhaps altogether unwitting, foray into the issue of inheritance and philosophical legitimacy in large part in respect to girls and women. My work is related to Miller's because Miller hints at the implications of Hegel's account of plant nature for his account of women. Finally, Stone's essay goes even further than Miller's in linking the nature and the spirit books (both Miller and Stone tend to downplay the logic in the two works mentioned). Krell in his (fictional) focus on the problem of *daughters*, and Miller and Stone in their concern for the link between nature, spirit and women, all three distinguish themselves from the focuses of much of the literature. They also touch upon issues of concern to me in this chapter.

As for me, I argue that on Hegel's accounts in the spirit books, despite his claims to the contrary, man and woman are not similar but different individuals. They are instead radically different individuals with the woman subordinate to the man. His account of marriage and, ultimately, his spiritual resolution of sexual difference are untenable. I demonstrate this in two intertwined ways. At first these ways will appear to be coming from two "directions".

First, I aim to reconstruct Hegel's (missing) account of girlhood development. I show how for Hegel girl children do not develop, spiritually, into human beings and never, on his account of development, *grow up*. In doing so, I put into question Hegel's reference to "*Frauen*" and the English language literature's references to "women" in Hegel's texts. These references would seem to indicate that the adult male has an adult counterpart, differently sexed (again, a similar but different being). This is not, however, the case, which is the important point: since girls do not grow up to be the women in Hegel's account of similar but different sexual difference, men lack counterparts. Hegel's spiritual account of sexual difference flounders. Girls grow like plants (the *Philosophy of Nature* enters the scene again); they do not develop like animals as boys do. Boys overcome their animality and are spiritually reborn as men, while girls never overcome their vegetative character.

Previously and in what follows I have sometimes referred and will sometimes refer to "women" when I am speaking most closely with Hegel, but it is my contention that the problem of girl children and their development is in an important sense prior to the problem of "women": if we speak of "women" without further ado, we give ourselves over to a normative presupposition, even an implicit justification of the process by which one becomes a "woman". To speak "first" or at once of the "girlhood development" problem is to ask after the possibility and rationale behind the scenes of "womanhood".

The second “direction” from which I approach the conclusion that men and “women” are related as subordinator to subordinated (as animal to plant) is along the path I’ve prepared in the first and second chapters. After I’ve shown through the spirit texts that girlhood development results in a plantlike individual who is not a suitable counterpart for Hegel’s man, I recall how the plant in the *Philosophy of Nature* is missing roots in a logical determination. This suggests that, like God, Hegel thought he could give man (the universal) a companion (the universal particularized) by pulling the other out of the one. But also like God, Hegel failed in that endeavor, even when the companions were not husband and wife, but brother and sister (see the addendum to this chapter). The fact that plant nature, like “woman”, lacks logical determination in Hegel’s *Encyclopedia* is symptomatic of the incapacity of Hegel’s system to figure a relationship of equality in difference.

### **Prefatory notes to *Philosophy of Mind***

Narratively speaking (see first chapter), Mind (*Geist*) presupposes nature and logic (Hegel, *PM*, pg. 8, Paragraph 381). But philosophically speaking, mind is the “*absolute prius*” (original emphasis) of Nature since it is its “truth” (pg. 8, Paragraph 381). At the beginning of the *Philosophy of Mind*, the “self-externalization” of nature “has been nullified and the unity in that way been made one and the same with itself” (pg. 8, Paragraph 381). Unlike with logic and unlike with nature, with mind in the beginning its determinations and the end lie latent; in this way mind expresses the *development* of the concept (see first chapter): “[t]he ‘concrete’ nature of mind involves for the observer the peculiar difficulty that the several grades and special types which develop its intelligible unity in detail are not left standing as so many separate existences confronting its more advanced aspects (as in nature: JP)” (pg. 7, Paragraph 380).

In logic, thought was not exposed to contingency, whereas in nature thought had to find itself in nature’s externality. Mind frees “itself from all its existential forms which do not accord with its Notion (*Begriff*): a liberation which is brought about by the transformation of the forms into an actuality perfectly adequate to the Notion of mind” (pg. 16, Paragraph 382, *Zusatz*). This remark could almost apply to nature. In the philosophy of nature, mind (or spirit; *Geist*) emerges from out of the externality of nature precisely by liberating itself from the “existential forms which do not accord with” the notion or concept (*Begriff*). But the key difference in this passage is found in the “transformation” of these forms. These inadequate forms from which mind has been freed will need to be taken up again, this time in a transformative manner so that their “actuality” corresponds “perfectly” to mind’s own *Begriff*.

Consider the example of sexual difference. Speculative logic has given us the concept or conceptual determination of *Geschlechtsdifferenz*. In nature, the sex relation between the male animal and the female animal manifests the determination of sexual difference deduced in the

logic. But as we saw in the previous chapter, sexual difference in the animal genus process ultimately results in the death of the animal, without a genuine resolution to the problem of the reconciliation of individuality to universality. While human sexual difference does not, of course, satisfy the concept of mind for Hegel (absolute mind alone is the adequation of actual mind to its concept), human sexual difference *should* resolve the problem of *animal* sexual difference. Again, the spiritual culmination of sexual difference is not, for Hegel, the coming-into-its-own of the absolute concept. However, we may look to his account of human sexual difference (particularly in marriage in the *Philosophy of Mind* and the *Philosophy of Right*) as the “perfected” form of logical sexual difference. So too in general, what was inadequate in nature will be found in adequate form in mind. The *Philosophy of Mind* traces the development of this “resolution” from mind in its subjective and objective phases (finite mind) to the culmination of mind in absolute mind (infinite mind).

Let’s turn now to the first phase of the task in this chapter: the reconstruction of Hegel’s account of girlhood development. To do this, we initially need to consider Hegel’s account of the ages of man in the Anthropology section of Subjective Mind, and then eventually his account of marriage.

### **Reconstruction of anthropological girlhood development**

Before focusing on the details of Hegel’s account of “the ages of man” and the human sex relation which succeeds “the ages of man” in *Philosophy of Mind*, I provide an overview (following Hegel) of the first moment of the first determination of the Anthropology (the “physical soul”). This first moment is called “physical qualities”. I then preview the first, second, and third moments of the second determination of the “physical soul”. This second determination is “physical alterations” (the moments of which are the “ages of man”, the “sexual relation”, and “waking/sleeping”).

The first principal division of *Philosophy of Mind* is Subjective Mind. Subjective Mind is itself divided in three. First there is Anthropology, which has for its first moment the “physical soul”, the soul “in its immediate natural mode”, or the “natural soul, which only *is*” (original emphasis) (390 34). To the “physical soul” belongs three moments, the first of which is “physical qualities”. These are in general “racial differences both mental and physical and also the differences of national mentality” (390 Zusatz 35). The “physical qualities” (392 36) are abstract and external to one another. Racial and national differences constitute the “universal natural soul” which “sunder[s] itself into an infinite host of individual souls” in the second moment of the “physical soul”, the “physical alterations” (390 Zusatz 35). The individual qualities which are separated in their universal manifestation as racial and national differences (which are physical and mental) are now taken back into “the individual human soul” and are therein unified (390

Zusatz 35). No longer externally related qualities, these differences now assume the “shape of natural alterations of the individual subject who retains his identity throughout” (390 Zusatz 35). These natural alterations are, strictly speaking, the first determination of the second moment (called “physical alterations”, following “physical qualities”) in the “Anthropology”, and Hegel calls this first moment of “physical alterations”, “the ages of man” (390 Zusatz 35). The differences in the “ages of man” (which are united in a single individual) are now internalized in such a way that the individual who undergoes these differences as changes in time remains the same individual throughout.

The moment that succeeds the “ages of man” is the moment of the sex relation (*Geschlechtsverhältnis*). This is the first time *human* sexual difference emerges as a dialectical moment in Hegel’s system. Of this difference, Hegel contends in an introductory manner:

But it is in the sexual relation (*Geschlechtsverhältnis*) that the difference becomes the actual specification, the real opposition, of the individual to itself. From this point onwards, the soul enters into opposition to its natural qualities, to its universal being which, by this very act, is reduced to the status of the soul’s Other, to a mere aspect, to a transitory state, namely, the *sleeping* state. Thus originates natural *waking*, the opening out of the soul. But here in Anthropology we have not as yet to consider the content of waking consciousness but waking only in so far as it is a natural state (390 Zusatz 35).

In the first moment of the “physical soul” the physical and mental qualities are in an external relation to one another; in the second moment these qualities are united in the same individual as he changes and exhibits these different physical and mental qualities in time; while, finally, in the sex relation the differences attain to their “actual specification” which, apparently, can only be had through the “real opposition” introduced with the sex relation (390 Zusatz 35). While it is clear that the differences of the “physical soul” are becoming progressively more determinate, unified, and internalized, it is unclear how and why at this moment opposition through sexual difference is needed to attain “actual specification” of the differences. But the *result* of this entry of sexual difference as opposition (to the male human animal) into the system might strike a familiar chord with feminist readers. It is the female human animal and the forms and figures which seem to succeed her and recapitulate her which begin to host the merely “natural qualities” against which soul begins to divide itself (“opening out”) and from which nascent spirit or mind mines its materials for its transformative, incipiently historical labor. The introduction of the female human animal transitions into the opposition between the natural waking and sleeping soul which foreshadows the more spiritual “waking/sleeping” distinction. Out of the female human animal, then, emerges the sleeping on the basis of which the implicitly spiritual (masculine) soul struggles to wake.

Now I elaborate “the ages of man” and the “sexual relation” together.

### **“The ages of man”**

The qualities or “diversities” which in the first moment of racial and national differences are, in “the ages of man”, “stages” in the “development” of the “one permanent subject” (396 55). These developmental stages are the “physical alterations”, which are “at once physical and mental” (396 55). The developmental stages which soul undergoes in “the ages of man” are peculiar to human being; “this process of development is education”, which animals do not undergo (396 Zusatz 55). In education, in nascent mind, the genus is “truly realized” since the element of mind is thought, the element “homogenous with the genus” (396 Zusatz 56). However, “in the anthropological sphere this actualization [of the genus], since it takes place in the natural individual mind, is still present in a natural mode. Consequently, it falls into time” (396 Zusatz 56). The temporal aspect of anthropological human development is important to hold in mind, so to speak. Hegel’s entire system, while analogous to human maturation beginning in childhood, is in no way reducible to this anthropological kind of development, immersed in time as it is. In other words, it is ill-conceived picture thinking to represent Hegel’s project as a grandiloquent child-rearing book (besides, Hegel gives no advice), even as childhood development is one of the most important recurring analogues integrating his system. Or, as Hegel phrases it, the differences of the stages of the “ages of man” (here he only lists childhood, adulthood, and old age) “represent the differences of the Notion (*Begriff*)” (396 Zusatz 57).

Keeping in mind that the outcome will be that the “ages of man” are really just that – the ages of *man* – I relay Hegel’s rather meticulous account of these developmental stages, which are primarily four, but, as we will see, reduced to three in the *Zusatz*: Childhood, Youth, Manhood, and Old Age.

### **Childhood**

In general, childhood is “mind wrapped up in itself” (396 55). It is natural immediacy, and so in a sense childhood itself is especially analogous to the first moment of the “Anthropology”. This first moment is, once more, mind “in its immediate natural mode”, which is soul (390 34). Hegel describes childhood as “the time of natural harmony” in which “the child lives in innocence, without any lasting pain, in the love it has for its parents and in the feeling of being loved by them” (396 Zusatz 57). In his nascence, the child is immediately at home in his world; it could be said that the child finds his “world presupposed” before him (386 22), to refer to Hegel’s description of Subjective Mind in general.

Hegel distinguishes three phases proper to childhood, and then adds a fourth, the child in the womb. The latter is not quite a distinct stage of the child's existence, since in this stage he is "identical" with his mother (396 Zusatz 58). I give an account of each of these phases, but it must be pointed out that Hegel does not explicitly name these phases after numbering them. It would seem that the best way to mark the distinct phases of childhood is to include "youth" as a childhood phase in the *Zusatz* belonging to Paragraph 396. While youth is not at all like the initial phases of childhood (youth exhibits the moment of opposition), and while in Paragraph 396 of "Physical Alterations" Hegel presents youth as a distinct stage in human development, not only does Hegel seem to count youth as a moment of childhood in the *Zusatz*, but also, if youth were a moment of childhood the "ages of man" (from which he sometimes excludes youth), now three, would better correspond to the determinations of the notion in *Philosophy of Mind*: subjective mind, objective mind, and absolute mind. On the other hand, Hegel's indecisiveness about the stage of youth might be read as symptomatic of an underlying tension (in the transition from the boy in the family to the man in the public community): indeed, in my discussion of the family in *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the addendum to this chapter, I show how the figure of the (male) youth and his feminine counterpart (his would-be bride) are key to the critique of Hegel's depiction of wifedom/motherhood as the bastion of "feminine freedom".

### **The unborn child**

The unborn child has a plantlike life (396 Zusatz 58). Like the plant, the unborn child "does not possess an interrupted intussusception" which would make it similar to the animal (whose many feats, from the standpoint of nature at least, include sipping water) (396 Zusatz 58). Similarly, the unborn child in the womb does not possess its own rhythm of respiration and is, in general, not yet an individuality (again like the plant). Because of this, the unborn child cannot "enter into relation with particular objects in a particular manner" (396 Zusatz 58). If there is a childhood of childhood for Hegel, it is the life of the unborn child who exists as one with its mother (or, as Hegel will proceed to say later in the "Anthropology", "the mother is the genius of the child" [original emphasis] [405 95]).

