

“Mind of God, Point of View of Man, or Spirit of the World? Platonism and Organicism in the Thought of Kant and Hegel”

*Paul Redding*

(Paper given to the conference, *Von Kant bis Hegel IV: Naturalism and Naturphilosophie*, Concordia University, Montreal, 11–12 October 2008)

In his account of Plato’s ideas in the first book of the “Transcendental Dialectic”, “On the concepts of pure reason”, Kant, in describing how for Plato ideas were “archetypes of things themselves”, adds that these ideas “flowed from the highest reason, through which human reason partakes in them”.<sup>1</sup> Later, in the section of the Transcendental Dialectic treating the “ideals of pure reason”, he again attributes to Plato the notion of a “divine mind” within which the “ideas” exist. An “ideal”, Kant says, “was to *Plato*, an *idea in the divine understanding*”.<sup>2</sup> But as the editors of the Cambridge University Press translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason* point out, the idea of a divine mind as *container* of the ideas was not Plato’s and did not originate until the “syncretistic Platonism from the period of the Middle Academy”. From there it “was later adopted by Platonists as diverse as Philo of Alexandria, Plotinus and St Augustine, and became fundamental to later Christian interpretations of Platonism”.<sup>3</sup>

In this paper I want to explore some of the consequences that Kant’s picture of the mind of God underlying his anachronistic slip may have for understanding both Kant’s own idealist project and the relations that the later idealism of Hegel bears to it. More particularly, I want to explore this by way of touching on their respective positions on the issue of the teleology of nature. In terms of scope, then, I will cover some of the same issues that Béatrice Longuenesse has covered in her illuminating essay, “Point of view of man or knowledge of God. Kant and Hegel on concept, judgment, and reason”,<sup>4</sup> an essay I rely on as a guide to locate the major landmarks

---

<sup>1</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, ed. and trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), A313/B370. See also A318/B374.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid: A 568/B 596.

<sup>3</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, editorial notes, p. 746 n. 86.

<sup>4</sup> Béatrice Longuenesse, “Point of view of man or knowledge of God. Kant and Hegel on concept, judgment, and reason”, in Sally Sedgwick (ed), *The Reception of Kant’s Critical Philosophy: Fichte, Schelling, & Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000),

within this complex and confusing terrain. Longuenesse's treatment of the Kant–Hegel relation in this paper reveals her as what I will call a qualified revisionist within the on-going dispute between revisionist “post-Kantian” readings of Hegel's metaphysics, such as found in the work of Robert Pippin and Terry Pinkard,<sup>5</sup> and the more traditionalist approaches. Like the revisionists, she sees Hegel as attempting to find a Kantian way beyond the internal problems of Kant's transcendental idealism. We should, she asserts “take Hegel at his word when he claims to have used Kant against Kant, and to have built upon those aspects in Kant's philosophy which pointed the way” towards restoring this metaphysical project. Indeed, as she has pointed out,<sup>6</sup> her own *earlier* work on Hegel had shown a “striking similarity” to the approach of Pippin.<sup>7</sup> But this post-Kantian reading has been qualified in her more recent writing by a Kantian reluctance to endorse the project she sees Hegel as aiming at, and in the final part of the paper signals using Hegel's criticisms for the purpose of a more Kantian way beyond the limits of the historical Kant. She thus suggests “that instead of pushing the results of Kant's dialectic, in all three *Critiques*, towards a reconciliation of the ‘point of view of man’ and the ‘knowledge of God’, another more defensible option is to retreat once and for all into the Analytic of all three *Critiques* and to further elucidate the ‘point of view of man’: the nature of the ever more complex ways in which sensibility and discursivity, passivity and activity are entwined in making possible our cognitive and practical access to the world”.<sup>8</sup> But might we not ask *whose* account of “the mind of God” and the “point of view of man” is being presupposed when the alternative is posed in this way? Might it not be the case that these phrases mean quite different things in the mouths of Kant and Hegel respectively? I want to suggest that they do, and that these differences bear on the question of the relative attractiveness of the position of each to a generally modern secular philosophical point of view. Kant's anachronistic slip about Plato suggests

---

revised in Béatrice Longuenesse, *Hegel's Critique of Metaphysics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Part II. Page numbers are given to the latter publication.

<sup>5</sup> See especially, Robert B. Pippin, *Hegel's Idealism: The Satisfactions of Self-Consciousness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) and *Idealism as Modernism: Hegelian Variations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) and *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> In the “Preface” to *Hegel's Critique of Metaphysics*, xiv. Part 1 of this book is translation of her 1981, *Hegel et las Critique de la Métaphysique: étude sur la Doctrine de l'essence* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1981).

<sup>7</sup> In particular, *Hegel's Idealism*. Longuenesse, *Hegel's Critique of Metaphysics*, “Preface”, p. \*.

<sup>8</sup> Longuenesse, *Hegel's Critique of Metaphysics*, p. 189. Longuenesse reflects further on the reasons for her change of perspective in the “Preface” to that volume.

where some of these differences might lie.

In most general terms, the contention of this paper will be that of the group of late antique platonists mentioned by Guyer and Wood in their comment on Kant's anachronism, it is Augustine who best represents those features of Kant's Platonism to which Hegel was opposed. But such Augustinian features coexisted in an unstable mix with others closer to the form of Platonism that *for Hegel*, best represented the point of transition from ancient thought to Christianity, and thence to modernity. These were features found more in the accounts of the pagan Neoplatonists, Plotinus and Proclus. Hegel, I suggest, can be seen as capitalizing on these pagan neoplatonic features of Kant's own transcendental idealism to criticise the more orthodoxly christian Augustinian ones, and one of the consequences of this was to free them from the merely "regulative" status that ideas had for Kant. It is true that this is a move that lifts the limitation that Kant places on our knowledge, so that it can no longer be conceived as limited to "the point of view of man". But this does not mean that he thereby *endorses* the coherence of the idea of "God's knowledge" in whatever sense that this term has in Kant's philosophy. Rather, I suggest, by purging Kant's account of some of its "Augustinian" features, he does away with the very idea of a Godly knowledge that limits the "point of view of man", by doing away with an anthropomorphic divine "mind" itself. Effectively, I argue that Longuenesse should not be as worried as she seems to be about following Hegel's criticisms of Kant to a place where *Hegel* thinks those criticisms lead. That is, she need not qualify the "revisionist" thrust of her interpretation. Or so I shall argue. I will start by quickly sketching Longuenesse's map of main features of the conceptual terrain in question and the path of her suggested tour through it.

