Notes for Week 7:
Hegel's Expressive Metaphysics of Agency

<u>Introduction:</u>

1. This chapter is the **beating heart** of the book philosophically.
It is the last substantive part of the book he originally conceived:
the one entitled *The Science of the Experience of Consciousness*.

Its title is *"Reason*." And we are told in the *Preface*, at [24] that "Reason is purposive agency."

We are also told, in the very first sentence of the chapter, that
"Die Vernunft ist Bewusstseins Gewissheit, alle Realität zu Sein":
Reason is consciousness's certainty of *being* all reality.
      That is rather more alarming, and to say the least, the connection between these
characterizations is not clear.
      I read the second pronouncement as saying that it is the account of agency that is going to
explain *bimodal hylomorphic conceptual realism*: the two forms conceptual contents can take, alethic
modal and deontic normative. The *same* structure we find in the content of our think*ings*, by which
things *appear* to us, is already present, only in another form, in the *reality* that is *thought about*.

2.   Hegel is father of the *philosophy of action* in the sense in which Wittgenstein, Anscombe, Taylor,
    and Davidson defined it in the last half of the 20th century.
No-one before him (not even Kant), and no-one after him until *at least* those figures, had as
sophisticated an account of intentional agency as Hegel does.

3. The two big differences between Hegel's **framing** and the one that becomes standard in the last
    third of the twentieth century are two:
1) The large, orienting **question** asked, and
2) The kind of **examples** of actions that are treated as paradigmatic.

Re (1):
Wittgenstein put the defining question as:
"What is the difference between my raising my arm and my arm going up?"
(Hornsby: transitive vs. intransitive).

Hegel put it as understanding the combination of identity and difference (**unity and disparity**) in an
action.

On the one hand, action is an identity: "I do what happens." (Anscombe).
The doing is the unity of what I intend and what happens.
On the other hand, I *never* do *just* (all and only) what I intend—always more and usually also less.

This unity, he insists, cannot be bolted together from independent elements: an intending and its consequences.
Must start with the unity and analyze it.

He said that about *cognition*, too.
But now he has assembled elements to let us address the issue.
The treatment of the constellation of the unity and disparity of agency is the model for the cognitive case as well. (That is what the first sentence of *Reason* is saying.)
This is (an essential dimension of) *his* pragmatism.
This is where "mind" most fundamentally meets "world," the subjective and objective in a unity that comprises and in no small part consists in the difference between those two aspects of it.
The **causal chain** (pearl necklace) model is "**bolting together** independent elements" and the **intensional-perspectival** account (oak tree) is "**analyzing a unity into its aspects**."

Re (2): The paradigm for analytic philosophy of action has been such **punctiform, episodic doings** as raising my arm or flipping a switch.
For Hegel it is **weightier, more substantive doings that are extended processes**:
Writing a book,
Building a house,
Teaching a course, or a single class,
Playing a game of chess,
Parenting—in the sense of what one *does*, not just the *state* of "being a parent."

It is with these sorts of doings in mind that Hegel can affirm that we are what we do:
that what a subject *is* is what that subject *does*.

These two differences in *framing* make a *big* difference in the conception of agency that results, because they make a big difference to the *criteria of adequacy* that set the standard for normative assessments of the *success* of the philosophical explanatory-explicative enterprise:
What determines whether or not we have provided an adequate *pragmatic metavocabulary* for discussing agency.

4. Hegel will offer a version of ***Davidson****'s* intensional-perspectival alternative to **causal-chain accounts** of agency.
This distinction is *orthogonal* to that between Hegel's *questions* and *examples* and contemporary ones.

But he goes well beyond Davidson, along two dimensions, which will determine the two parts of my discussion:

5. The two main themes of Hegel's advance beyond Davidson are:
Part I: The *social*-perspectival character of agency.
Part II: The *historical*-perspectival character of agency.

I'll discuss the latter under three heads:
i)   The **TOTE cycle of perception and action** as successor to the experience of *cognitive error*, gotten by incorporating the experience of *practical failure*.
ii)   The ***plan* structure of intention**, and
iii)   The way the fusion of subjective and objective in practical agency provides a ***semantic paradigm*** for understanding the cognitive relations between appearance and reality, phenomena and noumena, and **Fregean sense and reference**.