### **The infant: the child proper**

For the child in the womb "birth is...a tremendous leap" by which the child passes into the "animal mode of life" (396 Zusatz 58). Unlike the plant but similar to the animal, the infant child achieves a separate existence of its own. Development in the infant life of a child consists mainly of growth. Hegel refers the reader back to the *Philosophy of Nature* where, he remarks, one will find the account necessary to understand the animal organism and thus the infant child, since these seem the same up to a certain point: the "ground of the origin of self-feeling in the animal" is also the ground of the origin of self-feeling in the infant child (396 Zusatz 58).



However, as Hegel reminds us, in the human being not only has the animal organism reached perfection of form, but also, even indeed in his infant stage, the human being reveals his “higher nature” (396 Zusatz 58). The human infant reveals this “higher nature” primarily through screaming, which is for Hegel not simply an indication of helplessness but rather is at the same time an “ideal activity” by which “the child shows that it is straightway imbued with the certainty that it has a right to demand from the outer world the satisfaction of its needs, that the independence of the outer world is non-existent where man is concerned” (396 Zusatz 58-9).

In the very early stages of childhood, the child develops mentally by leaps and bounds: “in this first stage of its life, it can be said that man never learns more than in this period” (396 Zusatz 59). One of the main accomplishments of the child at this stage is his learning that the outer world is something actual and that “external things offer resistance” to him (396 Zusatz 59). The child begins to distinguish between himself and the objects external to him, which marks one of the primary differences between this animal-like child and his plant-like predecessor.

The child begins to make the transition to boyhood, the third stage of childhood, as he progresses in the development of his relationship to the outer world. He begins to form the habit of standing upright (something that distinguishes him from the animals); he starts to walk and in this way negates space and posits it anew, an ideal activity which evinces his increasing independence from the outer world. These changes, in which the child begins to progress past animality, herald the child’s becoming more of an “*actual human being*” (original emphasis) (396 Zusatz 59). The climax of the child’s relationship to actual, “tangible things” culminates in early childhood with the child “learning to play” with toys: “but the most rational thing that children can do with their toys is to break them” (396 Zusatz 59). This last remark is exemplary of Hegel’s account of growing up, and his description here is not limited to the anthropological context. It is reminiscent of his critique of those who advocate a return to a state of nature to assuage the unhappiness of alienation. For Hegel, it is wrong-minded to wish to return to a childlike state of innocence: actual reconciliation is won only by the hard work of “growing up”. Childhood development is always already subordinate to that which will come to surpass childhood, as the principle of the growth of the child.

Here what will become important is the fact that earlier in the *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel analogized seedlings to human infants. Now in the *Philosophy of Mind*, infants are most emphatically not vegetable but rather *animal-like* beings.

### **Boyhood**

Having destroyed his toys, the little child becomes a boy who passes on to “the seriousness of learning” (396 Zusatz 59). In becoming more eager to learn and less eager to play, the boy is

captivated by stories. In them what holds his interest “is ideas which do not come to them [the boy children] in an immediate manner” (396 Zusatz 59). The boy begins to take a more explicit interest in the life of the mind, however inchoate at this point. But the most important feature of boyhood “is the awakening feeling in them [the boy children] that as yet they *are* not what they *ought* to be, and the active desire to become like the adults in whose surroundings they are living” (396 Zusatz 59). In other words, boys begin to feel that there is something inadequate about themselves the way they are now, that development towards adulthood is imperative. As implicitly rational human beings, boys mustn’t stay boys forever. They need to grow up and they feel that this is what they *ought* to do too. A boy is nothing by himself, but he is only something to the extent that his boyhood anticipates his maturity and even his old age. The fact that boys feel the need to grow up contrasts with part of Hegel’s account of children in the *Philosophy of Right*, in which Hegel claims that (boy) children must be educated into the “feeling of subordination” through the discipline of their parents (notably, there is no mention of schooling here), otherwise they will not have inculcated in them the proper “longing to grow up” (Hegel, *PR*, 174 Addition H 212). For now, on the other hand, in the *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel elaborates the idea that the boy feels the need to become a man:

Whereas the feeling of immediate unity with the parents is the spiritual mother’s milk on which children thrive, it is the children’s own need to grow up which acts as the stimulus to that growth. This striving after education on the part of children themselves is the immanent factor in all education. But since the boy is still at the stage of immediacy, the higher to which he is to raise himself appears to him, not in the form of universality or of the matter in hand, but in the shape of something given, of an individual, an authority (396 Zusatz 59-60).

On the one hand, the (boy?) children subsist in the feeling of unity with their parents, a unity which in the *Philosophy of Right* is the basis of family life, or love (Hegel, *PR* 158 199). On the other hand, a rift in family life is implicit in this unity from the start, since the boys even in childhood already feel the need to grow up and are thus distanced from their boyhood as boys. And just as Hegel’s system more generally describes the immanent but as of yet only incipient (spiritual) development of the Notion, so too must education in its more specific anthropological context be immanent.

Growing up, then, unfurls as the increasingly developed fulfillment of a lack or need which always already belongs to the adult in his nascent form, the child. In other words, all boy children contain the principle of their rational development and the end of this (manhood and even old age) at their earliest beginnings. Little boys are little old men; the end is in the beginning, right from the start, or, as Hegel puts it in a different but still applicable framework in the *Phenomenology*: “the result is the same as the beginning, only because the beginning is the purpose; in other words, the actual is the same as its Notion only because the immediate, as

purpose, contains the self or pure actuality within itself” (just as the boy child contains in himself the purpose of his spiritual destiny, which ultimately concludes with old age) (Hegel, *PS* 22 12) . The implicit rift always already festering in family life on the side of the boys does not, however, cause the family to break up “prematurely” (for example, with the boys’ running away from home in order to seek the independence they sense they need). This is because of the authority of the father whom, at this point in his life, the boy strives to imitate (396 Zusatz 60). Before the age of mind proper at which the boy would be able to think for himself, the boy’s need to grow up and develop independently is still yoked to a familial father figure.

At school – an intermediate pedagogical phase between the family and civil society, a phase Hegel neglects in the *Philosophy of Right* – the boy further develops his burgeoning sense of independence and separation from the family. While in the family the boy is for the most part accepted and loved “in its [his] immediate individuality, is loved whether its behavior is good or bad” (is loved, apparently, without condition), in school the immediacy of the child no longer counts; here it [the boy] is esteemed only according to its worth, according to its achievements, is not merely loved but criticized and guided in accordance with universal principles, moulded by instruction according to fixed rules, in general, subjected to a universal order which forbids many things innocent in themselves because everyone cannot be permitted to do them. The school thus forms the transition from the family into civil society [again and importantly, something Hegel refrains from pointing out in *Philosophy of Right*]. But to the latter the boy has at first only an undefined relationship; his interest is still divided between learning and playing (396 Zusatz 61).

The principle of the family is love, and the boy’s entry into school is his still rather immature movement away from love as the governing principle of his life and his movement towards his true induction into the universal. Between family and civil society, the boy is preparing for manhood. His need to grow up and find independence begins to take place further away from the family and away from the father’s authority in particular (it is likely that at this point teachers replace fathers as authority figures for boys). At school the boy both learns and plays to become a young man.

### **Youth**

Youth is not quite childhood, even though Hegel does seem to treat it as such in this *Zusatz*. In youth, the young man has outgrown and even comes to shirk the authority of both his father and his teachers; he is beyond both (his original) family and school. “His ideal no longer appears to him, as it does to the boy, in the person of a man, but is conceived by him as a universal, independent of such individuality” (396 *Zusatz* 61). Less and less does immediate individuality count for the youth, who turns towards what is substantial and universal. However, in the youth this ideal still has a more or less subjective shape...The content of the ideal imbues

the youth with the feeling of power to act; he therefore fancies himself called and qualified to transform the world, or at least to put the world back on the right path from which, so it seems to him, it has strayed (396 Zusatz 61).

Although at this point, unwittingly advancing towards the stage of manhood, the youth begins to work for the universal, his consciousness of his activity is still tainted by subjectivity. To put it loosely, at the beginning of his manhood, at the start of his genuine work for the universal, the youth is still too self-absorbed. “As against this, it must be pointed out that the man is no longer wrapped up in his particular impulses and subjective views and occupied only with his personal development” (396 Zusatz 62). Nevertheless, it is just by focusing on his own “particular impulses and subjective views” that the youth makes the gradual and painful transition to manhood. During this transition he laments the “destruction” of his youthful “ideals”; but the young man is soon “liberated” from this mourning (396 Zusatz 63). This liberation from youthful ideals is the young man’s veritable passage into adulthood in which the dissatisfaction and striving of youth are, according to Hegel, completely forgotten; the youth’s ideals, like the child’s toys, are broken and cast aside, which is only fitting and necessary to the further development of his rational upbringing.

### **Manhood**

With the man’s definitive embrace of civil life, the world appears to him as, on the one hand, “already complete”, but, on the other hand, this world shows itself not as “a dead, absolutely inert world but, like the life-process, a world which perpetually creates itself anew, which while merely preserving itself at the same time progresses” (396 Zusatz 63). The man simultaneously recognizes that the world is already there, while advancing this very world through his work so that “on the one hand we can say that the man only creates what is already there; yet on the other hand, his activity must also bring about an advance” (396 Zusatz 63). This world of manhood corresponds to the second stage of mind’s progression in the *Philosophy of Mind*, the stage attained by objective mind, objective mind as mind “generating a world as our own creation” (386 22).

At the stage of objective mind and manhood, the ideals of the youth attain their truth in the “practical activity” of civil life (396 Zusatz 63). By this “practical activity”, the man gains both “satisfaction and honour” (396 Zusatz 63). Manhood and its attendant satisfaction in “practical activity” presuppose the completion of schooling, for the latter is insufficient to the maturation of the man. Through his “practical activity” and by his entry into civil life, the man “finds his place in the world of objective relationships and becomes habituated to it and to his work” (396 Zusatz 63). In this way, the man becomes more and more at home in the world, growing “accustomed to his lot” (396 Zusatz 63). As the man’s activity becomes increasingly “conformed to his work” his

activity meets less resistance to objects and there is a disappearance of “opposition” and “interest” in the man’s work (396 Zusatz 63). This is the man’s transition into old age.

### Old Age

The old man has lived himself into his world. Neither does he have the ideals of youth left to him, nor to him does “the future” seem to hold “promise of anything new at all” (396 Zusatz 64). The future, so it seems, has arrived. Struggle has gone and the old man’s life and work have become predictable. Increasingly forgetful of particulars, the old man perseverates on the “maxims of experience” which have guided his life (396 Zusatz 64). He feels himself compelled to “preach to those younger than himself” on this, his hard-won wisdom (396 Zusatz 64).

But this wisdom, this lifeless, complete coincidence of the subject’s activity with its world, leads back to childhood in which there is no opposition, in the same way that the reduction of his physical functions to a process-less habit leads on to the abstract negation of the living individuality, to death (396 Zusatz 64).

Old age is, then, the arrest of interested activity and of opposition, a second childhood and a “return” to an immediacy both physical and mental that culminates in death. The old man thus gains “freedom from it [the world] and in it” (386 22): old age is here the anthropological analogue of Absolute Mind, which is the last moment in the *Philosophy of Mind*. In Absolute Mind, all contingency and externality or “existential forms which do not accord with its [mind’s] Notion (*Begriff*)” are shed, and what remains is only “a liberation which is brought about by the transformation of these forms into an actuality perfectly adequate to the Notion of mind” (382 Zusatz 16). So too in old age the man perfectly coincides with his world, and thus goes back to his beginning (except now the beginning has spiritual as opposed to merely natural significance). Similarly, Hegel describes at the end of *Philosophy of Mind* how “science has gone back to its beginning: its result is the logical system but as a spiritual principle” (574 313). I cannot now pursue the analogy between Absolute Mind and old age for its own sake, but let these two observations suffice. First, that the culmination of Hegel’s system is analogous to senescence, is a thesis the implications of which are significant for debates about what “happens” at the “end” of Hegel’s dialectic. Secondly, it is worth noting that while for Kant human beings ought to attain to moral adulthood, the worthiest mode of maturation for men, for Hegel what must be and what is actually attained is old age, so that Hegel’s conception of man’s vocation (to borrow a more Kantian phrase) extends *past* manhood to old age.

Hegel concludes his discussion of “the ages of man” with two remarks. First he affirms that “the sequence of ages in man’s life is thus rounded into a notionally determined totality of alterations which are produced by the process of the genus with the individual” (396 Zusatz 64).

The first clause of this sentence re-affirms the claim that the “ages of man” mirror the spiritual development of the concept, while the second clause of this sentence is striking because it alludes to the genus-process, one moment of which is the sexual relation.

In his second remark, Hegel states that in order to describe properly “the ages of man” it was necessary to have “had to anticipate a knowledge of concrete mind”, a knowledge which is beyond abstract anthropology (396 Zusatz 64). This point reflects the fact that Hegel’s system itself presupposes its “end” as the veritable ground of its “beginning” in the “beginning” itself; and, more specifically in terms of individual human development, for Hegel the (aged) adult is already implicit in the boy *from* boyhood so that boyhood is only intelligible or rational on Hegel’s terms from the standpoint of the old man.