### ***Longuenesse on Hegel on Kant: From moral to metaphysical critique***

In the essay Longuenesse starts by considering Hegel's complex relation to Kant in the first part of the 1802 work, *Faith and Knowledge*. Hegel, she points out, praises Kant's "idea of reason" in the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Judgment*, but at the same time is critical of the "trampling down" of reason itself as it is presented as the "pure practical reason" of the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and the *Critique of Practical Reason*. According to Longuenesse, the spirit of Hegel's criticisms of Kant in *Faith and Knowledge* is continuous with that of his moral and theologically articulated criticisms in earlier works such as *The Spirit of Christianity*, but now they are made without any appeal to the moral role played by

“feeling”, or to the role of the historical Jesus: they have been, we might say, transposed from a religious to a philosophical key. Thus, Hegel now posits the idea of “a philosophical system that reap[s] the benefits of Kant’s Copernican Revolution while unifying what Kant divides: reason and sensibility, thought and being, freedom and necessity”.<sup>9</sup>

Thus Hegel’s critique, says Longuenesse, “starts with a demand for a new type of moral philosophy [and] goes on with a search for the relevant metaphysics for which Hegel finds the key concepts in Kant’s third *Critique*”, in particular in Kant’s appeal to the idea of a divine intuitive understanding in §§ 75 and 76 of that work. This in turn leads to a “reinterpretation of Kant’s *magnum opus*: the *Critique of Pure Reason*”.<sup>10</sup> In particular, what will be made problematic in the *Critique of Pure Reason* will be the claim from the “Transcendental Dialectic” that while ideas play an essential role in the pursuit of knowledge, they can never get beyond this “regulative” to achieve “constitutive” status. As for Kant the idea of a divine intuitive intellect is meant to signal the limit of the “point of view of man”, the collapse of the regulative–constitutive distinction for Hegel means the restoration of the human aspiration to know the mind of God. And as knowing the mind of God means knowing what God knows, this effectively amounts to coming to know the world as it is “in itself”, rather than as “appearance”. But as I have suggested, if Hegel’s philosophical idea of God is not that of Kant’s, then the consequence of such transcendence of the “point of view of man” towards some type of “divine” knowledge may be quite different than as when seen from the perspective of Kant’s implicit “theology”. To try to shed light on this issue, let us then start, where Longuenesse starts, with Hegel’s early criticisms of Kant’s moral philosophy.

Kant’s transcendently idealist approach to moral philosophy did not have to wait long before attracting the type of criticisms that Hegel later made famous, and by the early 1790s, Friedrich Schiller had already complained of the polarization of duty and inclination that resulted from Kant’s approach to practical reason.<sup>11</sup> Moreover,

---

<sup>9</sup> Longuenesse, “Point of view of man or knowledge of God”, p. 165.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>11</sup> For example, in *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, Schiller notes that to be a “member of the tribunal of reason”, involves raising oneself “from an individual into a representative of the species” (Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: In a Series of Letters*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), Letter 2.4.) Thereby, one speaks and acts as that “ideal man, the archetype of a human being” that each individual carries within himself (*Ibid.*: 4.2).

appealing to the actual *life* led by subjects, both individually and collectively, and with clear reference to both Kant's moral philosophy and the course of revolutionary events unfolding in France, Schiller had warned of the dangers of the external imposition of reason on a *living* body.<sup>12</sup>

Schiller's concerns with the relation of morality to individual and collective human *life*, and his talk of the forces that constituted and shaped those lives may have reflected the early influence of von Haller and his training in the emerging medical sciences while a student at the *Karlsschule* in Stuttgart. Indeed, his talk of the constituent "forces" of life of physical man seems to draw on the work of a near contemporary at the *Karlsschule*, Carl Friedrich Kielmeyer.<sup>13</sup> But it might also reflect the peculiar religious culture of the part of Germany from which he came, a distinctly Swabian form of Lutheran pietism that has been described as particularly influenced by the German mystical theologies of late medieval figures like Meister Eckhart and early modern ones like Nicholas of Cusa and Jacob Böhme. In turn these forms of Christian platonism are said to have been heavily *neoplatonist* in character, and often skirted close to the type of heresy that was in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to gain the description "pantheism". Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, an influential 18<sup>th</sup> century preacher active in the Duchy of Württemberg, had described God as the "purest activity, in which he is that which acts, the activity itself, and that which is acted".<sup>14</sup> There was no gap between God and nature, claimed Oetinger, God was the vital centre of every creature, "life" itself.<sup>15</sup> Lawrence Dickey has pointed to the Palagian, anti-Augustinian dimensions of a Swabian protestantism that was generally in line with the outlook of the German *Aufklärung*,<sup>16</sup> and I suggest, the features of Kant's

---

<sup>12</sup> This Natural State (as we may term any political body whose organisation derives originally from forces and not from laws) is, it is true, at variance with man as moral being ... But physical man does in fact exist, whereas the existence of moral man is as yet problematic. If, then, Reason does away with the Natural State (as she of necessity must if she would put her own in its place), she jeopardises the physical man who actually exists for the sake of a moral man who is as yet problematic. (Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, letter 3.3)

<sup>13</sup> In 1793 Kielmeyer delivered a groundbreaking lecture on the constituent organic forces that determined the development of organisms ("Über die Verhältnisse der organischen Kräfte unter einander in der Reihe der verschiedenen Organisationen, die Geseze und folgen dieser Verhältnisse") at that very school. We know that Schiller at least knew of the lecture, as it is enthusiastically mentioned in a letter from Goethe.

