

Handout for Week 2
The Argument of A *Spirit of Trust*

Part I. Conceptual Realism and Objective Idealism

A holistic non-psychological conception of the conceptual:

To be conceptually contentful is to stand in relations of material incompatibility (“determinate negation”) and implication (“mediation”) to other items, which also count as conceptually contentful in virtue of standing in such relations.

Absolute Idealism is taken to consist in the conjunction of the following three nested theses:

- i. *Bimodal Hylomorphic Conceptual Realism*: Conceptual contents have alethic modal and deontic normative forms.
- ii. *Objective Idealism*: The two conceptual forms are reciprocally sense-dependent.
- iii. **Conceptual Idealism*: Recollective synthesis of the status-dependence of normative attitudes and the attitude-dependence of normative statuses. (*: Subject of Part III.)

Part II. Normativity: Status and Attitude

Within the intentional nexus of knowing and acting (doxastic and practical commitments, articulated by conceptual relations of material incompatibility and implication), Hegel makes 3 crucial, orienting distinctions:

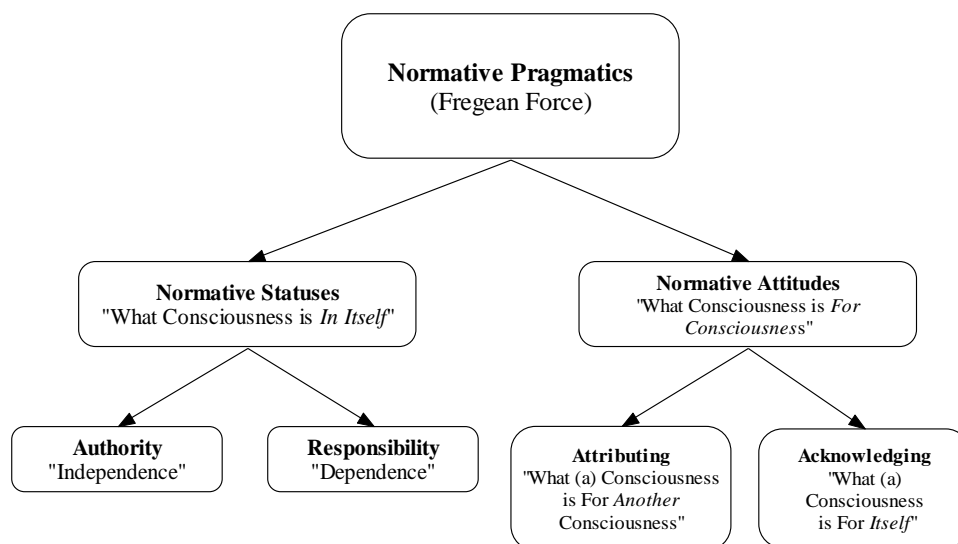
- a) Between normative *statuses* and normative *attitudes*.

In Hegel’s idiom, this is, on the normative side of subjects, the distinction between what those subjects are *in themselves* and what they are *for consciousness*.

- b) Within normative *statuses* (what subjects are *in themselves*), the distinction between *authority* and *responsibility* (entitlement and commitment). In Hegel’s idiom, this is the distinction between *independence* and *dependence*.

- c) Within normative *attitudes*, what subjects are *for consciousness*, the distinction between statuses one *acknowledges* or *undertakes* oneself, and those one *attributes* to others.

In Hegel’s idiom, this is the distinction between what a subject is *for itself* and what it is *for others*.

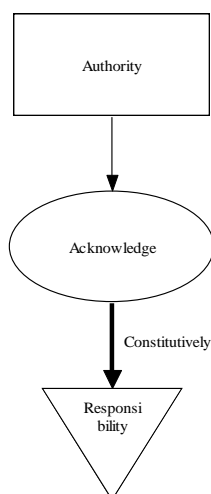


Elements of the model are in bold.