### **The sexual relation**

The second moment of “physical alterations” occurs in Paragraph 397. This moment is “the sexual relation” (397 64). Compared to the paragraphs describing the preceding moment (“the ages of man”) and the succeeding moment (“waking/sleeping”), Paragraph 397 on “the sexual relation” is strikingly succinct. No *Zusatz* is appended to this paragraph either. Because the paragraph is so notably brief, but of pivotal significance, I quote it here in its entirety:

Next we find the individual subject to a *real* antithesis, leading it to seek and find *itself* in *another* individual. This – the *sexual relation* – on a physical basis, shows, on its one side, subjectivity remaining in an instinctive and emotional harmony of moral life and love, and not pushing these tendencies to an extreme *universal* phase, in purposes political, scientific, or artistic; and, on the other, shows an active half, where the individual is the vehicle of a struggle of universal and objective interests with the given conditions (both of his own existence and of that of the external world), carrying out these universal principles into a unity with the world which is his own work. The sexual tie acquires its moral and spiritual significance and function in the *family* (original emphasis) (397 64).

The “individual subject” subjected to a “real antithesis” is the *masculine* individual subject. The masculine individual finds “itself in another” who is the feminine individual. In this second part of the first sentence, Hegel emphasizes “itself” and “another” together because it is critical to the antithesis and resolution of the sexual relation that, on the one hand, the masculine human being find himself in one who is similar in such a way that in her he is able to recognize himself, but also different in such a way that the antithesis between the (masculine) one and the (feminine) other might be “real” and not merely formal.

In “the ages of man”, Hegel gives an account of the anthropological development of the masculine individual. But there is in the *Philosophy of Mind* no analogous account of the development of the feminine individual (there is no moment, “the ages of woman”). The (human) feminine individual is introduced for the first time in this paragraph of *Philosophy of Mind* not “by herself” but “with” the man. She is introduced so that she may subject the (human) masculine individual to a real antithesis: she is the second term in this antithesis, the second term in the opposition that is sexual difference in its as of yet merely “natural” form.

If Hegel is to get beyond Kant’s treatment of the sexual relation as a relation which can only be thought of from a teleological point of view (in Kant’s sense of teleology), with no constitutive grounding or rational necessity, Hegel needs to ensure that the relation between the two sexes is in no way reducible to the means-end relation of external teleology Hegel finds so vulgar in Kant’s account of the marriage contract. Hegel must show how the male and the female can be different in their similarity if he is to ground their achievement of a more developed unity in difference (ultimately, in marriage for human beings). This task presupposes an account of the female side of the sexual relation, and an account of the female ought to be prepared beginning at least with the animal organism, where sexual difference first achieves its proper distinction as a difference. This is not the case, and in the anthropological context the gap in Hegel’s account of the sexual relation becomes all the more glaring. We are given an account of how boy infants grow into old men, but no analogous account of how girl infants grown into old women.

But Paragraph 397 of *Philosophy of Mind* already harbors clues to how, on Hegel’s own terms, the development of the human feminine individual must be thought.

It must be pointed out that even though from an anthropological standpoint Hegel’s account of the sexual relation is still on a merely “physical basis”, the account of this merely “physical basis” already anticipates the sexual relation in its ostensibly most concrete development in marriage and the family. This anticipation is reminiscent of Hegel’s aforementioned anticipation of concrete mind in his account of “the ages of man”. The “physical” and “mental” characteristics attributed to each sex in this paragraph are, it is important to remember, only anthropological. On Hegel’s view, this is where Kant *stops* in his account of the sexual relation, and it is supposedly on the basis of merely anthropological features that Kant builds his account of marriage (which is therefore only an abstract, contractual account). But here, Hegel makes it clear that the sexual relation does not attain to its ethical significance in the anthropological sphere. Instead, “the sexual tie acquires its moral and spiritual significance and function in the *family*”. It will therefore be necessary, after the analysis of this passage, to consider Hegel’s account of the family, first in the *Philosophy of Right* (which is supposed to be an elaboration of his account in the *Philosophy of Mind*), and finally, in the addendum to this chapter, in *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

I now examine Hegel's characterization of the two sexes from an anthropological standpoint. First, he characterizes the male sex (after the female sex) as "the active half" of the sex relation. The masculine individual shows itself as "the vehicle of a struggle of universal and objective interests with the given conditions (both of his own existence and of that of the external world), carrying out these universal principles into a unity with the world which is his own work" (397 64). Importantly, this characterization of the masculine individual describes the masculine individual in *manhood*, the stage at which, recall, the individual both conserves and advances the world in his objective, universally significant work. However, "the ages of man" does not culminate in manhood, but in old age. In fact, as I've suggested, old age is an analogue of Absolute Mind. The sex relation should then be at once a stage of development in "the ages of man" and the moment of real opposition which succeeds "the stages of man" as a single moment. In the former respect, the sex relation (and the feminine individual with which it is introduced) would not only be reducible to a phase of the masculine individual's development, but also the sex relation, making its debut at manhood, would itself be superseded *as* a stage in the development of man, since the masculine individual moves beyond manhood into old age (with all that means for philosophy as a system). Or else it might be the case that the sex relation (and the corresponding stages of development in the feminine individual) is tacitly present throughout "the ages of man", but that this relation receives a particular significance during the masculine individual's manhood. The latter describes a situation akin to that which I mentioned previously, the idea that there ought to be or is an implicit "ghost" anthropology which accounts for "the ages of woman". There seem to be, then, three alternatives for understanding the feminine side of development, none of which seem to be completely consistent with the account Hegel actually gives.

First, it is possible that the sex relation (and hence the feminine individual) enters on the scene only as the second moment of "physical alterations". But this contention seems untenable, since the description of this second moment refers itself to a specific moment during "the ages of man" (manhood).

That the sex relation (and the feminine individual) are introduced twice, explicitly, and in different ways, is thus a second alternative. This in itself is, from Hegel's point of view, not a problem. It is characteristic of Hegel's system that it recapitulate its moments from "within" and from "without" (for example, the *Phenomenology of Spirit* both the propaedeutic to the *Encyclopedia* and also a moment in the *Encyclopedia* itself [the so-called "Berlin Phenomenology"]). However, the sex relation does not in fact appear during "the ages of man", and it is unclear why this is, especially because it would not necessarily make trouble for Hegel to introduce the sex relation in the ages of man.

The third alternative is that there is a tacit and "parallel" development on the part of the feminine individual, an analogous "ages of woman". This third alternative is, unsurprisingly, not



“incompatible” (not quite the right word for Hegel) with the second alternative. Perhaps Hegel is “bracketing” the development of the feminine individual at this moment in the *Philosophy of Mind* similarly to the way in which he “brackets” the development of spirit which is presupposed by his account of nature, and that this development of the feminine individual could be introduced elsewhere. The problem with this third alternative is that Hegel does not in fact give an explicit account of something like “the ages of woman”, in an anthropological respect or otherwise, in the *Encyclopedia*.

The feminine individual is “subjectivity remaining in an instinctive and emotional harmony of moral life and love” (397 64). The feminine individual does not, however, develop “these tendencies to an extreme universal phase, in purposes political, scientific, or artistic” (397 64). The stage of *adulthood* in “the ages of man” is characterized by the man’s work for the universal, “in purposes political, scientific, or artistic”. The advancement of merely natural tendencies towards their universal forms is something that marks the transition from youth to manhood.

However provisionally, we might speculate at this point that, unlike boys, girls do not achieve an analogue of adulthood (if adulthood is indeed characterized by universally significant work and its corresponding objective world, to which feminine individuals do not attain). If it were the case that feminine individuals do not reach adulthood even in an *anthropological* sense, then we might say that whereas infant boys, little boys, and masculine youth are all little men or, better, little *old* men, it is unclear what young girls are or how they develop (still speaking from an anthropological point of view).

Boy children are to be understood in terms of what they will grow to be, for Hegel. Indeed, in the *Philosophy of Mind*, boys understand *themselves* like this, in terms of their desire to grow up and to become what they ought to be but are not already. Yet if girl children never grow up, if girls never attain to the objective world and to universality in the way that boys must and will, what then? Do girls, like boys, desire to grow up even though, unlike boys, they don’t or can’t? Do they feel the same deficiency that Hegel says boys feel, the feeling that they are not as they ought to be? But if girls feel this feeling do they feel their deficiency as an indication of the shortcomings of their feminine nature, or as a shortcoming in their child being, or both? If they feel deficient, can this feeling of deficiency be remedied if they do not, in any anthropological (or spiritual; see below) sense Hegel gives, become adults? Or do girls lack a feeling of inadequacy altogether, given that they are always all they will ever be? And, finally, if Hegel gives us to understand children not in terms of what they immediately are, but with an eye towards what they must become (adults and, eventually, old men), how can we understand girl children who, apparently, do not become adults, and certainly do not become old men (neither physically, anthropologically, nor spiritually, as I will show)? It is, then, unclear what a “*girl* child” is since as

a *child* she is already all she can be, whereas for Hegel the (boy) *child* is a child insofar as he is not already all that he can be. The “girl child” confounds Hegel’s retrospective notion of the child as little old man, even as an account of “the girl child” is necessary to his account of childhood (anthropological) development.

Even this early in *Philosophy of Mind*, in the Anthropology, what is clear is that “the ages of man” or the development of the masculine individual from infancy until old age requires the feminine individual whose development (if development there is) is as of yet lacking an account. “The ages of man” exhibits a merely formal antithesis, and its succeeding moment, the sexual relation, exhibits a real antithesis. Furthermore, the man (the masculine individual at the stage of manhood) in particular requires the feminine individual. It is significant that the man does not require an adult feminine individual (a “woman”), even by anthropological standards. The man requires that the girl remain “in an instinctive and emotional harmony of moral life and love” and that she not develop, like the man, on the side of the active universal (she must not grow up to become an adult, or, better, an adult old man) (397 64). And if the girl *did* develop on the side of the active universal she would become a member of civil society at the very least, and then she would not be able to maintain the side of the home and the family in the way that Hegel requires. The man does not require an adult woman with whom to enter into the sexual relation; he requires a girl who does not attain to the active universal, who maintains the “other” side of the sexual relation by not becoming, ultimately, an old man.

### **Interlude: Krell’s *Son of Spirit***

Let me pause a moment here to interject some brief critical remarks about David Krell’s novel, *Son of Spirit*. Krell’s novel professes to be a fictional account – which, however, makes an effort to stay “*true to the historical record*” – of Hegel’s relationship to his illegitimate son, Ludwig (my emphasis) (Krell, *Son of Spirit*, xiv). In the preface to his novel, Krell appears to announce a problem, that “spirit can only have sons” (ix). In this way, Krell at least tacitly recognizes from the start of the novel many of the difficulties in philosophical inheritance to which I’ve alluded: spirit disowns its illegitimate sons and does not even acknowledge daughters of any kind (Hegel himself had two legitimate sons, Immanuel and Karl [looking backwards and looking forwards as it were], with his wife Marie von Tucher, and one “illegitimate” son, Ludwig, by a woman called Christiana Charlotte Johanna Burkhardt [she shared his sister’s first name]. Hegel had no daughters). Because of his remarks in the preface and because of his seemingly critical references to specific passages from Hegel’s accounts of family life throughout the novel, we might start to read Krell’s book with the expectation that some *novel* critique of the problem of patrilineal inheritance in Hegel’s philosophy would unfold. We are disappointed.

The story (stories) takes place from Ludwig Hegel's birth, around the time G. W. F. Hegel published the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in 1807, until Ludwig Hegel's death in 1831 at the age of twenty-four (which is the same year as Hegel's death). Krell narrates the story from many different perspectives, including from the perspectives of several women. These women include Wilhelmine Herzlieb (whose name means "Love Heartslove" as Krell wistfully points out [ix]), the fleeting teenaged love interest of the ageing Goethe, "prized", by all, apparently, "for her beauty and amiability" (Krell is here speaking in his own voice) (ix). What Krell seems to completely forget is that Wilhelmine Herzlieb (whom Krell himself refers to informally as Minna, again in his own voice – most likely because she's such a *little* girl at the beginning) was herself an editor, with her own frustrated intellectual aspirations.

Krell tells us he has endeavored in his novel to stick to the historical record (even quoting from Hegel's correspondence) but warns us that he does in fact take some liberties, particularly in the stories of Ludwig Hegel and Herzlieb: "Yet many things in Louis Hegel's and Minna Herzlieb's stories – *if only because of the incompleteness of the record* – called for invention" (my emphasis) (xiv). One might forgive a novelist invention. But one might also begin to question why the "incompleteness of the record" in the case of Herzlieb's "story" "called for" the "invention" of episodes in Krell's novel in which Herzlieb is incestuously spied on, naked, while bathing, by Ludwig Hegel (Herzlieb and Ludwig Hegel were step-siblings at one point). And one might question why the "incompleteness of the record" demands the "invention" of Herzlieb's lovelorn self-identification with Otilie, the character from Goethe's own novel, while Herzlieb is wasting away in the insane asylum having failed at marriage. Presumably this is because, when it was all said and done, the complete historical record would have revealed Herzlieb hallucinating *Goethe*, the man who supposedly loved her in her prime, a prime which she wasted, as it would seem ("gather ye rosebuds while ye may!") (the fact that she died in an insane asylum and that her marriage failed *is* part of the historical record) (124).