Part I. The Social Articulation of Agency:

Plan:
1. Hegel's framing of question is about reconciling **the unity and the disparity** that action essentially involve.

    The challenge is to get together the sense in which what I do is an objective event in the actual world (something in itself) and the sense in which it is *mine*, *my* doing, an expression of *my will* and commitment, subject to assessment as successful or a failure depending on *normative* standards set by what it is *for me*. This is what Heidegger calls "*Jemeinigkeit.*"

2. Articulate the causal chain account (image: necklace of pearls strung together).
Kim.

A pathology associated with, but not implied by, accounts of this shape:
Trying : Seeming :: Agency : Cognition
This is the mistake of "volitions" as minimal doings.
It is intrinsic to causal chain account.
Even Kant is a volition-theorist, and causal chain guy.

3. Alternative: see intentional/consequential as two forms of one content (the "Sache selbst").
Image: oak tree, which can be considered either from the roots or from the leaves and branches.
Davidson's version.

4. Hegel adds *social perspectival* understanding of the two.

5. Then on to *historical perspectival* understanding.

[End plan.]

1.   On **unity and disparity** that agency necessarily involve:

[Here assemble **quotes from handout** on this theme, including our actions becoming puzzles to us.]

   Understanding the response Hegel gives, his positive account of how these are reconciled, is his basic model of how *identity*—of those two aspects of agency—can *consist* in difference that is in some sense internal to that identity. Slightly differently put, it is the **paradigm of *unity* that incorporates and is articulated by *disparity***.

       We saw this first in the notion of <u>conceptual content</u> as articulated by relations of material incompatibility (exclusive difference) and consequence (mediation) to other such contents.
       But the case of agency will be the rich, concrete paradigm of this fundamental *logical* relation, just as we saw that the simultaneous synthesis of self-conscious *individuals* and the *universals* comprising them that are their communities by practical attitudes of ***reciprocal recognition*** among *particular* desiring organisms is the rich concrete paradigm of the fundamental *logical* relations Hegel sees as holding together **particularity, universality, and individuality** quite generally.

       This modeling is worked out in detail in the way in which the unity-through-disparity of practical agency is the fixed end of the analogy by which we are to understand the *semantic* relations of phenomena to noumena, Hegel's version of Fregean sense and reference, appearance and reality.

   In these terms he criticizes the inherited—and still probably dominant— account:
The **traditional causal chain account** makes the unity invisible, enforces the disparity.
It **makes agency a riddle to itself**.

This criticism of the causal chain account of practical agency is **parallel to the critique of the two-stage representational picture of empirical cognition in the *Introduction***.
Both excavate gulfs between mind and world, the subjective and the objective.
His idea is that understanding how to overcome the gap on the practical side will tell us how to overcome it on the cognitive side.

2.   Contra **traditional Cartesian causal chain model** of agency.
That starts with willing or volition, an act of mind.
Which causes a bodily movement, say, contraction of muscles. Moving finger in DD's example.
Which causes some effect: flipping switch or applying match to 1 sq inch of wood.

…effects ripple out: turning on light, alerting burglar, or setting board on fire, then building, then next building.

3. One error here: volitions or willings as minimal actions.
For they are things one cannot try to do and fail.
Though Sellars himself never makes this argument: tryings : doings :: seemings-lookings : seeings.
Same diagnosis of why one can't merely try to try to put the ball through the hoop as why something can't merely look to look red.

From Ch. 12:
The volitional skeptic, more radically, would identify action with volition, **treating willing as the only sort of action possible—as the cognitive sceptic identifies knowledge with appearance**.

In "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" Sellars offers an account of the perversity of the Cartesian attempt to base all knowledge on that privileged knowledge of the mental for which no mistake is possible. Ordinary claims to knowledge express an endorsement of a content by the claimer. Error is possible insofar as that endorsement cannot be redeemed or vindicated justificatorily in the context of other claims which may come to be established. In the ordinary case of a non-inferential report such as "that is red", the subject does two things: expresses a responsive disposition to call the object red and endorses the claim that it is red. Appearance talk, as in "that appears (looks, seems) red" is explained as secure from error only because in saying that something looks red one expresses the same responsive disposition, but explicitly does not endorse the claim one is responsively disposed to make. Since no claim is endorsed, no error is possible. Once this account of the source of the incorrigibility of "looks"-talk is grasped, it can be seen how inappropriate this sort of secure cognition is for playing the role of original or basic knowledge which can only be extended by inference beyond the realm of appearance by incurring for the first time the risk of error. For appearance talk so understood presupposes reality talk; the ability to use the safe "looks" presupposes the ability to use the risky "is". Claims about how things look secure their independence from error simply by withholding the endorsements which could turn out to be inappropriate. But one must have mastered the practice of *making* such endorsements before one can engage in a practice of *withholding* those endorsements.

