

On Hegel's relation between self-consciousness and historical development

Tobias Martin

Hegel claims that self-consciousness is not only an individual but also a communal activity that progresses over history. In this essay, I will present Hegel's argument for the significance of this relation between self-consciousness and its historical dimension using the *Phenomenology of Spirit* as the main source. I will argue that even though Hegel emphasises correctly the importance of culture for developing self-consciousness arising from embodied freedom-in-necessity, his socio-political elaborations fail because of his metaphysical logic of rationality.

In the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel establishes consciousness as something that distinguishes itself from and relates itself to objects in order to attain knowledge about the world (Ng 2020, 97), but also that these objects themselves are not independent but essential to the subject's own consciousness (an object for-itself) (Beiser 2006, 284). Thus, reality is not independent of the subject but lies in the subject-object relationship. In this regard, Hegel understands self-consciousness as the goal to demonstrate the own self-identity by overcoming the opposition between oneself – as ideal conscious being – and the object in reality through attuning this relation. Here, the experience of the object corresponds to the object itself only if the subjective conceptualisation of it corresponds as well (PhG, ¶82). This requires the subject to actualise itself which amounts to the rational transformation of reality in such a way that it becomes more aligned with the concepts of the subject.

The sought unity must therefore arise from within – it “must become essential to [self-consciousness]” (PhG, ¶167) – which implies a movement through which self-consciousness develops from consciousness. Here, this movement follows a dialectical pattern for Hegel: consciousness examines itself and its objects according to its understanding of its own subjectivity and the objective world which necessarily causes contradictions that lead to adjustments of the concepts about subjectivity and objectivity until it ultimately reaches their unity (Bonsiepen 1988, XXX). In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel tracks this dialectical movement phenomenologically in a self-investigating consciousness.

At the beginning of the chapter on self-consciousness, Hegel's consciousness acts upon the concept of itself as being unconstrained by anything that is not itself (Neuhouser 2009, 1).
©2024 Tobias Martin, licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0

39). Thus, the only object the reflective activity can target is its own self: consciousness becomes the Kantian self-reflective “I” being aware of its own activity as world-creator at the expense of not being able to attain reality or the noumenal world. For Hegel, the subject considering its own knowing-of-itself as its object loses this very object because consciousness is both itself and its relation to the object. This reflection into itself, thus, leads to a “certainty that is equal to its truth” (PhG, ¶166). However, this assumed form of self-consciousness becomes also only the “motionless tautology of ‘I am I’” (PhG, ¶167) – it can only be aware of itself as static, pure consciousness without further content that would be necessary to conceptualise itself as real.

Hegel concludes that the movement constituting self-consciousness can therefore not only arise from itself but also includes a “return from the being other” (PhG, ¶167). This, I want to argue, amounts for Hegel to be necessarily the case for all living beings: on a biological level, the subject-as-organism brings itself into existence by separating itself from an outside and maintains it by introducing a goal-directedness that is not inherent in matter¹ (Weber 2016, 13). The organism – like life itself – is therefore embodied self-concern with an inside arising from the necessity of interpreting something as outside, as separate to itself, to continue its own existence. Thus, all life includes an antinomy of freedom and necessity: the necessity to be free from the world to exist while also being dependent on the world to stay alive (Jonas 2001, 83).

For Hegel, this is the contradiction manifested in every consciousness, and it becomes the work of self-consciousness to understand this. Here, “need and drive are the readiest examples of purpose. They are the felt contradiction, as it occurs within the living subject itself; and they lead into the activity of negating this negation (which is what mere subjectivity still is)” (Hegel 1991, 280). Thus, Hegel views this contradiction as necessarily active and real – it is part of us being alive and not only some mismatch between object and concept (Michellini 2012, 138). Also, it consists of negation which I do not interpret as something necessarily destructive but rather the subject’s meaningful determination of its objects through which they lose their independence and become for-the-subject. This is necessary to counter the steady pull of the world to dissolve consciousness in it, for which

1. In the *Philosophy of Nature*, Hegel expresses this clearly: “[an] organism is the process of subjectivity which is self-relating in the midst of externality ... [its] being preserves itself in this relationship with that which is external to it” (Hegel 1970b, 108), at which “the fundamental determination of living existence is that it is to be regarded as acting purposively” (145).

reason it becomes purposeful to the subject and it feels it as the drive for self-satisfaction. At the same time, consciousness can understand itself by “negating this negation” (Hegel 1991, 280): it understands itself as that what it cannot negate or what it cannot attach meaning to as its outside world.