<sup>14</sup> From Oetinger's *Versuch einer Auflösung der 177 Fragen aus Jakob Boehme* from 1777, quoted in F. Ernest Stoeffler, *German Pietism During the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973), quoted, pp. 112-113.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 114.

<sup>16</sup> Lawrence Dickey, *Hegel: Religion, Economics, and the Politics of Spirit, 1770-1807*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

moral outlook that Schiller and Hegel opposed can be fairly straightforwardly identified as those introduced into early Christianity by Pelagius' antagonist, the Bishop of Hippo.

### ***Kant's Platonism***

Recently, commentators as diverse as John Rawls, Frederick Beiser, and Richard Bernstein have pointed to what they have taken to be the distinctly Augustinian flavour of Kant's moral philosophy.<sup>17</sup> What Kant shared with Augustine, it is often pointed out, was an exclusive focus on the human *will* in matters of morality, an idea expressed clearly at the start of the *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*: "It is impossible to think of anything at all in the world, or indeed even beyond it, that could be considered good without limitation except a *good will*".<sup>18</sup> It is perhaps to overstate the case to say, as some commentators do, that Augustine *invented* the concept of the will, but this at least captures the extent of Augustine's departure from the moral thought of the Greeks. This departure was first and foremost established at the level of theology. Albrecht Dihle has pointed out, for example, that even within the monotheistic pagan theology of later antiquity, God, while having "the desire to create and govern the universe ... does not create *ex nihilo*. He moulds what was without shape, he animates what was without life, he brings to reality what was merely a potential. And, above all, he does not transcend the order which embraces himself as well as his creatures". This god is more akin to Plato's god in the *Timaeus*, who rather than an absolute originator of the world is an artificer who co-exists with a

---

<sup>17</sup> John Rawls *Lectures of the History of Moral Philosophy* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 294; Frederick C. Beiser, "Moral faith and the highest good" in Paul Guyer, (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Kant and Modern Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 594; and Richard Bernstein, "Radical Evil: Kant at War With Himself" in Maria Pia Lara (ed), *Rethinking Evil: Contemporary Perspectives*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 78.

<sup>18</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. Mary Gregor, intro. Christine M. Korsgaard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 4.393 (here pagination is given volume and page number of *Kants Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1900-)). Jerome Schneewind describes Kant's moral philosophy as combining aspects of voluntarist and anti-voluntarist traditions, with the notion that equates the good with that which is "willed by a will governed by the moral law" as a clearly voluntarist inheritance. "In his early attempts at theodicy Kant worked with the voluntarist idea that to be good is simply to be what God wills. He gave up on the thought that God creates all possibilities; but he never abandoned the account of goodness inchoately expressed in the early fragments. In the mature theory this point emerges in Kant's identification of practical reason with a free will governed by the moral law." (Jerome Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Moral Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998), p. 512)

world that is itself animated by a soul, and importantly, an artificer whose activity is informed but constrained by the ideas. However, as Albrecht Dihle adds, the biblical cosmology that Augustine was to attempt to synthesise with Platonic thought was “completely different”.<sup>19</sup> Augustine’s God of the Old Testament creates the world in an act of will, and in Augustine’s version, does so on the basis of ideas in the divine mind. According to John Rist, Augustine had been come to think of the soul as immaterial substance, “a view”, he adds, “unusual among western Christians of the age, though long familiar in the East”.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the Old Testament God within whom Augustine located Plato’s ideas was a God whose will was expressed in the form of laws, as in the story of the Decalogue, and again, as Remi Brague has pointed out, such an idea of divine law as issuing from some act of divine legislation was a notion almost foreign to both Greek philosophy and Greek religion.<sup>21</sup>

Augustine’s own voluntaristic *theology*, it is commonly said, was itself bound up with a distinctively new anthropology or *psychology*, and his conception of the self is often appealed to in relation to the development of modern subjectivistic concepts of the mind as found in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, especially with Descartes and Malebranche. The context in which this Old Testament voluntaristic theology was linked in this way to a type of subjective experience was Augustine’s *Confessions*, portrayed as the experience of an individual struggling against his own bodily and, importantly, sexual inclinations. In this sense, then, in the case of both God and man the will came to be conceived as something fundamentally subjective and legislating, to be imposed on an external material order grasped in terms of its resistance to, but also in terms of its capacity to comply with, this subjectively projected order.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> John Rist, “Plotinus and Christian Philosophy”, in Lloyd Gerson (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, \*), p. 403.

<sup>21</sup> Rémi Brague, *The Law of God: The Philosophical History of an Idea*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007). Thus Brague claims that for the Greeks, the gods “are not the source of law. A god never issues a commandment” (p. 22). There was an exception, however, Plato, especially in *The Laws*. Ibid, pp. 26–27.

<sup>22</sup> Stephen Menn argues that it is the doctrine of the incarnation that required Augustine to add a will to Plotinus’ God. “For the Platonists, God rules in accordance with the natures of things: everything proceeds from him in order according to the capacity of the recipient, and there is therefore no need for him to choose what he should send where. But it is not at all in accord with the nature of the recipient that Nous itself should descend into a human body: this requires a will in God, and not a will naturally directed toward what is good and appropriate for the divine nature, but a will capable of encompassing its own humiliation for the sake of the elevation of fallen human beings.” (Stephen Menn, *Descartes and Augustine* (Cambridge:

It is roughly this idea, I suggest, that underlies Kant's reading of Plato. As commentators have pointed out, Kant seems to have been clearly influenced by the interpretation of Plato given by Johann Jakob Brucker in his widely read *Historia critica philosophiae*.<sup>23</sup> As is signalled by his reference to Brucker at the beginning of "the Transcendental Dialectic", Kant disagreed with Brucker's generally negative assessment of Plato,<sup>24</sup> but otherwise he seems to have followed Brucker, especially in his account of Plato's ideas, and Brucker certainly would have given added weight to Kant's "Augustinian" assumptions about the mind of God.<sup>25</sup> In his Plato interpretation Brucker had consciously tried to separate the views of Plato himself from the Neoplatonistic framework in which Plato had been understood by Renaissance by figures like Ficino, or by later by Platonists like Cudworth. Brucker had been entirely hostile to the pagan Neoplatonic "monism" of Plotinus and Proclus which he saw as a forerunner to Spinoza's atheistic materialism.<sup>26</sup> But by the time that Hegel and Schelling were coming to engage with philosophy, this assessment of

Cambridge University Press 1998), pp 202–3.)