A similar diagnosis can be offered of *volitions*, construed as that privileged form of action for which no failure of achievement is possible. As language entries require both responsive dispositions and resulting endorsements, so language exits require both dispositions to perform and commitment to an achievement under the description expressing the purpose of the action. Corresponding to "that is red", we have expressions of language exits such as "I shall start the

car". Corresponding to "that *looks* red", which withholds endorsement of the "is" claim, we have "I shall *try* to start the car", which withholds commitment to achieving the intended result.

One may if one likes treat minimal "tryings" as a special kind of action, one that one cannot try to accomplish and fail. But as on the side of cognition, one must not think of these as the original kind of actions, which are only extended to extra-mental actions at risk of failure of achievement. For once again, one must already have mastered the social practice of committing oneself to an accomplishment before one can master the practice of occasionally expressing an intention while withholding such commitment. "Trying" talk is parasitic on "doing" talk, and abstracts a derivative private (as in "privation") and only apparently independent dimension from the social, essentially dually perspectival practice of undertaking commitments and appraising achievements to which others have undertaken commitment. The picture of action as demarcated from other behavior by the causal role played by volitions in bringing it about thus rests on the reification in the causal order of an inversion in the order of explanation. The identification of the active self with its volitions as a way of realizing the notion of action immediately, the strategy of the honest consciousness, is thus a doomed strategy of independence.

Need not make this mistake to hold the causal chain view—though the view invites the mistake.

4. Can now ask: is what matters to moral evaluation proximal or distal in this chain?
Will (intention) or consequences?
  Moral intentionalism—a one-sided strategy complementary to moral consequentialism—finds what is to be appraised (that is, the achievement) in the purpose. It is accordingly to be understood as committed to one or the other of these strategies of independence.
  Now, the *Sache selbst* in being merely willed...has the meaning of an empty purpose and of a unity of willing and achievement only in thought. [*PG* 414]

5. But what is the or even *an* **alternative** to the causal chain (pearl necklace) picture?

There are two principal approaches.
Hegel's alternative to Kant is a (more developed) analogue of Davidson's alternative to Kim:
Hegel : Kant :: Davidson : Kim.

6. An alternative:
Look at different *descriptions* or *specifications* of *single* action, instead of seeing a chain of *different* ones.
Davidson: "accordion effect" in specifying *one* single event *by* its *consequences*.

<u>Davidson</u>:

1) One and the same event can be described or specified in many ways.
2) One important way of identifying or singling out an event is in terms of its *causal consequences*.
3) Some, but not all, of the descriptions of an action may be privileged in that they are ones under which it is *intentional*.
4) What makes an event, performance, or process an *action*, something *done*, is that it is *intentional* under *some* description.
5) What distinguishes some descriptions as ones under which a performance was intentional is their role as conclusions in processes of *practical reasoning*.

Distinction between Kantian-Kimian theories of agency and Hegelian-Davidsonian.
This is between the *peal necklace* model and the oak tree model.
The pearls are the individual and individually identifiable events, strung together causally.
"Oak tree": can be regarded from the point of view of the roots or of what grows above ground: trunk, branches, and leaves.
This model and image has the advantage of picking up not only the continually growing character, but also an analogue of the plan structure.
They divide over whether we have a causally related sequence of events or aspects of one event.

7. Try to see Kant as Hegel saw him.
a) (Kant +): One the one hand, he had the progressive view, relative to the empiricists, about **free will**.
It consists in reading the relationship between freedom and responsibility (that one should only be held responsible for what one did freely) from the responsibility side, rather than the freedom side. This looks first to what we are responsible for, and determines on that basis what we count as doing freely. That is, thinking of it in deontic, rather than alethic terms. (This is clearest in the 2nd Critique.) This was wholly progressive.

b) (Kant -): On the other hand, Kant (as seen by Hegel) shares with the empiricists the picture of a sequence of causally related events: a willing (**volition**), an intentional doing (in the objective world), and its (intended or not) consequences.
That is, Kant has a Kim-style, rather than a Davidson-style understanding of intentional agency.