Thus, both subjectivity and objectivity become necessary for self-consciousness only because life is an objective feature of itself, and Hegel suggests that reflective self-consciousness grasps this truth through considering life – the meaningful world around it – as the object for its yet only simple desire (PhG, ¶171). It is therefore concerned with a double object: the object desired, which is marked as something negative, and desire itself as its own essence (PhG, ¶167). However, self-consciousness must also see itself as partly distinct from life because only itself can grasp the self-sufficient unity of subjectivity and objectivity while universal life is “this unity itself such that this unity is not at the same time for itself” (PhG, ¶168). Thus, consciousness can realise that it is alive without being only life itself: life is only its genus (PhG, ¶172), but self-consciousness is not mere desire (PhG, ¶175), or as Pippin (2011, 32) phrases it, self-consciousness needs to understand itself as being the subject of its own desires but not simply subject to its desires².

On the phenomenological level, pure consciousness driven by its simple desire at first seeks its own self-sufficiency by negating life and posing the nullity of life’s self-sufficiency as its truth when confronted with life as object (PhG, ¶173). Thus, it convinces itself as still absolutely self-determined (PhG, ¶174). However, this self-conception of the subject fails immediately as it necessarily learns of the absoluteness of the self-sufficiency of life in the process of negation: on the one hand, self-consciousness-as-desire must acknowledge its object to sublate it, so that the subject cannot be absolute self-sufficient anymore (PhG, ¶175). On the other hand, in negating the object, desire loses the ability to further prove its self-sufficiency to itself as the object ceases to be value-able. Therefore, desire always re-engenders the object anew in an endless cycle – like the universal life cycle of birth and death. This enables the subject to grasp now that despite its need to negate the object to

2. Ng (2020, 108) suggests additional importance of the insight, to be part of a species whose essence is life, for the subject: the concept of species where members are essentially united and differentiated through activities defined by their relation to the whole enables grounding a priori the notion of recognition and the necessity of turning to another self-consciousness. This might also be behind Hegel’s account that living also means dying (sublation of its shape) so that life becomes an endless cyclic motion of a self-sustaining whole independent of its individuals (PhG, ¶171).

affirm itself as a living being, the object thereby must not cease to exist. As a logical result, it must be the object that negates itself in the encounter of the subject to get closer to the actualisation of self-consciousness. This is because only in self-negation, the subject is still self-sufficient as it is itself the agent of this negation (PhG, ¶175). For Hegel, the only object able to self-negate is living self-consciousness and thus, “self-consciousness attains its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness” (PhG, ¶175) through mutual recognition. I interpret this as the claim that a desire for recognition is necessary for consciousness to recognise itself objectively such that the recognition itself is only the means but not the end of the desire (compare Honneth (2008, 87)). Importantly, this act cannot be one-sided because the object is a subject itself and has, therefore, the potential to resist the desire of the subject and present itself as something other (Hverven 2023, 76). Thus, the sought recognition of the subject cannot be more than a demand towards the other, and the required movement of one self-consciousness becomes necessarily a “doubled movement of both self-consciousnesses” (PhG, ¶182).

This insight reaches consciousness-as-desire phenomenologically within a “life and death struggle” (PhG, ¶187) with another self-consciousness as its object because, at this stage, each subject still tries to prove its apparent self-sufficiency to itself, i.e., that it is not bound by something else but an autonomous organism seeking satisfaction. This self-understanding leads to a necessarily negative outcome because the only way of proving self-sufficiency would be death which would necessarily occur since life is not valued yet. Hegel illustrates this step using the master-servant example: the master has self-sufficiency as her truth because she proved herself to be superior to life by negating objects without losing authority. This is achieved through the mediation of the servant who recognises the master and thereby, provides a non-decaying object of recognition for the master (PhG, ¶190). However, the master subdues the servant by considering her as just another object and lacking the necessary understanding about the value of life (PhG (¶192) and Pippin (2011, 86)). It is therefore not the sought doubled movement of two subjects required for the master to overcome her stage of self-consciousness.