<sup>23</sup> That Kant's account of Plato closely follows the Brucker's presentation was argued in by Gerhard Mollowitz ("Kants Platoauffassung", *Kant-Studien* 40 (1935), pp. 13–67). We should perhaps not be too surprised at Kant's account of Plato. As Frederick Beiser has pointed out, in the first part of the eighteenth century "Plato was almost forgotten, having been eclipsed by the Aristotelian scholasticism of the universities" (Frederick C. Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative: The Concept of Early German Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2003), p. 68).

<sup>24</sup> In his discussion of Plato at the beginning of the "Transcendental Dialectic" (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 316/B 372), Kant defends the relevance of "ideas" for political thought against Brucker's criticism of Plato.

<sup>25</sup> And what is more, Brucker's misreading of Plato seems to map neatly onto the implicit theology of Kant's own pre-critical writings. Thus, Susan Shell points out that for Kant, in *Universal Natural History* of 1755, "the unity of creation is unthinkable apart from the timeless divine schema or plan out of which creation temporally unfolds and in which each creature finds its ground or *raison d'être*". Susan Meld Shell, *The Embodiment of Reason: Kant on Spirit, Generation, and Community*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 165.

<sup>26</sup> Michael Franz, "Der Neuplatonismus in den philosophiehistorische Arbeiten der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts" in Burkhard Mojsisch and Orrin F. Summerell (eds) *Platonismus im Idealismus: Die platonische Tradition in der klassischen deutschen Philosophie* (München: K. G. Saur, 2003), p. 20. But in trying to restore the real Plato, he had attributed to Plato a *substance dualism* which separated the material world and the divine mind, and although aware that it was impossible to find the Christian idea of creation *ex nihilo* in Plato, Brucker had still regarded the divine mind of the *Timeaus* as the creator of the ideas: "[Plato] taught that there is an Intelligent Cause, which is the origin of all spiritual being, and the former of the material world ... God, according to Plato, is the Supreme Intelligence, incorporeal, without beginning, end, or change, and capable of being perceived only by mind" (Johann Jakob Brucker, *The History of Philosophy from the Earliest Periods*, drawn up from Brucker's *Historia Critica Philosophiæ*, by W. Enfield (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 2001), pp. 130–131.

Spinoza was, of course, radically changing.

### ***Hegel's Platonism***

It is common within recent accounts of the emergence of German Idealism to find stressed the impact of Spinozism on the generation to which Schelling and Hegel belonged, but it is less common to find discussion of the neoplatonic aspects of their thought, despite the fact that this was commonly noted in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, for example, in *All or Nothing: Systematicity, Transcendental Arguments, and Skepticism in German Idealism*, Paul Franks portrays the impact of the Spinoza dispute initiated by Jacobi in 1785 on the intellectual environment within which Kant was read. By exposing Lessing as an advocate the “*hen kai pan*”, Jacobi had inadvertently made Spinozism attractive to a generation of thinkers, and even linked Kant and Spinoza in two distinct ways. First, Jacobi construed Kant himself as set on a path towards the “nihilism” that he saw exemplified by Spinoza’s philosophy in its abandonment of religious faith for the rigorous pursuit of philosophical inquiry. More specifically, however, Jacobi had appealed to Kant’s own philosophy in order to explain Spinoza’s method of determination by negation, using Kant’s account of the part-whole structure of space, in the “Transcendental Dialectic” to illuminate Spinoza’s conception of substance.<sup>27</sup> While this can look like a simple misreading on Jacobi’s part, and was treated as such by Kant at the time,<sup>28</sup> Franks brings out the element of truth contained in Jacobi’s diagnosis. Kant himself had, in the “Transcendental Ideal”, invoked the rationalist concept of an *omnitudo realitatis*—an “All of reality”—and had likened its morphology to the part-whole structure of space. Jacobi was thus finding in Kant’s first *Critique* elements to which Hegel was later appealing in *Faith and Knowledge*.

But the Spinozism that was so revived was also one that was transposed from the more mechanistic framework of 17<sup>th</sup> century into the world of early biological thought of the late 18<sup>th</sup>. Moreover, by publishing as a “Beilagen” to the 1795 edition of his *Letters on the Teaching of Spinoza*, Giordano Bruno’s “On the cause, principle, and the one” (*De la causa, principio e uno*), Jacobi had further associated Bruno’s Neo-Platonism with Spinoza and thus, indirectly with Kant’s transcendental idealism itself. During the 1790s, the revival of interest in Platonism reasserted just that

---

<sup>27</sup> Paul W. Franks, *All or Nothing: Systematicity, Transcendental Arguments, and Skepticism in German Idealism*, Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 89.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

neoplatonic complexion that Brucker had resisted half a century before. The neoplatonic Plato was particularly attractive to the early Romantics, especially Novalis who saw in Plotinus a type of early version of the transcendental philosophy of Kant and Fichte.