In short, in Krell's account of Herzlieb's story, Herzlieb begins as a promising, intelligent, and, above all *gorgeous* young girl (Krell let's her painter himself attest to her beauty, so that we are assured). This girl is, however, uncertain of what to do with Goethe's ardor. She ends up doing nothing (the historical record, too, seems to indicate as much), and the tacit implication in Krell's narration seems to be that in doing nothing Herzlieb *missed her moment*. From Krell's more or less unwitting point of view, the "feminist" saving grace of it all seems to be that Goethe (one of the novel's principal heroes, it could be argued) does not want to marry Herzlieb but instead wants to *seduce* her (she could have been one of the genius' women!). This read of Krell's perhaps unconscious intentions with the Herzlieb narrative is certainly consonant with his sympathies in his more formal article on Hegel, "Lucinde's Shame" (there are more breasts addressed in this article, for those keeping score on that count [see below]), in which, against Hegel, he glorifies the character Lucinde in Schlegel's novel for her sexual freedom, for her giving in to the "seducers"

Hegel very much fears in the *Philosophy of Right* (and in his own novel, Hegel's conservative approach to sex – which sometimes gets overruled by his passion – is perhaps his fatal flaw). Alongside Krell's own article in *Feminist Interpretations of G.W.F. Hegel*, in "Hegel, Sexual Ethics, and the Oppression of Women: Comments on Krell's 'Lucinde's Shame'" Frances Olsen (graciously) remarks that Krell – no doubt one of philosophy's many "men of goodwill" – ends up portraying Lucinde as a "sexy woman who has a passionate love affair with a married man [and] is shameless about it" and, in doing so, substitutes a "male fantasy", an "escape fantasy", for a more rigorous consideration of sexist dynamics and institutions both inside and outside of Hegel's texts (Olsen, "Comments on Krell's 'Lucinde's Shame'", pgs. 109-11). In its treatment of girls and women, Krell's *Son of Spirit* seems to be mainly an elaboration of that male escape fantasy.

Another woman whom Krell makes speak is Christiana Burkhardt, whom Krell's Hegel constantly refers to as "the bitch" while waxing poetic about "her vast breasts" which Burkhardt, in Krell's novel, never fails to "thrust" at Hegel (Krell 9-10). Even in her own voice, Burkhardt comes across as crude, stupid, and bestial (specifically, "bovine" [Krell 9]), as if Burkhardt speaking were little more than the perfectly complimentary counterpart to Hegel's second hand reports on her nature. I will only ask of Krell's depiction of Burkhardt one thing: why several years after Hegel's marriage to von Tucher, when the historical records suggest that Hegel never met Burkhardt again after his marriage, why did the "incompleteness" of that record demand that in *Son of Spirit* Burkhardt and Hegel reunite for another tryst, possibly resulting in yet another illegitimate child (161)? "Even after all these years I am the only one who knows how to please him", boasts Krell's Burkhardt (162).

In critiquing Krell's novel, I am not concerned that Krell does dishonor to Hegel's chaste reputation by inventing some off-the-historical-record extra-marital flings for Hegel. What I wish to point out, referencing Krell's novel and article as two extreme examples, is the way in which philosophical interest in girls and their development can easily devolve into "male fantasy", especially at the hands of the "men of goodwill". Krell seems to represent the position of the seducers Hegel warns against, the ones who threaten to take away all a girl has (her ethical vocation as wife, contingent upon her virginity, according to Hegel). Stuck between Hegel's marriage and Krell's sexual love, a "girl" might want to pause and consider that the genuine "alternative" is not necessarily waiting in the wings, as the mere opposite of that which would normally be chosen. Krell glorifies a man like Goethe and the girls who run away with him. But in rejecting the husband (Hegel), we need not fall into the arms of the seducer (Krell).

### **And now, back to the "real" Hegel...**

To return to Hegel, in summary, from an anthropological standpoint Hegel has shown how the feminine individual and the masculine individual each exhibit two distinct sides of the sex

relation. The feminine remains at the level of emotion and instinct and does not develop further, while the masculine develops to the level of the active universal (and beyond, in old age). In manhood, the masculine individual has an especial requirement for the feminine individual.

But Hegel does not explain how these different individuals are implicitly similar, as they must be in order for further developments in the sex relation (such as marriage) to have a basis. The two individuals in the sex relation must be two similar beings. To illustrate the point rather bluntly, the sex relation proper (for example, at the anthropological moment) cannot take place between a masculine human being and a female dog. Like Kant, though for different reasons, Hegel does not support bestiality. In its human instantiation, even at the anthropological level, the sex relation must be a relation between two similar, in this case, *human* beings. And even thus far, doubt is cast on the humanness of girls in Hegel.

To elaborate Hegel's account of the human sex relation, we now consider Objective Mind and ethical life in the *Philosophy of Right*.

Objective Mind is the second principal determination in *Philosophy of Mind*. Whereas Subjective Mind occupies Hegel for more than half of *Philosophy of Mind*, Objective Mind is a much briefer section, the briefest being Absolute Mind. The *Philosophy of Right* is in fact intended as an elaboration of this second section of *Philosophy of Mind*, and so it might be treated as integral to the *Encyclopedia*. I will introduce Objective Mind as a segue way to the relevant sections in the latter.

Hegel describes Objective Mind as “the absolute idea, but only existing *in posse*” (483 241). In the realm of objective mind, which is the realm of right, free will exhibits the following tension, that, on the one hand, freedom is its “inward function and aim”, but, on the other hand, the free will is confronted by external circumstances and an already existing world (483 241). The aim of Objective Mind is to reconcile freedom as a merely inward aim with the external world as it is given, seemingly standing over against inward freedom (484 241). In other words, the aim of Objective Mind is to “realize its concept”, to bring it out of potential into full actuality, and to have the world completely coincide with this its concept (484 241). This actualization of the concept bequeaths necessity upon the makeup of the external world or, better, it discovers necessity in what appears initially to be contingent and external from will, by perpetually producing and conserving the world (484 241).

The stage of Objective Mind corresponds to the stage of manhood in “the ages of man”. And, as Hegel suggested in the Anthropology in Subjective Mind, the sexual relation receives a prominent role in this, the macro-systemic analogue of anthropological manhood. Here is where the sex relation recapitulates itself, as an explicit dialectical moment, this time in its ethical and

spiritual significance. Sexual difference gains this significance in marriage, as Hegel anticipated during the Anthropology. Immediately what is striking is the fact that the previous three forms of the sex relation pertained to three distinct beings, the plant, the animal, and the human being (although according to Hegel, the human being is merely the perfection of the animal organism). This fourth iteration depicts the sexual relation between two (supposedly) human beings once more, but this time so that “the physical difference [as described ostensibly in the *Nature* and in the Anthropology] thus [now] appears at the same time as a difference of intellectual and moral type” (519 255).

Though Hegel gives no account of the *anthropological* development of the feminine individual (“the ages of woman”), he alludes to the “adult” stage of the feminine individual, the supposed result of her upbringing, her moral and intellectual qualities already described in the Anthropology. I’ve suggested that in a certain respect, for Hegel, the feminine individual does not quite develop in moral and intellectual ways, but rather “develops” in a way somewhat between the natural and the spiritual. In what follows, I will make good on this heretofore provisional claim.

Objective Mind divides itself into three moments, which are identical to the moments which divide the whole of *Philosophy of Right*. The first moment is abstract right, which pertains to right in its formal existence as property; the second is morality, right reflected inward as merely subjective will; and the third is ethical life in which “the free will is the substantial will”, and in which the individual subject is constituted by or is an accident of what is essential, universal substance (487 243). Again just as in *Philosophy of Right*, ethical life unfolds into three moments: the family, civil society, and the state. Because the sexual relation is featured in the first moment of ethical life, I focus on Hegel’s account of the family, but I also mention certain characteristics of civil society since it is important in the context of a discussion of sexual difference to recount the transition from the family to civil society.

### **The sex relation in the *Philosophy of Right***

In *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel indicates three moments of family life. The first is marriage, the second is property and assets, the third is the raising of children and the dissolution of the family (Hegel 2008 159). In recounting these three moments, particularly the first and the third, Hegel tacitly constructs another developmental narrative akin to that relayed in “the ages of man”. The trajectory is relatively clear for boy children, who grow up both to establish new families and gain membership as sons in a second family, the universal family that is civil society (238 263). But Hegel is much more reticent to say *how* girls develop, are educated, and grow up, even as he is forthcoming about the end he thinks girls are destined to reach.

I begin with some general remarks on the family in *Philosophy of Right*, and then proceed to Hegel's account of childhood in the section on the family. In the latter, I seek a spiritual analogue of "the ages of man" and clues to the development of girls. I then consider the remaining relevant passages from the *Philosophy of Right*, with references to *the Philosophy of Mind* when appropriate.

The family is the moment of immediacy and nature in ethical life; it is the "*immediate substantiality* of spirit", having "as its determination the spirit's *feeling* of its own unity, which is love" (original emphasis) (158 199). What unites the family, then, is not the authority of law as it is in the case of the state, but a feeling, which is the feeling of love. In the family, spirit (or mind; *Geist*) *feels* its own unity, which is an immediate, natural unity; it does not yet, for example, *recognize it in law, or know it*.

A family is, furthermore, like an organism, in that each person in the family is not "present in it" as a mere part or as an independent entity, but, rather, is present in the unity of the family "as a *member*" (original emphasis) (158 199).

If the family is an immediate, natural unity that is like that of an organism, which organism is the family like? To which kind of life is family life analogous? This passage on the ethical life of the family juxtaposed to the relevant passages from *Philosophy of Nature* suggest that family life is most closely akin to animal life. This is because, first, the family has attained to feeling: indeed, it is the very feeling of its own unity, love – or, love is its life (the family is a loving animal). The plant, however, is not yet imbued with self-feeling. Secondly, each part of the family is a veritable member, just as each organ of the animal is a member and not a mere part. With the plant, however, each part is a mere part, just another individual that can indifferently pass into any other.

Family life is infused with love. Each member of the family as a member feels its membership in the implicit unity of the family as love. And yet, in the Additions to Paragraph 158 in which Hegel describes the determination of family life as love, he defines love as love between a man and a woman on equal generational footing (thus excluding the love between parents and children). Love produces and resolves a contradiction. The contradiction is, on the one hand, that I, as one side of the sex or love relation, renounce my independent existence.

Otherwise, if I were independent, I would feel deficient and crave completion. But, on the other hand (and this is the second moment of love), in another person I find the independent existence again which I had renounced, and s/he finds herself or himself likewise in me. Even though he is here speaking implicitly of the sexual relation in its nascent ethical mode – love between a man and a woman of similar standing – Hegel focuses on the *symmetry* characterizing

this relation. It is clear, as mentioned in the first chapter, that this is the beginning of the ethical culmination of the sex relation as a logical determination.

According to this introductory account of love (Paragraph 158), it would seem that the contradiction that is love and its resolution are encountered in just the same way by the feminine individual as it is by the masculine individual. The feminine individual and the masculine individual find recognition in each other from out of their difference. As previously cited, this recognition and discovery of unity in difference presupposes that the two aspects of the sexual relation, the two members in love, are similar beings. In the *Philosophy of Nature*, the two similar but different beings were animals, not plants. The animal organism in nature expressed the logical sex relation. We expect, in turn, that the spiritual climax of the sex relation will be had by two human individuals consummating their merely *animal* being, in love.

For now, I move to the children and their upbringing, the third moment of family life. The child actualizes and objectifies the merely implicit and subjective relation between his parents. From the natural standpoint, the birth of a child is the result of the parent's relationship and it thus succeeds this relationship. However, from the standpoint of mind, the child precedes the parents in the sense that only through the child does the parents' relationship attain to actuality (173 210). Hegel writes that in the child (of unspecified sex) "the mother loves her husband and he his wife; in it [the child], they see their love before them" (173 Addition H 210). It is the case, then, that there is no *actual marital* relationship for Hegel without the child. The wife truly becomes a wife only insofar as she loves her husband through her child, through having become a mother; the husband truly becomes a husband only insofar as he loves his wife through his child, through having become a father. The marital relationship proper is and must entail a parental relationship.

It is the child's right to be "*brought up and supported* at the expense of the family" (original emphasis) (174 211). In this vein, parents have the right of authority over the "*arbitrary will*" of their child (original emphasis) (174 211); without this right over the arbitrary will of the child, the child would not be subjected to discipline. And the undisciplined child would not (properly) grow up, would not to attain to his spiritual destiny – the attainment to which is the achievement of the actual universal which the *animal* genus process fails to reach.

The child's (undisciplined) freedom remains in childhood "entrammelled in nature", and this is why the parents must raise the child well in order to educate her or him to the level of the universal (174 211). "What they [children] are destined to become" cannot be arrived at after the manner of animals following their instinct (174 Addition H 211). Since instinct is inadequate to the achievement of the human child's spiritual destiny, the child must instead be *educated* (here by the parents; Hegel does not mention teachers in these passages).



Beginning with the child's upbringing in the family, education is first the raising of oneself above the natural (ultimately above the animal life-love of the family), and then, further, "in its absolute determination, [it] is therefore the liberation and work towards a higher liberation" (187 225). This "higher liberation" is the "absolute transition to the infinitely subjective substantiality of ethical life, which is no longer immediate and natural, but spiritual and at the same time raised to the shape of universality" (187 225). The upbringing of children or their education, then, begins in the family but has its end *beyond* family life. Education traces the transition from the natural immediacy of family life to the truly spiritual attainment of infinite subjectivity beyond the family. If it is to be said that the parents' task is to raise their children, it must be added that the proper upbringing of children entails raising them to progress beyond familial life. The aim of the family is to have its members move beyond the family; the aim of the family is its dissolution. And, once more, in education with its end beyond family life and in its dissolution, the human sex relation solves the "problem" the merely animal sex relation failed to solve, actualizing the universal – at least for the *sons*.

In the "Anthropology", recall how the feminine individual does not reach the level of the active universal, and that this indeed must be the case in order for the sexual relation to achieve a unity in *difference*. But if upbringing and the education of children, the aim of the family, is upbringing and education with the aim of having the children leave the family on their progress onwards towards the fulfillment of their spiritual destiny, upbringing and education that begin as preparation for the introduction to the universal, then it would seem that girl children are not raised or educated, at least not in the way boys are. Girls do not reach the universal at all in the way boys do and must. When Hegel speaks of the upbringing of children, he is then only speaking of the upbringing of *boy* children.