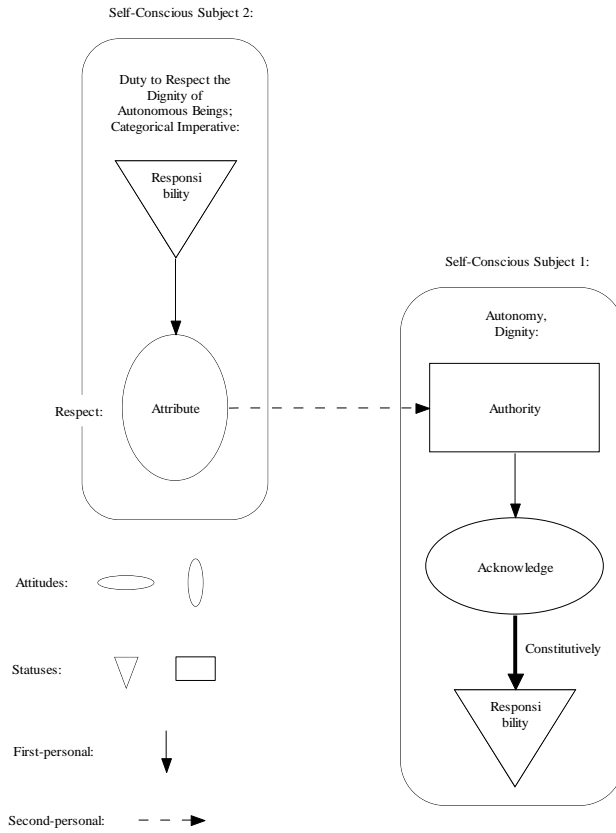
Modeled Hegelian phrases are in quotes.

Put in these terms, the long, slow, still incomplete transition from traditional to modern normative structures is the transition from a one-sided appreciation of the *status-dependence of normative attitudes* to a one-sided appreciation of the *attitude-dependence of normative statuses*.

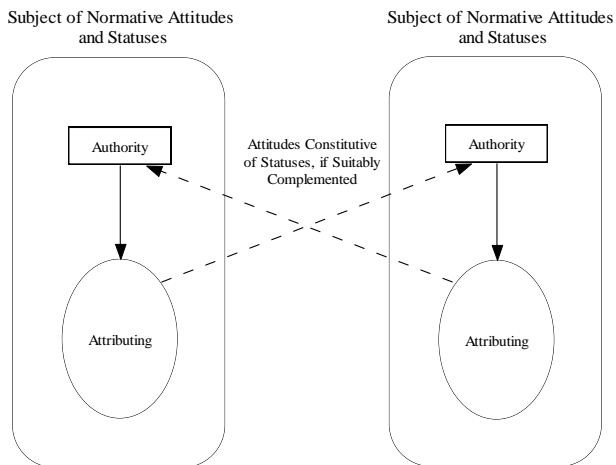
**Autonomy:
The Basic Kantian Normative Status**



The Social Dimension of the Kantian Autonomy Model



**Robust General Recognition
is Attributing the Authority
to Attribute Authority
(and Responsibility)**



On the relation of meanings (norms) to beliefs (attitudes):

Hegel : Kant :: Quine : Carnap

On how the deliverances of sensuous immediacy necessarily outrun any conceptualization of them:

Kant understands this in terms of the in-principle *inexhaustibility* of the deliverances of sense by any finite set of judgments. There is no bit that *cannot* be conceptualized, but conceptualizing *all* of it is an infinite, never-completable task.

Hegel understands it in terms of the in-principle *instability* of any set of determinate empirical concepts. This is the necessity that the result of *properly* and *correctly* applying any set of empirical concepts (norms, meanings) by endorsing judgments will lead us to doxastic commitments (attitudes, beliefs) that are *incompatible* according to those very norms.

Part III. Semantics: Recollection and Representation

Making and finding: One important dimension of the distinction between the traditional appreciation of the status-dependence of normative attitudes (conforming the statuses we acknowledge and attribute to what we ourselves and others are *really* authoritative about or responsible for) and the modern appreciation of the attitude-dependence of normative statuses is that on the traditional picture we *find* norms (as features of the objective world) and on the modern picture we *make* the norms, instituting them by the practical normative attitudes we adopt towards each other.

The model of common law:

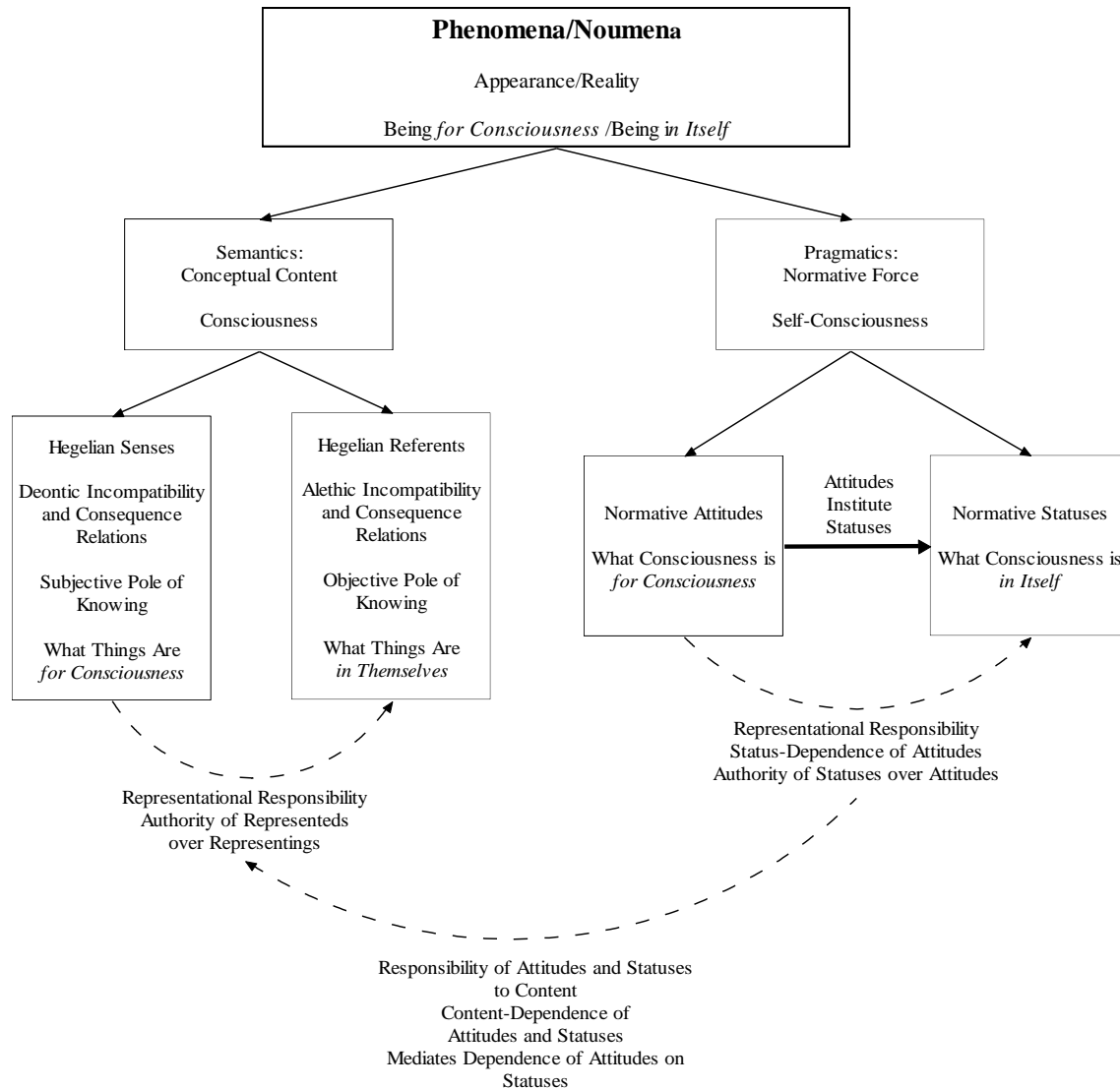
Common law is *both* **made** by judges *and* **found** by them.

Each judge both exercises some *authority* over the law she inherits, in applying it to a case consisting of novel facts and concrete circumstances, and thereby further determining its content, and is *responsible* to the law she is applying. For future judges will apportion their recognition of the authority of her decision to their assessment of its fidelity to the prior decisions in which the norm she extracts and applies is implicit.

(Constitutivism and detectivism about norms and attitudes are both one-sided and incomplete.)

The pragmatic account of the institution of norms by attitudes (compatible, in the end, with understanding attitudes as normatively governed by statuses) determines the account of reference in terms of sense, the intelligibility of the concept of representeds in terms of representings, and of noumena in terms of phenomena.

This is a principal instance of the *pragmatics-first* order of explanation I claim Hegel saw in, and followed from, Kant.



Part IV. Postmodernity: Reconciling the Traditional and the Modern Insights

The story about recollective rationality shows how to reconcile the traditional insight into the status-dependence of normative attitudes with the modern insight into the attitude-dependence of normative statures. In doing that, it shows the way forward to a third stage in human history, a third form recognitively instituted normativity (and so, self-consciousness) can take, announcing the possibility of postmodern *Geist*.