Both early Schelling and Hegel were clearly attracted to Plotinian thought, and especially the particular role Plotinus had given to the processes of life. In the *Enneads* Plotinus had portrayed life as infused with the processes of intelligence or *nous*, the second member of the triad, the one, intelligence, and soul (En, nous, psyche).<sup>29</sup> A particularly clear application of the Plotinian processes of egress and regress from “the one” within the living realm is to be found in Hegel’s discussion of life in chapter 4 of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

[T]he simple substance of Life is the splitting-up of itself into shapes and at the same time the dissolution of these just as much a splitting-up and the forming of members. With this, the two sides of the whole movement which before were distinguished, viz. the passive separatedness of the shapes in the general medium of independence, and the process of Life, collapse into one another.<sup>30</sup>

This process which in the *Phenomenology* is construed among living beings and linked to a picture of life as a realm of struggle for life is also applied by Hegel elsewhere at the level of the *individual* organism in ways that parallel Kant’s discussion of the organism in the third *Critique*. Life in its immediacy is this singular living being. But this being is simultaneously an “immediate self-relating universality” in as much as its particular organs “are reciprocally both *means* and purposes for each other” such that the life of the organism itself results as this “negative unity” existing among the organs. In Hegel’s developing concept of spirit, however, spirit is clearly not nature, and its self-developing whole does not, as in nature, “dissolve its development”. Nevertheless, spirit essentially has this same logical architecture for Hegel as conveyed in his well-known account of the process of recognition in which the “I” splits the “we” that return to the unity an I. Moreover, the developmental

---

<sup>29</sup> Enthused by the nature philosophy that was being developed by Schelling, Friedrich Creuzer, later to be a colleague and correspondent of Hegel, in 1805 translated Plotinus’s “On nature and on contemplation and the one”, from the *Enneads* book, III. C.f., Werner Beierwaltes, *Platonismus und Idealismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2004), p. 84.

<sup>30</sup> G. W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), § 172.

processes of spirit are still embodied and located in the processes of nature, itself conceived as “the idea” in externality, such that nous could be conceived as distributed across and immanent within the interacting individuals of the historically developing human community.

We might say then that Hegel’s conception of both life and thought, starting from abstract universality which is the analogue of the Plotinian “one”, is not grounded in any Augustinian, ego-logical idea of a spiritual entity which is aware of its own contents, as it were, from the inside.<sup>31</sup> Plotinus’ “henological” one resists any characterization, including characterization as a mind. As the Plotinus scholar E. K. Emilsson puts it, sounding remarkable Hegelian, “The One doesn’t even know itself, because self-knowledge requires some distinction between knower and known, and if it were to know itself, it would have to know itself as something non-simple.”<sup>32</sup> Given that the one conceived abstractly is all there is, the ideas are in some sense “in” the one, but they can only be portrayed as elements at the level of the second hypostasis, *nous*. To get a picture of the ideas in the one as in a mind one must, as did Victorinus in his transformation of the Plotinian trinity, collapse the hypostasis of *nous* back into the one.<sup>33</sup> This is the move that separates Kant’s more Augustinian implicit theology from Hegel’s more explicit Plotinian one, as is revealed in Hegel’s own unorthodox interpretation of the picture language of the trinity. In turn, this difference has consequences for how they think of teleology or purposiveness in nature.

As Kant sets out his position on teleology in the third *Critique*, we as individuals recognize purposes “as if” they exist in nature *because* of a subjective principle within ourselves, a regulative principle “that is necessary for human judgment in dealing with nature”.<sup>34</sup> Natural purpose is then a projection of a type of purposiveness within us that is fundamentally *intellectual* and *formal* rather than

---

<sup>31</sup> Plotinus himself had spoken of cities, not just individuals, as having souls, and by appealing to the interaction of living individuals Hegel might be seen as having attempted to resolve the Aristotelian problem of the disembodied nature of nous without appealing to the existence of any distinctly spiritual entity over and above the finite ensouled living beings.

<sup>32</sup> Eyjólfur Kjalar Emilsson, *Plotinus on Intellect*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Rist, “Plotinus and Christian Philosophy”, p. 403.

<sup>34</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. W. S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), §77, 404.

material:<sup>35</sup> it is the purposiveness manifested the Augustine-like moral capacity to impose a law onto a world which includes those only quasi-teleologically organic processes of our bodies that manifest themselves as desires. However, Hegel rejects this picture of the will, and hence rejects the idea that what allows the recognition of natural analogues of purpose could be something both fundamentally subjective and formal. Rather than it being the case that we recognize analogues of our own formal purposiveness *in* nature, it must equally be the case that we are capable of subjective purposiveness *because* we share that type of immediate “for-selfness” that we recognize in other living beings.

It is against this general background of this more Plotinian idea of thought as, in some sense, continuous with rather than simply opposed to the processes of life conceived in this way that now I want to pose the following questions. First, what might be the consequences for a type of transcendental idealism that attempted to give a place to Platonic ideas retrieved via the intermediary of the pagan Neoplatonists rather than Aquinas? Or to put it another way, what might be the consequences for the opposition “mind of God—point of view of man” were one to start with something more like the Plotinian *nous rather than* the Augustinian conception of the “mind of God”.

### ***The Hegelian Fate of the Kant’s Transcendental Unity of Apperception***

In “Point of View of Man or Knowledge of God”, Longuenesse locates a key difference between Kant and Hegel in their conception of the transcendental unity of apperception. “For Kant, it is the unity of a finite consciousness: a consciousness which is not the source of its own empirical object, but merely generates the forms according to which these objects are perceived and conceptualized. ... For Hegel, the unity of apperception is much more than this. It is the same “reason,” or intuitive understanding, which Hegel found in Kant’s solution to the dialects of aesthetic and of teleological judgment”.<sup>36</sup> This is the move in which Hegel abandons the Kantian idea of the finitude of man and his point of view, and embraces the project of knowing the mind of God. But before attempting to say what this move might amount to in *non-Augustinian* language, I want to look at what Hegelians commonly see as the costs of maintaining the Kantian position.

---

<sup>35</sup> This is particularly clear in Kant’s discussion in §62 of the *Critique of Judgment*, “On Merely Formal, as Distinguished from Material, Objective Purposiveness”.

<sup>36</sup> Longuenesse, “Point of View of Man or Knowledge of God”, p. 187.

A particularly clear expression of one such cost can be found in William Bristow's recent treatment of Hegel's critique of Kant's "subjectivist" rendering of his own idealist project.<sup>37</sup> Focusing on Kant's claim in the B deduction that "the unity of consciousness is that which alone constitutes the relation of representations to an object, thus their objective validity",<sup>38</sup> Bristow stresses the theme of the normativity of judgment that underlies Kant's account. For Kant, the objectivity of judgment, he says, implies "a constraint on how we must combine representations ... a rule that holds universally and necessarily".<sup>39</sup> But for Kant, such a rule can only *be* my rule if I can be thought as somehow having *legislated* it. For Bristow, while this is a theme that Kant only makes explicit in his practical writings,<sup>40</sup> it nevertheless holds the key to his conception of theoretical reason as well.