To continue with the analysis of the text, there is a notable difference between the references to the upbringing of boy children in the Anthropology and their upbringing in the third moment of the family in the *Philosophy of Right*, a difference already mentioned but one which I am now in a position to elaborate. In the Anthropology, Hegel claims that boys feel a deficiency in their being, that they are not yet what they ought to be and what they must become. Boys feel even *as* boys that they must fulfill a destiny, and that this destiny requires them to grow up and stop being boys (stop being animal-boys destined to fail at achieving the universal). Boys *long* to grow up. But here, in the *Philosophy of Right*, Hegel remarks that "one of the chief moments in a child's upbringing is discipline [something he also thinks is indispensable, of course, in the *Philosophy of Mind*], the purpose of which is to break the child's self-will in order to eradicate the merely sensuous and natural" (174 Addition H 211). And then, at the end of Addition H to Paragraph 174, he concludes that "unless the feeling of subordination, *which creates a longing to grow up*, is nurtured in the children, they become forward and impertinent" (my emphasis) (174 Addition H 211).

Here in stark contrast to the Anthropology, Hegel contends that the desire to grow up must be instilled in the boy through discipline and subordination. Otherwise, the child becomes saucy, refusing to obey and subordinate himself to the most important source of pre-rational authority in his young life – his parents. This discrepancy between the two passages on growing up cannot, so it seems, be accounted for by the different standpoints (the natural and the ethical or incipiently spiritual, respectively) invoked by both passages. In fact, according to the second passage from the *Philosophy of Right*, the natural in the boy is what is tamed and disciplined because what is natural in human being must be worked up into a second nature, out of its initial immediacy. But in the first passage from the Anthropology it would seem that the boy need not work to eradicate the natural in him to the extent that it is a natural instinct of his to want to become an adult. There, the child's will need not be broken and a new, habituated longing to grow up need not be instilled in him since he already has a natural yearning to do so. Indeed, Hegel even represents this view again in the *Philosophy of Right* itself, when he writes that “the need for an upbringing is present in children as their own feeling of dissatisfaction within themselves at the way they are – as the drive to belong to the adult world whose superiority they sense, or as the desire to grow up” (175 212).

It is not as if from one standpoint the boy grows up on his own naturally and from another standpoint the boy is brought up by his parents through discipline. Rather, there need not be discipline or, better, there need not be a discipline imposed for the specific purpose of breaking the boy's will if boys already by nature want to become men. The point I am making is that even in his account of boy children, Hegel flounders, however slightly, especially on the question of how growing up is accomplished: whether it happens because boys by nature feel themselves lacking as boy children and therefore, on the basis of that lack, strive to become grown ups, as if spontaneously; or whether boys grow up because of the parental discipline that must be applied to break their defiant wills. Do boys grow up naturally, or must they be *compelled* to grow up, and coerced into adulthood? As I will show shortly, this question is also relevant to girl children in Hegel. But with girls the question is riddled with even deeper problems.

Hegel continues to describe the parents' educational duties towards their (boy) children. On the one hand, in its positive determination, the upbringing boys receive from their parents instills in them a sense for the ethical in the form of immediate feeling (175 212). To put it more plainly, before the proverbial “age of reason”, boys become acquainted with the ethical in its nascent form: boys are suffused with a feeling for the ethical from a young age in the modes of “love, trust, and obedience” (175 212). This prepares them for the subsequent and hard-won, mature receipt of reason. On the other hand, in its negative determination, the beginnings of education aim to raise the children “out of the natural immediacy in which they originally exist to self-sufficiency and freedom of personality, thereby enabling them to leave the natural unit of the family” (175 212). This negative determination of the raising of children reiterates the point that

the goal of raising children in the family is to have them become independent personalities that supersede and move beyond family life. Indeed, this is how Hegel describes the “ethical dissolution of the family”, which “consists in the fact that the children are brought up to become free personalities and, when they have come of age, are recognized as legal persons and as capable both of holding free property of their own and of founding their own families – the sons as heads of families and the daughters as wives” (177 214). The ethical dissolution of the family is its completion.

But the family is only dissolved with the directive that children of both sexes re-establish the family. Boys grow up to become husbands and thus fathers. And, importantly, though Hegel does not mention civil society in this passage, grown boys (or, according to the Anthropology, the youth) also exit the (original) family altogether, even as they are re-establishing the (reproductive) family by simultaneously entering civil society; for these grown boys, civil society is a kind of surrogate family whose members are all independent of and alienated from one another, while at the same time they are sons of civil society itself and like brothers to one another (238 263). On the other hand, with the ethical dissolution of the family, girls somehow grow up to be wives/mothers. But girls do not enter civil society. Their destiny, as I will explain momentarily, is confined to family life and its reproduction.

The end of children’s upbringing is differentiated on the basis of sex. In “the ages of man”, Hegel tracks the anthropological development of boy children. There, boy children are from the start understood not in terms of what they immediately are, but in terms of what they ought to and must become. Here, in the *Philosophy of Right*, the boy child’s educational trajectory from home to civil society is projected by Hegel, and it is by the guiding principle of this trajectory (which is peculiar to boy children) that the family comes to appear as a moment subordinate to civil society, a moment to be superseded for the sake of the grown up boys’ advancement into manhood and beyond. On the other hand, we have come to see that Hegel says nothing about the development of girls from an anthropological standpoint. What has been cited thus far, however, suggests that girls do not develop like boys since unlike boys even from an anthropological point of view, girls do not attain to the level of the “active universal”. Now from the more spiritual standpoint of the *Philosophy of Right*, the fact that girls are not raised towards the universal (the work of men in civil society) means that girls have a strictly familial destiny. It is the supreme aim of girls in life to remain in the immediate, animal realm of feeling, loving, family life. So far, this means that in order to adequately manifest the logical concept of sexual difference; in order for human sexual difference to avoid the pitfall of animal sexual difference, girls must remain in immediate family life so that grown boys can go out and win the universal before which the mere animal *dies*. And so while boys grow up to establish both new families as father-husbands, and to establish themselves as free, independent personalities in civil society attaining to the universal, girls move from one family to another, from the family in which they were born daughters (Hegel doesn’t

mention sisters in *Philosophy of Right*) to the family in which they become wife-mothers. For girls, in other words, the ethical dissolution of the family signifies nothing more than the reestablishment of the family...while the grown sons are off winning the universal in accordance with the logical concept.

Having now brought the reading of Hegel's text to the moment at the edge of familial life, I now consider in greater detail the first moment of family life, marriage. I do so, however, not by following the sequence of Hegel's own exposition. Instead, I do so by following the girl, about whom we know little. The girl is currently on the brink of the ethical dissolution of family life. I thus begin, within the moment of marriage, with Hegel's account of the education and growth of girls, in order to account for their development as far as possible on Hegel's own terms, up until the point of their supposed maturation with their entry into marriage.

In the H, G Addition to Paragraph 166 in the midst of his discussion of marriage, Hegel writes:

Women (*Frauen*) may well be educated, but they are not made for the higher sciences, for philosophy and certain artistic productions which require a universal element. Women may have insights, taste, and delicacy, but they do not possess the ideal. (166 Addition H,G 207).

This is the only passage which directly addresses the development of the feminine individual in something more than a passing allusion.

In this passage, Hegel admits that "women" are, like boys, "educated", but not with the same aim or for the same purposes. But if we refer again to Hegel's definition of education as, even in its beginnings in the family, an arduous upbringing that trains (boy) children for a future in the world of universal, objectively meaningful work, it becomes meaningless to speak of the education of "women". "Women" lack the universal (Hegel already indicates this in the Anthropology) and therefore cannot, strictly speaking, be educated, do philosophy, or even do art, because both the latter require induction into the universal. If "women" cannot do philosophy, moreover, they can never achieve the spiritual, concrete, universal self-knowledge about which Hegel speaks in the introduction to the *Philosophy of Mind*, and without which, as previously mentioned, the human being as such cannot fulfill himself. If "women" cannot be philosophers, they are not, even implicitly, human beings.

Relatedly, Hegel claims in this passage that "women" do not possess the ideal. This claim has important consequences. It means that "women" are not, like boy children are, from the very beginning of their development something more than what they immediately show themselves to be, even as mere children. Those Hegel calls "women" (*Frauen*) never get beyond feeling, but

remain at the stage of insight, taste, and delicacy. By the standards of masculine development – which are the only standards Hegel formally elaborates – “women” do not grow up, and, indeed, they barely develop in their own peculiar way, as I will show.

It seems remiss to call these feminine individuals, who remain at the stage of feeling, “women” since they are not “adult” in any of Hegel’s most rigorous senses of adulthood (or, rather, of manhood). However, it seems equally inappropriate to call these feminine individuals girls, as if these feminine individuals could be analogues of their masculine counterparts, boys who do in fact “grow up”. I have argued that boys are nothing by themselves, but are instead to be thought of as little old men, anthropologically and, further, spiritually: just as the concept in the foregoing passage from the *Phenomenology* is already (implicitly) actual, since the end is lodged in the beginning and even reduces this beginning to itself from the start, so too in that sense are boys already what they are destined to become – old men (like Hegel) from a spiritual standpoint, philosophers, the individual vehicles of Absolute Spirit which comes to know itself through the individual in its full concretion. But the girl (the feminine individual who develops in accordance with her peculiar sex) is not a “girl” in that same sense in which a boy is a “boy”. It appears that the young feminine individual (the girl) is always already more or less what she ought to be. She is born into nature, like the boy, but unlike the boy, there she remains. Since the destiny of the girl is not a spiritual destiny or even an anthropological one for which she must rigorously work and transform her immediate nature (she persists with feeling and instinct), all terms which invoke something like “the ages of woman” including “girl child”, “young girl”, “young woman”, “woman”, and “old woman” are problematic. For Hegel, for whom development ultimately culminates with the end becoming completely contained within and presupposed by the beginning which it grounds, the stages of the life of a “girl child” don’t exist as anything but, perhaps, stages of *natural* development: the “girl” as an animal organism, although indeed as a *female* animal organism, might have a certain way of developing. And yet this merely natural development of the girl never itself develops into a higher, more spiritual development. If girls were analogous to boys in Hegel, they would be little old women, since Hegel can only think of boys from the standpoint of old age. But since girls do not develop past the stage at which they immediately seem to be, they cannot be thought of as little old women (from a spiritual standpoint). If there were old women from a spiritual standpoint in Hegel, they ought to be philosophers; but, alas, Hegel tells us that girls are not budding philosophers and that from the point of view of spirit, there are no old women.

Neither is the problem contained on one side of the sex relation, for these questions raise an even more confounding one: how are we to think “the child” at all? If we don’t know on Hegel’s terms what we mean when we call a girl a “girl”, we are also thrown into doubt about children more generally. If what we call “the girl child” cannot be thought of as a “child” at all when to be a child means to be always already an inchoate adult, then the problem of “the girl

child” from a spiritual standpoint introduces the possibility of thinking children differently, and of thinking development in a different way. It would hardly seem likely to conclude, even on Hegel’s terms, that the “girl child” in no sense develops spiritually, even as it is clear that she does not develop spiritually in order to attain to the level of the universal and to be able to comprehend the true in the form of the true, to be a philosopher thinking in terms of the concept. But perhaps, thinking a bit beyond Hegel now, there is another way to think things like children, spiritual development, and change over time without always already reducing the beginning to the end. The prospect of thinking children and development differently comes out of the problem in Hegel of “the girl child” and her development. The “girl child” is a figure of a child in Hegel which shatters his account of what a (boy) child is, and thus “the child” demands to be thought differently; the “*development*” of the “girl child” becomes a problem too, since Hegel offers no model for human development that is not educative and spiritual in the aforementioned ways.

By “girls” – and this is important – I am not referring to spiritually stunted women, or child-women, meaning, women who are kept in a childlike state, infantilized, or who are prevented from “growing up” – even though it might very well be the case that the “women” in Hegel’s texts are precisely overgrown girls whose intellectual, spiritual growth is frustrated. But to lament the depiction of “women” as overgrown girls who need their chance to go out into the world of war and work with the men and labor for universal Spirit, however, risks doing something I do not wish to do in this piece, which is to prescribe the “solution” of *womanhood*. Thinkers like Mills and Ravven seem to critique Hegel with just this aim, to urge him to bring women forward in the dialectical march of universal history. I disagree that this is the most fruitful way to think through the problems with sexual difference that arise in Hegel’s texts. If we focus on bemoaning the fact that “women” in Hegel are confined to the home and in this way are stalled and trapped, we risk avoiding the difficult work of critiquing Hegel’s notion of spiritual development and all its attendant assumptions about, for example, the relationships between earth, plants, animals, and human beings, in the first place; this is because in the former case we become invested in “correcting” Hegel by including or making room for women in his texts, rather than proceeding by interrogating the terms and assumptions by which his text necessarily comes to marginalize “women” – rather than thinking how to let the text twist free of itself.

However, because I refrain from advocating a more Hegelian “solution” to the problem of girls, does not mean I think the solution is to hold girls captive in eternal girlhood. Elsewhere, it has been my intention to critique the thinking which splits the problem of the girl into a dichotomy: on the one hand, there is the mature, adult woman who is, finally, truly equal to the man, on the other hand there is the feeble, vulnerable little girl, the eternal child who refuses or is refused the right of adulthood. My idea is that refusing to accept “growing up” as either a philosophical or an existential solution should not amount to refusing growth altogether. What is required is to think development without the normativity and “teleology” rampant in Hegel: such a

thinking of development moves beyond the dilemma, eternal girl or grown woman, with all the dangers each side entails. In any case, for now, the task is to hold open and further cultivate the problem of the girl child in Hegel, instead of being too quick to reach for a dialectical (re)solution.