Instead, Hegel turns to the dialectics in the servant, the self-consciousness that submits to the negation of the other, to proceed. First, the servant experiences the master as a living example of authority during her servitude and thus, the concept of self-sufficiency becomes an objective experience for the servant (PhG, ¶194). Further, the absolute fear – the fear of death – that drove the servant into her position, enables her now to understand that

her life is the overarching value for herself. In contrast to the master, the servant therefore “[learns] that life is as essential to [her] as is pure self-consciousness” (PhG, ¶189). Serving an “other” also means that the servant needs to overcome her own (natural) desires and in achieving this, she can gain confidence in her ability to become her own master as a determined self-consciousness beyond embodied life (PhG, ¶194). I would argue that this is also implied by the servant’s work itself because it is “desire held in check” (PhG, ¶195): the formation of things manifests the servant’s subjectivity in the world without necessarily destroying it. The subject is thus not mere desire like a simple organism that “blindly” consumes its surroundings to survive. At the same time, the transformation of the alien world makes it less fearful for the servant, and she becomes open to the possibility to encounter her own agency objectively in the world (PhG, ¶196). In its continuing existence, the world becomes more interesting to self-consciousness in a way it previously was only interested in the world’s disappearance: the stable existence of the world becomes increasingly reality, something self-consciousness actualises in itself as reason (compare PhG (¶232)).

Pinkard (2017, 44) argues that Hegel introduces the master-servant struggle because it is an empirically reoccurring thread in humanity throughout various forms of cultures in history, while certain feminist readings tend towards reading the dialectics as the struggle of women to free themselves from men (Fritzman and Gauthier 2015, 43). Instead of engaging in the credibility of these readings³, I want to highlight the importance of this dialectics within the *Phenomenology*: it emphasises that self-consciousness can internalise a concept of itself as living subjectivity only in recognising otherness – reality – as such and the own subjectivity as an essential feature of this objective realm of otherness. However, objectivity is a shared realm that arises from mutual recognition, and it is in extension of this dialectics, that self-consciousness recognises the other to have “being” – to be another subject within a shared world. Thus, this step marks the transition from a purely subjective development of self-consciousness to an intersubjective development which Hegel attributes to spirit.

Like the structure of universal life, spirit is an abstract organic whole that is constituted by its parts, the individual self-consciousnesses, as much as it constitutes them. As such, spirit necessarily has the form of self-consciousness – a communal self-consciousness

3. For example, Tembo (2020) challenges the idea that this dialectics concerns colonial structures.

– so that its actualisation cannot happen outside of itself but within its particularities. The individual self-consciousness becomes thus nothing but the subjective side of the self-development of spirit, at which the very concept of individuality arises from the concept of community. Further, spirit, like the individual self-consciousness, manifests itself in activity and “realises its potentiality...[and] contemplates itself as an objective existence” (VPG, 99). Outside the individual, spirit takes therefore on an objective form in reality as a particular culture connected to a certain form of worship, customs and laws. Spirit’s dialectical progress is however necessarily mediated in its parts such that the subject’s experiencing and engaging with the objective form of spirit develops subjective and objective self-consciousness together: the unity of self is thus a result mediated by the world the self co-creates as part of a culture but also in which consciousness develops both, biologically, intellectually and socially.

Bykova (2009, 287) points towards “enculturation” (Bildung) as key for this development within the social sphere: Bildung designates the active process that on the individual level, amounts to appropriating the cultural development, its tradition as a world full of meaningful constructs presented as universal cultural phenomena. This is performed in actions and events of consciousness’s own experience, and I would argue that the work of the servant can be interpreted as this beginning work of consciousness on concrete forms of alienation in the world. Tradition is, however, at the same time always objective to the subject, such that consciousness necessarily transforms culture in the process of taking it into itself (288). Thus, spirit drives culture while also changing through the individual appropriating it, and Bildung becomes the movement that mediates the opposition of the individual subject and the universal object (289).