In a similar vein, Terry Pinkard has pointed to the problems facing the concept of "the will's being subject only to those laws it gives itself", a problem that he calls the "Kantian paradox", and that he identifies as motivating Hegel's move beyond the Kantian framework. Kant seems to require an agent "to split himself in two, to 'double' himself – in effect, for 'me' to issue a law to myself that 'I' could then use as a reason to apply the law to myself".<sup>41</sup> Pinkard's revisionist Hegel solves Kant's

---

<sup>37</sup> William Bristow, *Hegel and the Transformation of Philosophical Critique* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>38</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 137.

<sup>39</sup> Bristow, *Hegel and the Transformation of Philosophical Critique*, p. \*.

<sup>40</sup> where he makes it clear that "in order to understand oneself as the source or the seat of norm-governed judgment, one must understand one's activity as the source also of the legislation for that activity". *ibid.* p. 34. And again, "We can regard judgment as our activity only if the principles according to which judgment is governed also have their source in our activity. ... If judgment were bound by an externally legislated principle, it wouldn't be judgment at all. Hence if judgment is understood as something we do, something we are responsible for, then the constraint on our combination (which constitutes the objectivity of representation) can be nothing else than the subject's self-legislation". Both Bristow and Pinkard refer to Kant's canonical formulation of this view from the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, "The will is not merely subject to the law but subject to it in such a way that it must be viewed as also giving the law to itself and just because of this as first subject to the law (of which it can regard itself as the author)" GMM 4: 431. Bristow quoted 75.

<sup>41</sup> Terry Pinkard, "Subjects, Objects, and Normativity: What Is It Like To Be an Agent?", in Karl Ameriks and Jürgen Stolzenberg (eds), *International Yearbook of German Idealism, vol 1* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003), p. 210. Pinkard continues: "However, splitting the agent in two *per se* does nothing to solve the problem, since such a view cannot adjudicate which of the two sides of the same agent is to have priority over the other; it cannot, that is, show how splitting myself in two somehow 'binds' one of my parts because of legislation enacted by the other". *Ibid.* Pinkard adds, that "Wittgenstein's arguments about private languages and rule-following only reinforce such a view".

problem with a move to the “sociality of reason”,<sup>42</sup> a move analogous to that found in Wittgenstein’s response to the so called “private language” problem or Brandom’s response to the “myth of the given”. It is incoherent to regard the norms to which any subject holds herself as at the same time *legislated* by the subject. Rather, they must be regarded as immanent within the rule-governed social life to which that subject belongs. But this is not meant to establish some higher order or superindividual agent—“society” itself—as the legislator. Utilizing Hegel’s notion of recognition, the revisionist Hegelians conceive of the rules as holding, as it were, simply between agents. The rules to which I hold myself are the rules to which I equally hold others. It is only because these others reciprocally hold me to the same rules that I can hold myself to them, and of course the same applies to these others. The rules themselves, as contemporary advocates of externalist approaches to mental content point out, not primordially *in* my mind, nor in that of any other finite agent. But neither are they in the mind of some supra-individual entity, they are simply immanent within the forms of life within which we all participate. But at the same time, Hegel is still a Kantian idealist rather than a Platonic realist about the *status* of the rules. The rules exist there only to the extent that agents actually *do* hold themselves and others to them, and in *this* sense they are “mind-dependent”. But we shouldn’t over-literalise this phrase to conceive of a *thing* on which they are dependent in the way properties might be conceived as dependent on a substrate. They are not *in* a mind.

It is this general shape of the revisionist Hegelian critique of Kant’s subjectivism, I suggest, that is reflected in what I have been characterizing as Hegel’s Plotinian account of the ideas to Kant’s more Augustinian one. Both Kant and Hegel think of the status of theological language in broadly similar ways. It is meant to give expression in some type of symbolic or picture-language form to structures which are properly given a conceptual articulation. Kant, of course, rejects the idea that philosophy should simply inherit any assumptions from religion, but my suggestion has been that he himself does inherit assumptions from the Christian religion of his own culture, and that this affects the philosophical shape of his project by affecting his understanding of the Greek philosophy he wants to critically inherit. Hegel’s philosophical ideas too were clearly influenced by the Christian culture to which he belonged, but it was a significantly different one. My question has effectively been to ask the degree to which Kant’s critical program might be divested of its more Augustinian assumptions about Platonic ideas, and reinterpreted in the light of

---

<sup>42</sup> As developed in Pinkard, Pinkard, *Hegel’s Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason*.

different, more Plotinian ones. In the final section, I pose this question in the context of Kant's account of the idea that gets expressed in religious language as the idea of God.

### ***Kant's Omnitudo Realitatis and the idea of God***

In the "Transcendental Ideal" in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant describes the idea of God as resulting from the *realization, hypostatization and personalization* of the "idea" associated with a particular type of inference pattern, the disjunctive syllogism. A disjunctive syllogism is a syllogism of which the major premiss is a disjunctive judgment in which a concept has been divided into a set of mutually excluding contraries that stand in relations of "logical opposition". I may know, for example, that to be learned is to learned *either* in matters of history *or* in matters of reason. If then I know that a particular person is learned, but *not* in matters of history, I can infer that they are learned in matters of reason. Kant thinks of syllogisms as able to be chained into "prosyllogisms" that result in something like the tree-like structures that we associate with Plotinus's follower, Porphyry. What gives rise to the idea of God concerns the concept that we anticipate as standing at the top of a Porphyrian tree of concepts that split into subconcepts that stand in these relations of logical opposition. But Kant's discussion of this "idea" departs in important ways from his discussion of the ideas associated with categorical and hypothetical syllogisms.