In this way, when I refer to the girl, the girl child, or girls, I am conjuring a specific difficulty in Hegel's text, which I am about to further explicate. I am invoking with the word "girl" not a feminine individual at a particular developmental stage, but a question about the concept of development, a problem that arises in Hegel at the moment of the figure of the girl.

To return to the text, I have suggested that girls cannot be educated or "raised", despite what Hegel says in the Addition to Paragraph 166, since the education and raising of (boy) children has a very specific meaning that does not apply to girls. However, my contention that girls do not develop from an anthropological standpoint and from a spiritual standpoint seems to be contradicted by the rather obvious fact that in Hegel's text girls are raised and educated, if not to attain to the realization of absolute mind, then to occupy the roles of wife and mother. Hegel's account of the girl's development from girl to wife-mother is untenable. In what remains of this section I first render Hegel's account of the girl's ostensible development from virginal daughter to wife-mother, her journey from family to family which is supposed to be her fulfillment and liberation. Then I show how Hegel's account of the girl's transition cannot hold, and I do so with reference to another section of the Addition to Paragraph 166, Hegel's reference to women and plants.

To think of marriage in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, we must think of two individuals, a masculine individual and a feminine individual. The masculine individual is on the cusp of manhood, having begun his career and advancement in civil society (and beyond). The feminine individual, the girl, is more or less what she always is in the life of natural immediacy, feeling, and instinct: she is still immersed in the life of love in the family into which she is born. Each member of the love relation feels deficient without the other and renounces his or her independence; and then each member of the love relation again finds his or her independence by discovering his or her reflection in his or her partner. We will track how this love relation comes to constitute the marital relation. It will happen that the love relation is such that mutual recognition in the beloved is impossible, and this is because the feminine individual is not in fact a 'different *but similar*' individual to the masculine individual. She is instead altogether disparate and can be no partner to the man.

Marriage has a twofold origin, a subjective origin and an objective origin.

In its subjective aspect, marriage originates either in "the particular inclination" of the two individuals (the youth or young man, and the girl in love), or in the "foresight" of their parents

(162 201). Of these, Hegel has more esteem for the latter origin of marriage. The parents' planning is favored because it is more principled and less rooted in feeling, although both origins in their subjective aspect are merely contingent. On the other hand, Hegel displays contempt for the "modern dramas and other artistic presentations" which depict heated romantic love affairs because of the "pervasive element of frostiness" in such works (162 202). The coldness in such passionate works is introduced by the utter contingency of "the particular inclination" of two individuals who enter into a love relation with one another on the basis of this inclination which, Hegel snaps, "may well be of infinite importance for *them*, but it is of no such importance *in itself*" (162 202).

The objective origin of marriage is "the free consent of the persons concerned" to form a union of "self-limitation", this "self-limitation" being in fact the "liberation" of each partner (161 201). This "free consent" is an important moment for Hegel. Without it, in the cases of marriages which are arranged solely by the parents, the girl is held in low esteem: "among those peoples who hold the female sex in little respect, the parents arrange marriages arbitrarily, without consulting the individuals concerned" (162 Addition H 202). It is the girl who is primarily disrespected by such an arrangement because her entire life is bound up in the family, while the man "has another field of ethical activity" – his entire being is not reducible to his family life (164 Addition G 205).

For a similar reason, before the girl is married off, she must take care to avoid "*seducers*" (164 Addition G 205). Her honor and her being are thoroughly entwined with her virginity, which must not be taken until she can have sex for procreation within the confines of marriage. The girl's virginity is all she has before marriage, and its being in tact is what allows her to be worthy of entering into this, the marital relation in which her vocation as a wife-mother may be fulfilled. In contrast, the man's extra-marital love affairs are not disastrous to him: "it should be noted that a girl loses her honour in [the act of] physical surrender, which is not so much the case with a man, who has another field of ethical activity apart from the family" (164 Addition G 205). The girl must then beware of (masculine) seducers<sup>3</sup> since she, not they, has everything to lose. "A girl's vocation consists essentially only in the marital relationship; what is therefore required is that love should assume the shape of marriage, and that the different moments which are present in love should attain their truly rational relation to each other" (164 Addition G 205-6). Marriage protects the girl, whose virginity must be guarded and not squandered before or outside of marriage, lest the marital relation – the sole site of the girl's liberation (as wife-mother) – lose its ethical significance. Indeed, marriage is "rightfully ethical love" which purges itself of all merely subjective aspects of romantic and carnal love, and which at most *subordinates* the moment of "natural vitality" to the self-conscious union that is marriage as an ethical relationship (161 Addition G 200; 201). Marriage is not to be understood from a physical standpoint, and it is not to be understood, as Kant understands it, from the standpoint of the civil contract. For Hegel, marriage is "essentially an ethical relationship" (161 Addition G 201) which, since it contains "the



moment of feeling” is on the one hand intrinsically “unstable”, but which on the other hand ought to defend its rightfully ethical character against the arbitrary dissolution threatened by, for example, extra-marital desires and love affairs (163 Addition H, G 203). In this way, marriage is supposed to be the spiritual answer to the logical determination of sexual difference.

The developmental trajectory Hegel very roughly sketches and prescribes for the girl is, then, her journey as a virginal daughter in her parents’ home to the achievement of her vocation and freedom with her role as wife-mother in her new husband’s home. Hopefully, along the way, she has successfully avoided all injuries to her honor. Hopefully, the girl has managed to avoid seducers and their romantic, compelling arguments along the way from home to home.

But this account cannot stand. To support this claim, I quote again from the H,G Addition to Paragraph 166:

The difference between man and woman is the difference between animal and plant; the animal is closer in character to man, the plant to woman, for the latter is a more peaceful process of unfolding whose principle is the more indeterminate unity of feeling (166 Addition H,G 207).

The Addition concludes:

The education of women takes place imperceptibly, as if through the atmosphere of representational thought, more through living than through the acquisition of knowledge, whereas man attains his position only through the attainment of thought and numerous technical exertions (166 Addition H,G 207).

The first sentence quoted above identifies the “difference between man and woman” with the “difference between animal and plant”. We have seen, however, that the relationship of plant to animal is the relationship of that which necessarily sacrifices itself to a superior being whose “right” it is to consume what in its environment belongs to it. Indeed, the dialectical transition from plant to animal is not merely a transition from means to end: it is (*at least it is supposed to be*) a necessary, rationally justified development. If the feminine side of the sex relation is related to the masculine side of the sex relation as the plant is related to the animal, then the feminine individual sacrifices and subordinates itself to the masculine individual. The two individuals are thus utterly disparate; they do not meet, like the two sides of the sex relation ought to do, in equilibrium and stasis as two similar (yet different) beings. Instead, the animal-man demonstrates through his consumption of the plant-girl that she is nothing to him, and nothing in herself. This is in utter contrast to the similar but different ideal love relation. It would have been more in keeping with what Hegel wants to demonstrate about the rightfully ethical character of love and marriage for him to say that the feminine individual is analogous to the feminine animal, and the masculine

individual is analogous to the masculine animal. In that case, there would be two similar beings confronting one another at the same time across (sexual) difference. On the other hand it could just as easily be the case that there is also something amiss with Hegel's account of animal sexual difference. It is not clear even whether sex difference in animals is a relation of two similar but different beings. Perhaps female animals on Hegel's account would have to sacrifice and subordinate themselves to the male animals.

In her article, "Matter and Form: Hegel, Organicism, and the Difference between Women and Men", Alison Stone examines the ways in which, for Hegel, women are physically "preeminently suited to family life" (Stone, "Matter and Form", pg. 212). She does this by turning to Hegel's account of animal sexual difference and anatomical difference in his *Philosophy of Nature*. While her attention is mostly directed towards the relationship between the nature and spirit texts in respect to the problem of sexual difference, with a nod to the *Logic* Stone argues (successfully, in my opinion) that Hegel's understanding of the relationship between the sexes is, however unsavory, "conceived...in metaphysical rather than narrowly biological...sex difference...for Hegel, is ultimately a metaphysical difference and is only secondarily anatomical" (Stone, "Matter and Form", pg. 218). I am sympathetic to Stone's critique of Hegel's account of sexual difference, and I am particularly supportive of her more systematic approach to Hegel's account turning as she does to the *Philosophy of Nature* and referring too to the logic books. The issue I have with Stone's critique is that she does not question that human sexual difference is traceable to animal sexual difference in the *Nature*. It ought to be on Hegel's account, but it isn't. As I've been arguing, marriage is akin to the relationship between animal and plant (not a sexual relationship, even) rather than to the relationship between two animals, one male the other female.

Elaine Miller is to be credited with drawing the most attention to the metaphorical and philosophical preoccupation with plants and botany during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Her book, *The Vegetative Soul*, contains a chapter on Hegel called "The Self-Sacrifice of the Innocent Plant." Although Miller does not at all elaborate the connection between Hegel's remarks on plants and his remarks on women (this is not her focus in this book), she nonetheless is right to point out Hegel's repeated association of women with plants (Miller, *The Vegetative Soul*, pg. 122). In doing so, Miller recognizes what is at stake in the difference between animal and plant metaphors, analogies, and analyses in the text. However, Miller neglects the logic texts and in contrast to Stone she seems to interpret Hegel as holding a natural – not a conceptual, metaphysical – justification of sexual difference: "...it is precisely because it (the "hierarchical" ordering of geological organism, plant, and animal: JP) is taken to be the description of a natural order; the hierarchy will then permeate other hierarchies and provide their "natural" justification" (Miller, *The Vegetative Soul*, pg. 126). Miller then proceeds to quote from the passage on women and plants, to show the consequences of Hegel's allegedly nature-based hierarchy. I disagree with Miller in this regard. I have shown that, like Stone in the "Matter and Form" article, natural sexual

difference presupposes conceptual sexual difference for its “justification” and so too does spiritual sexual difference.

To return to the text, in the next sentence, Hegel analogizes the character of the animal to the character of man and the character of the plant to that of the girl. He remarks that the plant best characterizes the girl because of the way the plant unfolds its being. Here is an explicit remark by Hegel to the effect that the girl develops like a plant. But we know that, according to Hegel, plants unfold or develop by multiplying themselves, by coming forth out of themselves without, from the standpoint of the animal, making a veritable return into self. Plants are not yet properly speaking selves, and they are not individuals. Furthermore, plants do not, like animals, exhibit sexual development. This is not only because the principle of sex does not pervade the plant (indeed, it cannot, since the plant is not a genuine organism), but it is also because again in contrast to the animal, the plant is not “right from the beginning” the kind of sex it ought to be, and so it has no sex. At most we can say with qualification that even the dioecious plants are ambiguously sexed: these plants in which sexual difference appears to distribute itself in two separate plants cannot decide which sex they are. Hegel considers this a defect, of course, which must be superseded in the animal organism.

None of this about plants can be consistent with what Hegel wants to say about the sex relation in human beings. As I have shown, one reason why plants do not truly enter into the sex relation is because they are not yet proper individuals and selves. If girls, like plants, are not proper individuals and selves, they cannot even enter into the sex relation with other plant-girls let alone with men. What is more, if girls develop like plants, their sex is ambiguous or, strictly speaking, they do not have a sex. This too disqualifies them as beings similar (yet different) to men. And we needn't even take the analogy too literally to take its point seriously: Hegel has already indicated elsewhere and several times that girls remain at the stage of mere instinct, nature, and feeling. This already suggests that girls are essentially (conceptually, metaphysically) dissimilar from men. But it is noteworthy that in the foregoing quotation Hegel attributes an “indeterminate unity of feeling” to plants, whereas we know from *Philosophy of Nature* that it is only with the animal that feeling makes its debut.

In the last sentence quoted, Hegel describes the education of girls as happening so as to be barely perceptible. It is almost as if Hegel is throwing up his (very human) hands and exclaiming (with distinctly human, erect posture): “Who knows how “girls” develop!” and then concluding that it must happen almost as if by magic, similar to the way in which the plant develops from out of the seed as if by magic. The tone of this passage when read in light of my previous exegesis sounds faintly puzzled. Girls, Hegel suggests, develop almost as they live, so that their

development is, while not quite natural not yet spiritual. Girls are more embedded in nature in that, like plants, they are hardly separate from the elements and environment in which they are rooted (can girls sip water?); and also girls, like plants, are ambiguous, intermediary beings. Just as the plant is between the chemical and the organic, so too is the girl between the natural and the spiritual. Like the animal with its constructive instinct, it is the man, not the girl, who works up the world. The human sex relation, the love relation, the marital relation, all subtle iterations of one another, cannot be between a man and a being between nature and spirit, between a man-animal and a girl-plant.

## VI. Conclusion: Implications of the Plant-Girl

In this dissertation, I have given a provisional sketch of sex difference in Hegel's *Encyclopedia* in its logical, natural and spiritual aspects. The last passage quoted from *Philosophy of Right* in the previous section goes a long way in explaining why for Hegel there is no feminine analog to the "ages of man"; girls do not grow like animals (and therefore do not exhibit the moments of opposition and difference in the concept the way that boys do), but like plants. Moreover, girls growing like plants means that by the standards of animal development and properly spiritual development (the two are analogous), girls do not strictly speaking grow at all. But if girls do not grow in the way that boys do, then the demand of the concept in the anthropological sex relation cannot be met: unlike boys grown into manhood, girls grown and educated like plants cannot meet their adult masculine counterpart as equal but different companions. They are instead – and several feminist readings of the spirit texts have already shown this part – subordinate, not equal, to men, confined to the family in arrested quasi-spiritual development. Girls growing like plants do not reach spiritual adulthood with the men. I would also add that the girl is quite like the flowering plant which sacrifices itself (in the girl's case, in marriage, her own efflorescence) for the sake of the consumptive demands of the animal and, above all, (supposedly) in accordance with the demands of the concept. It is interesting to note in this context that while in logical sex difference and in animal sex difference the "feminine" side co-equally seeks out the consummation of the universal or genus, in spiritual sex difference the boy comes to seek out the self-conscious universal in his manhood by leaving the family and obtaining recognition from other men in civil society. The all-important pursuit of the universal does not happen in the equal partnership of man and woman but instead it takes place amongst men alone.