Hegel analysis the dialectical realisation of this social spirit by outlining the necessary conditions for a unified, universal whole which guarantees proper social relations. For the sake of my argument, it is sufficient to briefly outline these conditions in the following. On the subjective side, freedom, or individual self-consciousness⁴, necessitates life in a communal collective, arising from strong bonds within the nuclear family with emotional support and recognition (GPR, ¶158). This community though lacks the stability to maintain proper balance (compare GPR, ¶181) for which reason Hegel introduces the civil

4. Hegel uses the concept of freedom to describe the essence of spirit, and I follow Pinkard (2017, 43) in arguing that freedom is an abbreviation for the sought unity of subjectivity and world, or simply the self-consciousness of individuals and spirit.

society as the institutions that protect the rights of individuals. This secures subjective freedom but only by constraining the freedom of others (James 2017, 5–6). For Hegel, restraining freedom for the sake of freedom cannot be universal freedom for which reason the civil society is necessary but not sufficient for the self-consciousness of spirit (GPR, ¶258).

Truly free will, as acting by the own self-conception, requires not just any form of free will but “the [subjective] free will which wills the [universal] free will” (GPR, ¶27), so the right (objective) content not just the right (subjective) form: only when the content is of universal kind, the willing subject can be fully conscious of its freedom and recognise itself in that which limits its will (7). On the subjective level, this is morality as the self-restraining from the abstract right of free choice according to the own conception of rationality. Thus, self-consciousness can make sense of itself in its actions within its community under the condition that the form of community is universal. For Hegel, this amounts to the state as the actuality of the spirit when it has been raised to universality (GPR, ¶258): the constitution and laws of the state enable the particular interests of citizens to reach full development, but also, that the individuals identify with the state in such a way that they align their own interests with the interest of the universal (state) (GPR, ¶260). Thus, citizens do not restrain themselves but affirm rationally their own as well as communal freedom as law, morality and government, which sublates the contradiction of subjective and objective consciousness (VPG, 56). Self-consciousness’ requirement for culture can therefore only develop as a member of a state such that the social spirit is necessarily political as well (compare James (2017, 11)).

The distinct feature of Hegel’s argument is however that the presented form of socio-political spirit is not a priori but historically conditioned: self-consciousness becomes the realisation of itself from nature within a historical development (VPG, 32); not just in the individual through engaging with its culture but also across the world history through nations as spirits with a particular socio-political structure and understanding of spirit (compare GPR (¶340) and Beiser (2006, 274)). For this purpose, Hegel introduces the world spirit as an aspect of spirit that unites subjective and objective spirit in the absolute. Thereby, world spirit moves necessarily dialectically from within which is played out by its parts, so national spirits that develop together with the subjective self-consciousnesses constituting the nation: spirit enfolds within one particular nation until a contradiction between its ideal and reality necessarily leads to worldly changes that cause spirit to be

transferred to a different nation (VPG, 98-9). Thus, spirit is actually the director of events of world history (VPG, 19) for which reason the necessary conditions to attain spirit's goal reveal themselves first in the historical process itself (Beiser 2006, 290). Furthermore, this implies that the ultimate result of history has to be proven historically-empirically instead of a priori (VPG, 22). It is therefore only within the latest stage of spirit (in which Hegel was contemporary), that self-consciousness realises that it can only actualise its freedom if it reconciles necessity with freedom through willing a certain kind of moral and political constraints within a state as analysed above⁵ (Sedgewick 2015, 446).

Thus, my overall analysis of Hegel shows that he identifies self-consciousness not just as an individual, subjective phenomenon but in its very essence as part of embodied life and intersubjectively linked to socio-political and historical developments. One rather obvious critique of Hegel is the convictions and prejudices that are embedded into his historical account of world spirit (compare Beiser (2006, 287)). As such, Hegel does not follow his own idea that the understanding of spirit's development needs to arise from history but instead, falls back to individualism and ethnocentrism typical for contemporary Western thought. In particular, his empirical basis for claiming that his "own" people are the latest stage of spirit is as much debatable as his following of the typical narrative of historical continuity from the Greeks to modern Europe as well as the necessity of nations for history to occur. Irrespectively, the question though becomes to which degree Hegel's principle idea about the relation between self-consciousness and historical development can be defended.