Kant says that every concept "in regard to what is not contained in it, is indeterminate, and stands under the principle of *determinability* [*Grundsätze der Bestimmbarkeit*]: that of *every two* contradictorily opposed predicates [*kontradiktorisch-entgegengesetzten Prädikaten*] only one can apply to it."<sup>43</sup> This "merely logical principle" is just another way of expressing—Kant says it "rests on"—the "principle of contradiction [*Sätze des Widerspruchs*]." But while every *concept* falls under this principle, every *thing* stands under a *further* principle that he calls the "principle of *thoroughgoing determination* [*Grundsätze der durchgängigen Bestimmung*], according to which, among *all possible* predicates of *things* [*Dinge*], insofar as they are compared with their opposites [*Gegenteilen*], one must apply to it."<sup>44</sup> Thus, rather than considering every thing in relation to "two mutually

---

<sup>43</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A571/B599.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, A571–2/B599–600. The Kemp Smith translation of this passage obscures Kant's meaning by rendering the "*Gegenteilen*" that Kant uses of the predicate pairs relevant to the "principle of thorough-going determination" of *things* as "contradictory opposites"

contradicting predicates [*einander widerstreitenden Prädikate*],” the principle “considers every thing further in relation to *the whole of possibility*, as the sum total of all predicates of things in general; and by presupposing that as a condition *a priori*, it represents every thing as deriving its own possibility from the share that it has in that whole of possibility” and “thus deals with the content [*Inhalt*] and not merely the *logical form*.”<sup>45</sup>

This idea is, in Kant’s terminology, a “transcendental ideal” or “*Prototypon transcendentale*”—a representation of the world as a whole, whose parts are all thoroughly determined in terms of the totality of such opposed predicates. It is an “All of reality (*omnitude realitatis*)”, an “unlimited (the All)”, that grounds “all true negations [*alle wahre Vereinungen*]” which are “nothing but limits [*Schranken*].”<sup>46</sup> Reason demands that we hold such an idea of such a unified ground to all determinately existing beings as a regulative idea, but under the influence of the transcendental illusion, we realize, hypostatize and personalize it, and the result is the idea of God—or more particularly, Kant’s Augustinian Christian God that is the realization, hypostatization and personalization of his own *transcendental ideal*, the God whose epistemic capacities defines the limits of our own.

We should not be surprized to find that Hegel rejects something about the conceptual infrastructure that underlies the generation of Kant’s idea of God, nor that his criticism here coheres with the difference between his own idea of God and that of Kant. Kant is explicit concerning how we are to conceive of the relation of finite entities to their transcenental ground, the *omnitude realitatis*: they are “negations [*Verneinungen*]” of the ideal, “mere limitations [*blosse Einschränkungen*] of a greater and finally of the highest reality; hence they presuppose it, and as regards their content they are merely derived from it.”<sup>47</sup> But this begs a logico-semantic principle to which Hegel is resolutely opposed, a principle that he calls the “principle of

---

rather than “contraries.” Here, Kant explicitly uses the terms “contradictorily opposed predicates [*kontradiktorische-entgegengesetzten Prädikaten*]” and “mutually contradicting predicates” [*einander widerstreitenden Prädikate*] when speaking of the merely *logical* “principle of determinability” of concepts, and is relying on the same distinction that elsewhere he renders as between “real” and “logical” negation.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., A572/B600. Translation modified and final emphasis added.

<sup>46</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A575–6/B603–4.

<sup>47</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A578/B606. Moreover, in going on to compare the negations of the ideal to the way that spatial figures are rightly regarded as “possible only as different ways of limiting infinite space” draws attention to the way that his conception of pure intuition itself presupposes the priority of the affirmative principle.

affirmation". Effectively Hegel opposition here is to what Laurence Horn has called the "asymmetricalist" position on the nature of logical negation. *Asymmetricalists*, like Kant, regard negative statements, says Horn, as "less primitive, less informative, less objective, less godly, and/or less valuable than their affirmative counterparts".<sup>48</sup> In contrast, Hegel works on the *primacy* of the type of negation that holds among the parts of the predicate of a disjunctive judgment. The parent concept of which the sub-concepts are the determinations cannot itself be thought of as having some kind of positive determinate content apart from the determinate negations into which it itself enters into at the higher level. Were one to think of what was at the top of such a Porphyrian tree, one could not think of it as a positive reality of which all the finite entities below were "mere negations". Hegel wants to cut off at the pass, as it were, the thought of a positive "all" that *could be* subject to the processes of "realization, hypostatization and personalization". Once more, Hegel's thought here is Plotinian, or more accurately *Proclean*.

It was Proclus, who, in his commentary on Plato's *Parmenides* had challenged Plato's asymmetricalist privileging of affirmation over negation, thereby providing Hegel with a paradigmatic criticism of the primacy of the "affirmative principle".<sup>49</sup> While Plato "declared Being to be superior" to non-being,<sup>50</sup> Proclus had countered

---

<sup>48</sup> Laurence R. Horn, *A Natural History of Negation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> Hegel refers to Proclus in this context in his discussion of Plato's dialectic in the *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*. "[T]he Neo-platonists, and more especially Proclus, regard the result arrived at in the *Parmenides* as the true theology, as the true revelation of all the mysteries of the divine essence. And it cannot be regarded as anything else ...." G. W. F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, 3 volumes, trans. E. S. Haldane, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), vol II, p. 60. Elsewhere, Hegel refers to the "great sagacity" expressed in Proclus' treatment of the one and its "negations." "Multiplicity is not taken empirically and then merely abrogated; the negative, as dividing, producing, and active, not merely contains what is privative, but also affirmative determinations." *Ibid.*, p. 438. Hegel's link to Proclus was not lost on Ludwig Feuerbach, who labelled Hegel "the German Proclus." Ludwig Feuerbach, *Principles of the Philosophy of the Future*, trans. M. H. Vogel, intro. T. H. Wartenberg (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986), p. 47. For an extensive treatment of the relevance of Proclus for Hegel, see Jean-Louis Vieillard-Baron, *Platon et L'Idéalisme Allemand* (1770-1930), Paris: Beauchesne, 1979), pp. 267-324, and Beierwaltes, *Platonismus und Idealismus*, pp. 154-187. While traditionally the proximity of Hegel to neoplatonic thought has usually been taken as evidence of Hegel's pre-critical metaphysical intentions, this need not be interpreted in such a way. The aspect of Proclus' work that I take to be relevant here is his logico-semantic approach to negation as explored by John N. Martin, *Themes in Neoplatonic and Aristotelian Logic: Order, Negation and Abstraction* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004). Such a generally semantic approach to the Neoplatonists has also be suggested by A. C. Lloyd, *The Anatomy of Neoplatonism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