We must step back even further, however, in order to grasp the logical implications of the disparate relationship between girl-plants and man-animals. Recall how the plant nature is not at all deduced in speculative logic, and yet it is treated in the *Philosophy of Nature*. Without fully resolving this problem here, we will venture the following. From the standpoint of logic the fact that the plant nature is not deduced first as a thought determination means that in the *Philosophy of Nature* the plant does not exhibit the moments of the concept and therefore should be as irrelevant to a philosophical treatment of nature as Krug's pen. But perhaps, we might suggest, like everything else, to a lesser or greater extent in nature, the plant exhibits the moments of the concept *weakly*. If, however, the philosophy of nature can somehow "legitimately" take up natural appearances that were not first deduced in the logic, like the philosophy of nature assumes the plant, what else might the philosophy of nature assume beyond the scope of the logical concept? With this question, the door begins to open onto a less conceptual philosophy of nature project:

Hegel's own *Philosophy of Nature* begins to look more like those of the so-called dabblers he despises..

As it stands, in Hegel's *Encyclopedia*, the spiritual culmination of sex difference in the marital relation between man and woman does not in fact exhibit as it ostensibly does the moments of the logical concept of sex difference. This is because man and woman are not related to one another as two differently sexed animals (as anticipated by logical sex difference and even natural sex difference) but are rather related to one another as animal to plant, which is not, in the *Philosophy of Nature*, a relationship between sexes but is rather a relationship of consumer to consumed, superior to sacrificed subordinate. The fact that the feminine individual in marriage is analogous to the plant which is a natural appearance without foundation in the logical concept, this suggests that the concept as Hegel conceives it is incapable of including women as (at least) co-equal partners to men. One wonders whether the ultimate failure of the concept to determine the ideal relationship of identity-in-difference between man and woman should motivate us to scrap the Hegelian concept or even any kind of conceptual thinking of sex difference(s) altogether, or whether the inability of Hegel's conceptual thinking to attain even to its own (limited) vision of love between the sexes calls us to rethink and question the very nature of conceptuality.

## **Addendum: Sexual Difference in the Brother-Sister Relationship in the *Phenomenology of Spirit***

In Chapter V, I concluded that Hegel's account of the sex relation is unsustainable, because the relation is between essentially disparate, unequal beings. What is striking about the account of the family in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* is, then, that it harbors an account of sexual difference and its spiritual culmination that is a relation between two beings Hegel claims are equal and similar even as they are different: the brother and sister pair. In fact, in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel claims that the relationship between the husband and the wife is incomplete (this is in contrast to the way in which he describes the love relation, where each side finds completion in the other), as is the relationship between the parents and that which actualizes and justifies their relationship, the child. It is therefore of interest to turn to the *Phenomenology*, to see whether Hegel's rendering of the brother-sister relation amends the difficulties in the man-animal plant-"girl" relation. I will not address the complexities of the relationship between the *Phenomenology* and the so-called "proper" *Encyclopedia* system. Instead, I will merely take an additional glance at the material on sexual difference in the *Phenomenology* only in respect to the foregoing problem.

In the *Phenomenology*, Reason transitions into Spirit when "it is conscious of itself as its own world, and of the world as itself" (PS 438). Spirit recognizes itself as the world, and, looking out as if at the world, recognizes itself. As universal, actualized Spirit, Spirit is supposed to be at home with itself and in its world, which it realizes as its very own making. Previously, in observing Reason, Reason has a merely "unconscious" existence (PS 438). It "finds" itself in its object, as if the truth lies solely in the object, the "found Thing" (PS 438). This movement is one-sided. Next, the "found Thing" appears in consciousness as the "being-for-self of the 'I'" (PS 438). This moment, in which the "I" appears to have the truth on its side alone, is equally one-sided, and is to be superseded.

The supersession of these two one-sided moments is the emergence of Spirit. Spirit is its own presupposition, its work, and its goal. As mere essence, Spirit is "ethical substance," but as the "actuality of that substance," Spirit comes into its own and exists (PS 439). Hegel describes this movement, the development of "actual self-consciousness" from out of "ethical substance" and the consequent destruction of the "ethical order," in terms of the relationship between man and woman (specifically, the relationship between brother and sister, which is key, for reasons I will explain) (PS 445).

The relationship between man and woman is in some respects parallel to the relationship between the community and the Family (PS 445). The community and the Family, though from a certain viewpoint standing opposed to one another, cannot be neatly divided into two static, everlasting realms. Hegel instead speaks of the “constant becoming” of the ethical substance, of two syllogistic movements, one accorded to man, the other to woman, the “downward movement of human law” and the “upward movement of the law of the nether world” (PS 463). In the “union of man and woman,” the two syllogistic movements are united, and, importantly, the ethical order in light of this union is “a world unsullied by any internal dissension” (PS 463). So, even as this order “divides itself” into antithetical sides (Family and community), their opposition “is rather the authentication of one through the other, and where they come into direct contact with each other as real opposites, their middle term and common element is their mutual interpenetration” (PS 463). Neither the Family nor the community enjoys exclusive legitimacy or authority. Moreover, rather than being mutually exclusive opposites, the Family and the community insofar as they are “real opposites” mutually interpenetrate. In short, while there are differences between the community and the Family, and while there are also “differences and gradations” within the community and within the Family (PS 454), neither the Family nor the community can be taken abstractly. Hegel describes the (ever-transitioning, dialectical) opposition between Family and community in succinct fashion at the end of Paragraph 450:

The Family, as the unconscious, still inner Notion [of the ethical order], stands opposed to its actual self-conscious existence; as the element of the nation’s actual existence, it stands opposed to the nation itself; as the immediate being of the ethical order, it stands over against that order which shapes and maintains itself by working for the universal; the Penates stand opposed to the universal Spirit (PS 450).

The Family is implicit, immediate, underground, associated with the divine and the maintenance of the household gods. The community or the nation is explicit, actual, above ground, on the earth, and associated with human law.

On the one hand, the Family appears as ethical substance in its immediacy, or ethical substance as it “simply is” (PS 450). The community, on the other hand, is ethical substance “conscious of what it actually does” (PS 450). The Family is the precondition for the actual existence of the community, the “general possibility of the ethical sphere in general” (PS 450). In this way, the Family is not “separate” from the community. Rather, it is what makes the life of the community possible, and, in fact, already “contains” as implicit within it the “moment of self-consciousness,” which itself only appears in the “daylight” of the community (PS 450).



Now I examine the determinations specific to the Family and the community in their turn. In doing so, I prepare a consideration of the relationship between the brother-sister relationship, which comes into its own at the brink of family life.

Hegel claims that the Family is “immediately determined as an ethical being” (PS 451). He is careful to show how, in its ethical determination, the family is something other and more than the mere “natural relationship of its members” (PS 451). I am going to summarize how he demonstrates “what constitutes its [the Family’s] peculiar ethical character” (PS 451). This is a problem for Hegel – to show how the Family can be something other than a relationship contingently bound by desire, appetite, need, love (PS 451); in other words, to show how the Family in its ethical being is something more than a merely natural (animal) family, which, for Hegel, could not be a Family, strictly speaking, because it has no ethical significance.

Hegel rules out love and feeling as the essential characteristics of the Family as an “ethical being” because love and feeling, unlike the ethical, are not universal. He tells us that the ethical character of the Family is also not to be found in “the conscious End motivating the action of this whole [of the Family], so far as it is directed towards that whole...[which is] itself the individual” (PS 451). In other words, the “ethical principle” is not to be found in the Family only insofar as the Family is directed towards the individual’s acquisition of wealth and prestige, though Hegel mentions that these, in their “higher determination” become mediated, no longer merely belonging to the spheres of appetite and need, and therefore become, in a subsequent determination, subordinate to a higher meaning (PS 451).

Hegel asserts that the “higher determination” of the Family pertains to the community, since it is only the community that is “truly universal” (PS 451). In its higher ethical determination, the Family must “expel” its (as I will show) masculine members, must push them out of the Family so that they may be born into the life of the community, trained for “a life in and for the universal” (PS 451). In the self-conscious community, the individual risks his life for the community, works towards the universal and dies. This is how the ethical character of the Family becomes possible.

The ethical deed, Hegel writes, concerns the “individual as such” (PS 451-2). The individual as such is neither a citizen nor the “individual who is to become a citizen” (the living brother as Family member) (PS 451). The individual as such is the individual who has attained to “pure being” – death (PS 452). The Family has ethical existence and is justified insofar as its duty is to take what the unconscious forces of Nature do to destroy the exposed corpse of the dead brother (who dies, in an accidental manner, in the midst of his work for the universal) and make it meaningful, spiritualizing the corpse and its relationship to the earth (PS 452). By burying the dead brother (and the Antigone references have already begun), the Family, particularly, for

Hegel, the sister (for example, Antigone) (PS 457) substitutes the degrading action of Nature on the corpse for its own meaning-giving action. This action raises the merely dead universal being into “universal individuality” (PS 452).

Also in the performance of its burial rite duties, the Family unites, as if in marriage (“weds” PS 452), the “blood relation” to the “bosom of the earth” (PS 452). Through this spiritualizing wedding between the blood of human kinship and the earth in burial, the Family ensures the entrance of the dead brother into a community of ancestors (as opposed to the actual, self-conscious community of the nation) (PS 452).

So far, what is particularly striking is the (in my opinion under-analyzed) fact that there are two communities, both fraternal, one living, the other dead, which are related to the Family in the *Phenomenology*.

Hegel goes to great lengths to describe how the Family -- indeed, the Family in its relationship to the community – is not a merely natural entity but, rather, has an *ethical* existence. This is important for Hegel because that which does not attain to ethical existence or actuality has no ultimate justification or reason. In other words, what is at stake for Hegel in describing the make-up of the Family as “an ethical being” is the *reason* and *necessity* for the Family’s existence in general.

Hegel justifies the Family in the *Phenomenology* by referring us to what supersedes the Family, first to the self-conscious community, then to the community of ancestors. Recall that, for Hegel, the higher determination of the Family (the determination that subordinates the natural moment in Family relations to a higher end) points outside of the Family, towards the self-conscious life of the (exclusively male) community. But the ethical deed itself pertains to neither the living brother as Family member nor to the man as citizen. The ethical deed concerns the individual as such, the dead brother, and, ultimately, is directed towards the establishment of a fraternity of the dead that is neither the living Family nor the self-conscious community, working towards the life of the universal. The ethical deed is directed towards a “community” of ancestors, which it is the work of the Family to establish and preserve, through the wedding of blood kinship and earth. This “community” of the dead into which the dead brother enters by way of the action of the Family, specifically the sister (which “supplements” the blood-relation [PS 452]) is the “positive End” of the Family (PS 451), and its ethical justification. In short, the Family, apart from its orientation towards, first, the (again, as I will show) exclusively male community of the nation, and, ultimately, towards the community of ancestors, has no ethical justification, which means, for Hegel, that, had it not these Ends, it would have no justification for existing at all. The Family, governed by Divine Law (which has for its content the “positive End” described above) (PS 456),

has no ethical existence by itself; it is only justified in its service to the ends of the fraternal community of the nation and the community of dead brothers.

The brother-sister relationship is pivotal in thinking this transition from Family to community and vice versa. This is because the brother-sister relationship climaxes at the brink of “the self-contained life of the Family,” at the moment of the dissolution of the Family and its simultaneous supersession (at least through the figure of the brother) by the life of the community (PS 458).

The problem is one of recognition, specifically the problem of recognition for what Hegel here again calls “women” but which I will call “girls” (with the sense of invoking the problem described in the previous chapter). Girls, never entering into the life of the community and so never gaining, (like the boys become men), political recognition from men: for girls, how to attain recognition, and from whom? In whom can the girl recognize herself, keeping within the Family (at least according to Hegel)?

There is no recognition between man and woman as husband and wife not only because there persists the natural relationship of desire, but also because the husband-wife relationship has neither its actuality nor its justification in itself. The actuality of the husband-wife relationship is to be found in the (supposedly neuter) child just as in *Philosophy of Right*, while the child equally testifies to the passing away of this relationship.

For Hegel, the relationship between parents and children and the relationship between children and parents are asymmetrical, “disparate,” and “transitory” (PS 457). The parents, on the one hand, have the actualization of their relationship outside of the relationship itself, in the objective being of the child, and the children, on the other hand, see their relationship to their parents necessarily pass away as the precondition for their attainment to independence and separation (independence and separation mean something different for girl and boy children, though Hegel does not claim this explicitly) (PS 456). There can be no recognition between members of *different generations* because of the *ephemeral and unequal* relationship between parents and children. It is instead through the relationship between brother and sister that the two different sides of the sex relation can supposedly gain recognition as members of their respective sex. Importantly, this is because there is a kind of equality, equilibrium and spiritual bond between the brother and the sister which cannot subsist between husband and wife or between parents and children of the opposite sex for the foregoing reason.