The critical step of Hegel's self-consciousness is the conceptualising of itself and reality as something not arising within the subject alone but enacted somewhere in between the subject and its world⁶. Thus, our thinking of the world bears a biological and social stamp, at which the social component frames individual self-consciousness as an intersubjective one. This manifests a link between subjective and objective spirit for Hegel, but he consid-

5. However, Hegel thought that "his" modern state fails to develop the social reality that gives appropriate expression of this subjective understanding because it still focused too much on private interests instead of on the universal will (Bykova 2009, 284).

6. I use "enact" in this context to follow Thompson (2007) who introduces "enactivism" as the theory in cognitive sciences that the human-mind-environment relation is actually one integral system: sensual impressions perturb the system by which meaning is constructed according to the current configuration of the system, such that the world around us is not mirrored in us from perceptual input but actively enacted by us inseparable from the changing structure of our brain and our sense organs. In my reading of Hegel, he would eventually embrace these findings.

ers this not a historical-empirical theory but necessary: history is only about progressing dialectically towards a better understanding of this link – one that brings us closer to unite thought and being, subject and object.

This amounts to the claim that the world, nature, is the substance that changes from initial opposition to consciousness towards unity by becoming increasingly intelligible; it is the whole from which self-consciousness actualises itself as spirit as its absolute purpose⁷ (Stone 2005, 31–2). This presupposes the continuity of substance which Hegel defends in his *Science of Logic*: thought acting from rationality is free and can objectify itself by taking forms in response to rational requirements (96). However, these forms of thought do not simply impose a structure on reality as necessity but create the world by thinking in relation to it. This requires that natural, like mental and social forms, share a logical structure that guarantees their potential intelligibility, and they need to be able to actively transform themselves to resolve their inner contradiction in a necessarily dialectical manner (66). These structures are therefore necessarily rational because spirit – reason – is the universal for Hegel⁸, and they reveal themselves by rational thinking alone⁹ (53). In contrast, the intelligibility of the world cannot reveal itself through uncovering of objective facts because they do not necessarily tell us anything about the principle’s intelligibility as a whole which includes both subjective and objective spirit (compare Gabriel (2016, 199)).

Following Stone (2005, 102), Hegel though struggles to establish the structural link between the thinking subject and world without simply presupposing nature as a priori existing. In particular, Hegel takes his logical structures of pure thought as ontologically prior to matter so that they can transform themselves actively into matter to guarantee continuity. However, pure thought could only exist conceptually without ontological structure prior to being materialised, whereas Hegel’s order would require matter to exist at all stages of thinking. Therefore, he imported the a priori existence of world into his logic to

7. Hegel states this for example in his lectures on the philosophy of nature: “Nature is implicitly a living whole; [...] the movement through its series of stages consists of the Idea positing itself as what it is implicitly [...] It does this primarily in order to take on living being, but also in order to transcend this determinateness, in which it is merely life, and to bring itself forth into the existence of spirit, which constitutes the truth and ultimate purpose of nature, and the true actuality of the Idea.” (Hegel 1970a, 216).

8. This does however not imply that all forms are aware of this. Rather, the potential for rationality is necessary but not sufficient for self-consciousness to arise for Hegel.

9. Compare this to his claim that “[t]o him who looks upon the world rationally, the world, in turn, looks back rationally; both is mutually determining” (VPG, 23).

make rationality the ground of everything, which implies that he fails to assign rationality to all substance a priori when starting from a rational subject only.

The necessity in Hegel's spirit is thus open for discussion and in particular, the dialectical method, which Hegel considers as rational and thus necessarily constituting the dynamics of all reality, needs to be considered as a first principle of his system instead. As such, it can be argued that Hegel's system involves paradoxical logics where the start of the system is constituted by a contradiction but also results in one, even though it actually cannot be contradicted anymore as a first principle (Pratt and Zhao 2019, 13). The dialectics thus forms a whole but only a circular one. Thereby, the middle ground between a statement and its contradiction remains open for discussion once the process is not necessarily constituting the world for which reason the stages of progress become rather individual choices¹⁰. Consequently, it becomes doubtful whether Hegel is successful in arguing for the necessary progress of spirit towards some universal let alone towards self-consciousness. Here, it is not just simply an empirical challenge for the latest stage of Hegel's spirit but his metaphysical framework, and it leads me to the conclusion that self-consciousness is not able to rationally unite itself with the real world necessarily.