<sup>50</sup> "It is quite clear what relation Plato himself in the *Sophist* (258ab) declared Not-

that it is *not* true “that assertion is always superior to negation.” In particular, there is a special case in which assertion “takes a second place” to negation and in which “negation expresses that type of Non-Being which is beyond Being.”<sup>51</sup> It is precisely so in relation to “the one,” since conceiving of the one as “non-being” exempts it from being the subject of assertion that, says Proclus, “wants to lay hold of some Form.” It is necessary to avoid treating the primal entity as “being” because it “is ... above form, and it is not suitable to apply to it any of those attributes which are proper to secondary things, nor to transfer to it attributes proper to us.”<sup>52</sup>

Yet despite the difference between Hegel and Kant here, there seems a definite sense in which Hegel’s Proclean-styled criticism of the tendency to treat “the one” as a determinable object has features that are akin to Kant’s criticism of the aspirations of pure reason. Sometimes Kant describes the divine intuitive intellect in ways that stress the distinction appearances/things in themselves, but at others the emphasis is on the intuitive grasp of the whole in way that collapses the dimension of conceptual determination with that of the idea of intuitive wholeness that applies to singular objects of empirical apprehension.<sup>53</sup> During his Jena years Hegel had turned against his earlier acceptance of Schelling’s notion of intellectual intuition, and his entirely negative Proclean approach to “the one” reflects this. But if it allows him to capture something of Kant’s critique of traditional metaphysics, it does so in a way that allows him to circumvent the Augustinian dimensions of Kant’s criticism, that is, the dimension which expresses the limitations of the human point of view by the contrast to an omniscient divine mind. In fact, there are indications that, in his treatment of the *transcendental ideal*, Kant was himself struggling to work his way out of the more formalist “Augustinian” assumptions that had otherwise so shaped his approach.

That Kant’s treatment of the *transcendental ideal* points in a direction that leads

---

Being to have toward Being, and that he declared Being to be superior.” Proclus, *A Commentary on Plato’s Parmenides*, trans. John M. Dillon and Glenn R. Morrow, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 426.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. p. 426.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> According to Moltke Gram, Kant refers to God’s intuitive intellect in a variety of conceptually distinct ways. One is the familiar idea of the knowledge of a realm of “things in themselves” known independently of the conditions of sensibility. Besides this, however, a second construal concerns “the possibility of an intellect that would intuit the sum total of all phenomena”, and a third involves “a kind of intellectual intuition in which the intellect would create its own object”. All of these characterizations, he claims, are “logically independent” and “have essentially nothing in common” (Gram 1981, 288).

beyond the framework of the first *Critique* is stressed by Longuenesse when she notes that Kant himself treats the *omnitude realitatis* not simply as a representation but “as something really existing”, but which can nevertheless be regarded as a “critically reduced” version of the metaphysically conceived intelligible totality of the rationalists. “It is a sensible, conceptually indeterminate whole”, she suggests, “necessarily presupposed as the background of any empirical given.”<sup>54</sup> And this is an element of the first *Critique* that looks forward to the more prominent role given to the conception of the world as a purposive whole that is found later in the *Critique of Judgment*.<sup>55</sup> Others have treated this as signalling something like a later reconciliation with a type of Spinozist monism seen in Kant’s *Opus Postumum*,<sup>56</sup> but I want to suggest that a more fitting model for Kant is the sort of “sensible”, but “conceptually indeterminate whole” is just what Hegel alludes to with the notion of “life” as an indeterminate concrete universal. Life, for Hegel, only *gets its* conceptually determinate forms in virtue of the existence of particular *types* of life that he alludes to with the notion of “spirit”, but this will only be able to be understood if we are to go beyond the legacy of the radical Augustinian opposition between spirit and life. Hegel finds the resources for this in the work of the late antique pagan neoplatonists from which he gets his own heterodox interpretation of the Christian “*Vorstellungen*” of the trinity and the incarnation. The result, I suggest, is a type of critical philosophy freed from the extraneous Augustinian presuppositions that otherwise affected Kant’s attempt to understand Plato better than he understood

---

<sup>54</sup> Béatrice Longuenesse, *Kant and the Capacity to Judge: Sensibility and Discursivity in the Transcendental Analytic of the Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Charles T. Wolfe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 308. Longuenesse further develops this reading of Kant’s transcendental ideal in Béatrice Longuenesse, *Kant on the Human Standpoint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), ch. 8. Henry Allison has argued that while the givenness of the *omnitude realitatis* is a “product of transcendental illusion,” Leibniz’s metaphysical error properly hangs on the *hypostatization* of the notion and “the subsequent identification of the *ens realissimum* with a being whose existence is absolutely necessary,” that is, God. Allison, *Kant’s Transcendental Idealism*, pp. 404–5. Allison points out, however, that this does not mean that Kant’s account of the *omnitude realitatis* and the *ens realissimum* are free from problems, with one source of these resting on Kant’s continued use of the scholastic idea of “the priority (both logical and ontological) of realities or positive predicates over negative ones” (Ibid., p. 399), a distinction already contained in the categories of “reality” and “negation” from the “Transcendental Analytic.” This is exactly the target of Hegel’s critique.

<sup>55</sup> Longuenesse’s idea of a critical reading of the *omnitude realitatis* has been criticized by Michelle Grier (*Kant’s Doctrine of Transcendental Illusion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 235–52) to whom Longuenesse replies in *Kant on the Human Standpoint*, ch. 8.

<sup>56</sup> See especially, Jeffrey Edwards, *Substance, Force, and the Possibility of Knowledge: On Kant’s Philosophy of Material Nature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

himself.