What is immediately striking is that on the one hand, I concluded in the previous chapter that spiritual sexual difference was between two metaphysically disparate individuals (the girl is not even an individual) and so could not be a relationship between similar beings. But, on the

other hand, in the *Phenomenology*, Hegel announces that it is not in the marital relationship but in the relationship between two siblings of the opposite sex in which sexual difference acquires its spiritual significance, precisely because they are equal and similar to one another. The task is to further explicate the brother-sister relationship, and to see whether it “corrects” the difficulties undermining Hegel’s account of the sex relation in *Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Right*. Once more, key to a consideration of the sex relation is the developmental trajectory of each sex: of the “girl” or sister from one family to the other, and of the “boy” or brother from family to community (in which he becomes a citizen).

Hegel believes that in the brother-sister relationship “the girl” as sister is able to attain to recognition with her brother. This is possible because for the sister the brother is “a passive, similar being in general,” and “the recognition of herself in him is pure and unmixed with any natural desire” (PS 457). Hegel makes much of the fact that the brother and the sister do not owe their “independent being-for-self” to one another (as children do to their parents), and of his belief that there is no desire between the brother and the sister (PS 457). These are the conditions that make it possible for the brother and the sister to achieve something like recognition in one another (PS 457). It is what makes their relationship a relationship between equals or between similar beings.

For the sister this attainment to recognition in the brother is more important than is the brother’s “equal” relationship to the sister. This is because the sister has no other way to attain to recognition except through her brother. As Hegel suggests, this makes the sister’s relationship to her brother precious: “[t]he loss of the brother is therefore irreparable to the sister and her duty towards him is the highest” (that is, the ethical duty which is the work of the Family as guardian of Divine Law) (PS 457). The way in which the brother is precious to the sister, more than she is to him, is reminiscent of the way in which “the girl’s” virginity is precious to her, but not precious to men, especially not to those ravishing seducers.

Even though the importance of the brother to the sister is supposed to be predicated upon the equality of the brother-sister relationship, the relationship is not equal: for one thing, if the sister were not confined to the life of the Family she would have other means of attaining recognition (the importance of the brother to the sister is based on a “prior” inequality between men and women more generally), and, for another thing, while the sister remains indebted and duty-bound to her brother (think here of Antigone’s interpretation of her obligation to bury her unburied dead brother), the brother has no parallel obligations or duties to his sister (see also Patricia Mills’ “Hegel’s Antigone”).

The sister never enters into the life of the community. While the brother makes the transition from the life of the Family into the life of the community (where he is able to risk his

life for the universal and, eventually, by way of the sister's performance of her ethical obligation to him through burial, into the fraternal community of ancestors), the sister is making the transition from the family in which she is sister and daughter, into the family in which she is wife and mother. The sister loses the brother in whom she (supposedly) comes to recognize herself, at the brink of Family life, as he "leaves this immediate, elemental, and therefore, strictly speaking, negative ethical life of the Family, in order to acquire and produce the ethical life that is conscious of itself and actual" (PS 458). She is somewhat compensated by her marriage to the "youth" (PS 475) who, to the sister/daughter, is neither her original brother nor a citizen per se, but a substitute, other brother from another family. This youth becomes her husband, and through marriage to him, Hegel wants to say, the sister/daughter is "freed from her dependence [on the family]" (PS 475), and "obtains the enjoyment and dignity of wifeness" (PS 475).

This remark of Hegel's is especially discomfiting. On the one hand, Hegel seems to acknowledge here a need for the sister/daughter to attain to independence in a way that at least parallels the brother's similar attainment, and he also seems to understand that the sister/daughter is as of yet unfree because of her position in the Family, at the moment of the brother's leaving her and the Family in general for the life of the community. But Hegel does not seem to recognize the fact that the girl is only freed from the family (into which she was born) by entering into the family (in which she gives birth). The sister's escape from the family amounts to her re-entry into its trap.

However, what seems to make the difference of freedom, on Hegel's account, is the difference in the girl's position in the family into which she is born (where she is a sister/daughter) and the family in which she gives birth (where she is a wife/mother). Yet, and it would seem so on Hegel's own terms, the sister cannot be free even as she transitions to the position of wife/mother. While she loses her brother to community life and, in this way, also loses the *ostensibly* similar being in whom she achieves recognition (she cannot be free without this), as wife and mother she loses her husband (a substitute brother) to community life as well. And she necessarily loses her children, with the passing of generations -- the boy children to the life of the community, and the girl children to men similar to the one to which she lost, on my reading, her freedom. This is why, perhaps somewhat unwittingly, Hegel writes how woman, the ineradicable "everlasting irony" of the community of ethical life (PS 475), values *youth* above all else. Youth represents the brother whom the sister loses before he leaves her for the life of the community, the husband before he acquires over his wife the "right of desire" (PS 457), when he is not yet her husband -- the "brave youth" in whom "woman finds her pleasure, the suppressed principle of corruption," and in whom woman imagines something like a freeing a-familial sexuality (PS 475).

To summarize the import of the brother-sister relationship for the relationship between the Family and the community: the non-desirous brother-sister relationship that takes place at the

brink of Family life is, for Hegel, the acquisition of an ethical signification for sexual difference (PS 459). The ethical meaning of sexual difference comes into its own for Hegel when on the one side man finds his rightful place in the community, by leaving the sister and the Family for the fraternal communities, one living, one dead (and guaranteed by the sister specifically), and when on the other side the girl establishes her rightful place in the Family, losing her brother, but, supposedly, finding her “freedom” from the Family by entering into the Family, now as a wife/mother. The brother-sister relationship underscores the fact that sexual difference becomes ethically significant (and, therefore, justified) only when men are born into the living fraternal community, and when girls remain guardians of the Divine Law within the Family, ensuring that their dead brothers, whom they lose (original brother) and lose (dead brother) and lose again (substitute brother/husband), enter into the fraternal community of ancestors.

I conclude this section by examining the relationship between the girl and the youth towards which she moves in an effort to discern with greater clarity what Hegel means by the independence and freedom the girl supposedly attains through wifedom/motherhood. For Hegel now, what is this feminine freedom, and is it genuinely “free”?

The girl, unlike the boy, makes an exclusively *intrafamilial* transition. She moves, as daughter or sister, from the family of origin, to the family of procreation. Hegel sets up this intra-familial movement the girl experiences as an analog to the brother’s entrance into the community and his induction into his role as citizen; the movement of brother from family to community (where he is citizen), and the movement of the sister from the family of origin to the family of procreation (in which she is wife/mother) are parallel in Hegel’s text.

In Paragraph 457, the freedom of the sister is found in the ostensible recognition she achieves through her brother; the sister’s relationship to the brother in this paragraph is contrasted with the parental relationship, in which “she does not behold her own being-for-self in a positive form” due to this relationship’s transitoriness and “disparity”. In this way, in this paragraph, the sister experiences the passing away of her parents, as she turns instead towards the relationship of “equilibrium” with her brother.

Secondly, for Hegel, the brother-sister relationship is at the brink of the divide between the Family and the community; it is “the limit at which the self-contained life of the Family breaks up and goes beyond itself”.

It would be more accurate, however, to say that the incipient man continues on to be born beyond the Family; because in Paragraphs 458 and 459, Hegel describes two parallel movements, one masculine, the other feminine. Interestingly, both these movements in these paragraphs begin from the same starting-point: the brother-sister relationship at the limit of Family life.

From Paragraphs 457-9 we have seen the girl moves from the Family (of origin), signaled by the passing away of the relationship with her parents, to the brink of familial life, represented by her relationship with her brother. It is at this moment, in her relationship to her brother, that the girl supposedly enjoys recognition and the freedom that is the “existence of her own of which she is capable”. In these paragraphs, the girl, at least according to Hegel, attains to the height of womanhood - her sex shines, supposedly, in its “ethical significance” - in her role as sister.

We see the girl assuming her role as wife in Paragraph 475. In this paragraph, Hegel speaks of the daughter who finds in the “youth” a freedom “from her dependence [on the family],” and her obtainment of the “enjoyment and dignity of wifedom”. Here, it seems to be, at first blush, that it is the girl in her mature role as *wife* that affords the feminine its peculiar freedom, enjoyment and dignity, whereas before the *sister* seemed to be a particularly hallowed moment of the feminine.

Considering these passages more carefully, we find that it is not at the moment that woman assumes her role as *wife* that is the moment of freedom. This moment of freedom for the daughter is in fact not within the family, neither original nor reproductive. *The freedom is instead in-between roles, in the transition between families*: at the moment of being freed, woman (who, at this point, is in between the roles of daughter and wife) is moving towards the youth (who, at this point, is himself in between his familial childhood in which he is the sister’s brother and his foray as a man into the community). This is what the text suggests, but Hegel does not point this out or develop these in-between moments. This is all the more striking since Hegel has much to say about youth as a stage of development for the masculine individual in *Philosophy of Mind*. But even in the passages on “the ages of man”, as I’ve mentioned previously, Hegel is vague about the stage of youth: on the one hand he treats youth as among four stages in the development of the masculine individual, but on the other hand he at other times treats youth as a moment of childhood, which is itself one among three main stages of the development of the masculine individual. This is not to suggest that “the ages of man” is directly applicable to this section on the family in the *Phenomenology*. It is however noteworthy that the youth appears as an ambiguous figure, both in the latter work and in *Philosophy of Mind*.

The girl’s freedom lies in the prospect of youth, in masculine youth. This is because the youth is a potential husband, a promise of a (familial) situation outside of the Family (of origin) on which, as Hegel himself relates, the girl is dependent. Again, since the husband-wife relationship is inherently incomplete, the freedom of the feminine is not in the moment of the husband-wife relationship. At the moment of that relationship, instead, is a pregnant incompleteness succeeded by the birth of the child to which both parents become (in different senses) subordinate. So it is not as *husband* that the youth represents a kind of freedom to the girl as daughter; it is only as the not-yet-husband, as the husband-to-be that youth promises the girl an escape from the Family. As the not-yet-husband, the youth offers the girl the prospect of escape from the familial situation from which she originated and out of which she cannot move. (And that is why the figure of Prince

Charming is always on the way, but never arrived). The girl cannot be born into the community (as in *Philosophy of Mind* and *Philosophy of Right*, she does not attain to the universal), but in *moving towards* the youth not as her husband, but as her husband-to-be, her not-yet-husband, she experiences, at least phantastically, a moment of escape. This is the moment in which the girl is moving between the roles of daughter or sister, and wife.

As in *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel has difficulty determining the role of the stage of “youth”, but in the *Phenomenology* the difficulties are even more acute. Since Hegel does not have any explicit account of development in the *Phenomenology*, other than his description of the parallel trajectories of the two sexes, he is in an even trickier position when it comes to situating the youth. Who is the youth? In the *Phenomenology*, he must be either a member of the Family, or a man. We have seen that he cannot be a man; he has not yet entered into community life; he is “youth,” not adult.

Perhaps *despite* Hegel’s intentions, then, the youth can only be a member of the family. Hegel names three interrelationships in the family: husband-wife; parents-child; brother-sister. The youth is not yet a husband, and he is not, in respect to the daughter, a child. He is then a *brother*, but not her original brother. He is a *sexualized* brother, a brother with whom the “natural” relation of desire will ensue, a brother who is, at the moment of the daughter’s moving towards him, outside of what the Family *presently* means for the daughter, because outside of her Family of origin, beyond her blood.

At first it might seem that the youth compensates for the sister’s loss of her original brother by his entry without her into community life, because in the youth she acquires a husband. But instead the sister loses her brother, only to gain an *other* brother: the sexualized brother who is a youth from an other family, outside of her own. The freedom Hegel mentions then entails the prospect for the sister and daughter of a sexuality both (momentarily) extra-familial (and therefore freeing) and incestuous by substitution (because the man to whom she moves as a wife-to-be is, at the moment of his “youth,” an other brother).

But once the girl becomes wife and man becomes husband to his wife, she once more becomes locked into the family, beholden to her child and to her husband-brother. The two forms of the feminine Hegel valorizes the most, the sister and the wife, both lose a “brother” as the brother becomes a man who enters into the community into which the sister and wife cannot move, not even in death (the fraternal community of ancestors).

It is as if the girl’s original brother abandons her on the brink of the family, past which she cannot follow, and yet returns to her, as a specter, haunting, in another form, as an other brother with whom she can have sex – the youth, her husband-to-be. But just as the culmination of her relationship to her brother left the girl alone and without the prospect of recognition and freedom, so too does the



climax of her relationship with the youth – marriage – result in her renewed subordination to the life of the family, which is dictated by the (boy) child and his need to get beyond the family.

The girl is thus perpetually mourning some brother or other. As the brother from her family of origin goes out into the community where she cannot follow, the sister becomes a wife whose husband, a “brother” from an other family, is then sent out by “the Spirit of the Family into the community,” just as was the original brother. Considering that the husband, having acquired the “right of desire” by virtue of his being born into community life, rules over his wife in the familial sphere, woman’s “substitute” brother - the youth who seemed to promise an extra-familial sexuality - ends up as her ruler within the realm to which she is confined. The meaning of the brother figure transforms from that of the original brother as “passive, similar being in general” to the sister, into that of the husband who rules over his wife with the “right of desire” (Paragraph 457). For the daughter and the sister, the promise of youth - freedom - amounts to a fleeting phantasy. The youth becomes her *promise of escape* (he is her prince, her husband-to-be who is yet to come, beyond the family), who must also become her *trap* (he is her king, her husband whose rule reinstates the reign of the family).

### Notes

1. I have in mind especially her excellent book *Woman, Nature, and Psyche* (1987).
2. Who has ever heard of referring to the men in this profession as “men in philosophy”? It’s a pleonasm.
3. Hegel does not imagine girls seducing girls.

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