This opens up the possibility to discuss ontologies free from Hegel's logical requirements, for example one inspired by modern biology that considers the living world not as simply self-producing and intelligible by reason but sympoietic: like a spider net, partnerships exist on all levels of life, without clear units interacting with each other; it is a collectively-producing system that does not have self-defined spatio-temporal boundaries but control distributed among components with potential for surprising changes (Haraway 2016, 33). In particular, change is not simply imposed on matter through intentional human actions such that the more-than-human world is not an external force, as Hegel would phrase it (compare VPG (64)), but as much part of the sympoietic system as human beings and their cultures. I would therefore question Hegel's claim that the structure of individual self-consciousness and the world match necessarily: culture is not a closed and self-correcting organism but open towards the world in relations that are thus not necessarily structured as our subjective self-consciousness.

Hegel introduced "reason" as an aspect of self-consciousness after the subject learns about the necessity to look into the world to find itself, and I would agree that this is

10. One might even argue that this makes it seemingly impossible to refute Hegel's system from within because there is always a new stage that will eventually refute an argument against.

required for us, as rational animals, to make sense of the world because we still necessarily enact the world actively as living beings. However, negation, as this creation of a meaningful world to make it relevant for the subject, cannot alone constitute the process of becoming self-conscious. Rather, reality as dynamic becoming needs to encompass both, an ontological basis for experiences and a separation from it for that experience to be meaningful. This ontological level is though not separate from ourselves because it is constituted by all forms of life with their embodied objectivity and creative subjectivity as aspects of the same realm. At the same time, we are embedded in local intersubjectivity that still develops its own concepts and realities within a sympoietic system around its culture-nature.

Self-consciousness thus develops in space and time by attuning to the necessary processes of mutual becoming and decaying (Weber 2016, 117) – within subjectivity but also objectivity, without ever uniting the two. Quite the contrary, it seems to me that this distance is the balancing act that allows us to steadily become ourselves: freedom-in-necessity cannot reach unity but is a demand for us to become an agent of the more-than-human world and live in harmony with other forms of subjectivity – through contradiction but also confirmation - reason but also intuition¹¹. Only in this respect, self-consciousness is historical in the sense of always changing in time by being woven into the dynamics of the world and communities.

In conclusion, I presented Hegel's self-consciousness as an activity that historically develops from inside the nature of spirit through intersubjectivity and dialectics. As such, spirit is the unity of subjective and objective self-consciousness at which the individuals reach self-consciousness only in as much as the whole reaches it. Thus, subjective spirit, as the self-conscious agency, is to be aligned with objective spirit which Hegel identifies as particular institutions, social practices and common thought. This process becomes historical within but also across cultures for Hegel because all aspects of spirit are interdependent. Hegel himself concludes that in his time, the unity can only be realised within a rational state with a particular socio-political structure. I countered this argument by pointing out the import of his own convictions into his empirical account of history, but also by investigating his metaphysics about the necessity of a link between subjectivity and objectivity. In particular, I argued against the a priori validity of this link so that Hegel's

11. My argument fits well the description of the Daoistic philosophy by Pratt and Zhao (2019, 32).

spirit seems to fall apart irrespectively of empirical controversies. Thus, the absoluteness of spirit cannot be taken as given, and spirit is not proceeding throughout history at least not necessarily progressive in a dialectical manner. Instead, I proposed to consider self-consciousness as the realisation of the necessary subjective distance to but also creative participation in the world - something which itself cannot be grasped by human thought only because of its restricted applicability in reality. As such, Hegel's general idea about the cultural-historical dependency of concepts as well as the embodied and intersubjective nature of self-consciousness remains significant to me despite the failure of his overarching system. In particular, it helps understanding ourselves as social animals and our active role in the historical and future becoming of the world.

Abbreviations

- PhG *Phänomenologie des Geistes* cited according to the critical edition reproduced in Hegel (1988). The referred paragraphs are taken from the English translation of Pinkard (Hegel 2018).
- GPR *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* cited according to Hegel (2009).
- VPG *Vorlesungen Über die Philosophie der Geschichte* cited according to Hegel (2021).

References

- Beiser, F.C. 2006. "Hegel's historicism." In *The Cambridge companion to Hegel*, edited by F.C. Beiser, 270–300. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bonsiepen, W. 1988. "Phänomenologie des Geistes." Chap. Introduction, edited by H.-F. Wessels and H. Clairmont. Hamburg: Meiner Verlag.
- Bykova, M.F. 2009. "Spirit and Concrete Subjectivity in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit." In *The Blackwell guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, edited by K.R. Westphal, 265–290. Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Fritzman, J.M., and J.A. Gauthier. 2015. "Feminism and Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit: 'Lordship and Bondage' and 'Ethical Action'." *Hegel Bulletin* Vol. 30(1-2):42–53.

- Gabriel, M. 2016. “What Kind of an Idealist (If Any) is Hegel?” *Hegel Bulletin* Vol. 37(2):181–208.
- Haraway, D.J. 2016. *Staying with the trouble: making kin in the Chthulucene*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Hegel, G.W.F. 1970a. *Hegel’s philosophy of nature, Volume I*. Translated by M.J. Petry. London: Allen & Unwin.
- . 1970b. *Hegel’s philosophy of nature, Volume III*. Translated by M.J. Petry. London: Allen & Unwin.
- . 1988. *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. Edited by H.-F. Wessels and H. Clairmont. Hamburg: Meiner Verlag.
- . 1991. *The encyclopedia logic. Part I of the encyclopedia of philosophical sciences with the Zusätze*. Translated by T.E Geraets, W.A. Suchting, H.S. Harris. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- . 2009. *Gesammelte Werke Band 14,1: Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*. Hamburg: Meiner Verlag.
- . 2018. *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: The phenomenology of spirit*. Edited by T.P. Pinkard. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2021. *Werke 12: Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte*. Edited by E. Moldenhauer and K.M. Michel. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag.
- Honneth, A. 2008. “From desire to recognition: Hegel’s account of human sociality.” In *Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit: a critical guide*, edited by D. Moyar and M. Quante, 76–90. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hverven, S. 2023. *Ville verdier: naturfilosofi i menneskets tidsalder*. Oslo: Dreyers Forlag.
- James, D. 2017. “Introduction: Freedom and History in Hegel’s Philosophy of Right.” In *Hegel’s Elements of the Philosophy of Right: A critical guide*, edited by D. James, 1–15. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Jonas, H. 2001. *The phenomenon of life: towards a philosophical biology*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

- Michellini, F. 2012. "Hegel's Notion of Natural Purpose." *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* Vol. 43:133–139.
- Neuhouser, F. 2009. "Desire, Recognition, and the Relation between Bondsman and Lord." In *The Blackwell guide to Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, edited by K.R. Westphal, 37–54. Chichester: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Ng, K. 2020. *Hegel's concept of life: Self-consciousness, freedom, logic*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pinkard, T. 2017. *Does history make sense?: Hegel on the historical shapes of justice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Pippin, R.B. 2011. *Hegel on self-consciousness: desire and death in the Phenomenology of Spirit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Pratt, J., and Y. Zhao. 2019. *A Daoist Critique of Dialectics and Why It Matters*. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3140946orhttp://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3140946>.
- Sedgwick, S. 2015. "Philosophy of History." In *The Oxford handbook of German philosophy in the nineteenth century*, edited by M.N. Forster and K. Gjesdal, 436–452. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stone, A. 2005. *Petrified intelligence: nature in Hegel's Philosophy*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Tembo, J. 2020. "Hegel's Lord-Bondsman Dialectic and the African: A Critical Appraisal of Achille Mbembe's Colonial Subjects." In *Violence, slavery and freedom between Hegel and Fanon*, edited by U. Kistner and P. Van Haute. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.
- Thompson, E. 2007. *Mind in life: biology, phenomenology, and the science of mind*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Weber, A. 2016. *Biopoetics: towards an existential ecology*. Dordrecht: Springer.