One route to volitions: Understanding volitions as tryings.
"tryings" : doings :: "seemings" : seeings.
The Myth of the Given that we saw in thinking how things merely *look* (noncommittally) are prior to and independent of actual commitments s to how things *are*, which we saw debunked in *Sense*

Certainty, has an analogue in willings = volitions = tryings on the practical side of agency rather than cognition.

And here, Kant is Cartesian, in seeing volitions as minimal doings: doings that are minimal in the specific sense that there is for them no distinction between trying and doing (trying to try *is* trying), as the cognitive Cartesian claim is that appearings are minimal seeings, for there is no distinction between seeming and being (seeming to seem *is* seeming).

c) (Kant -): And Kant wants to restrict our (moral) responsibility to the willing alone.

This is a **contraction strategy**.

For H, this not only gets the metaphysics wrong, it gets the responsibility wrong.

("A thrown stone belongs to the devil." The arsonist burns down the building, not just the square inch to which he applies the match.)

8. If Hegel is right, Kim and Davidson fought this battle on the wrong ground.

Kim, by and large, didn't care about agency.

He and DD fought over the conception of *events*.

But Hegel thought *actions* were not *just* events.

His considerations are special to events that are actions.

From this point of view we can see DD as boldly claiming that Hegel's account of events that are actions follows (at least, a lot of it: the contrast with causal chain conceptions) from much more general considerations having to do with the broader class of mere events.

Then Hegelian advance over Davidson is to see, first, the difference of aspects as a difference of *social* perspectives, and then (discussed in Part II) as also a difference of *historical* perspective: prospective and retrospective.

9. **Hegel sees the two social perspectives as those of the agent and the audience.**
    In normative terms: the context of *deliberation* and the context of *appraisal* w/res to a doing.
These are different loci of *authority*:
    Agent is authoritative about what he *meant* to do, was *trying* to do, what his *purpose* was.
    Community is authoritative about consequential specifications, of what was *actually achieved*.
    It must be assessable from both perspectives because normative *statuses* are instituted by *reciprocal* recognitive *attitudes*.
    Undertaking responsibility and holding responsible (attributing responsibility), *imputing* the deed.

    De dicto and *de re* **specifications of the doing.**
Handlung and *Tat*: **action and deed.**

10. Hegel's story is *hylomorphic*.

The two "aspects" are forms of *one* content.

This is the model for the bimodal hylomorphism we saw on the side of cognition.

11. The basic elements of the story I have told here about how **to reconcile the two aspects of unity and disparity** that Hegelian agency essentially involves are these:
- The story is *hylomorphic*: the "distinction that action necessarily involves" is that between two forms of one content. The forms are diverse, the content is common and unitary.
- Both aspects (forms) are essential to the identity of the content, i.e., it is essential to it, and not just accidental, that the content (the Sache selbst) takes *both* these forms.
- The two forms are different *specifications* of the one content.
- A place to start in understanding this distinction is Davidson's distinction between *intentional* and *consequential* specifications of a single agentive event.
  (Distinction of this from understanding intention/action/consequences as distinct events, causally related.)
- The two "forms" are generated by different social perspectives on the action: that of the agent, and that of the other community members.
- These social perspectives are different loci of *authority*. They are generated by the context of deliberation and the context of assessment. This is the first deepening of the Davidsonian distinction between intentional and consequential specifications.
- The one content *must* have these two "forms" because it must be assessable from *both* perspectives.
- They correspond to *de dicto* and *de re* specifications.
- It must be assessable from both perspectives because normative *statuses* are instituted by *reciprocal* recognitive *attitudes*.
- In addition to being *socially* perspectival, the recognitive process that institutes the complex normative status of **action** is *historically* perspectival. It is of its essence to be articulated into *pro*spective and *retro*spective perspectives, which provide additional fine structure to Hegel's deepening of Davidson's distinction between intentional and consequential specifications. (That historical dimension is the subject of Part II.)

Part II. The Historical Dimension of Agency:

Plan:
Cycle of perception-and-action. It is a TOTE cycle
   This is the extension-development of the experience of error, now extended to error-and-failure.
Plan structure of (extended) doings.
This as a *semantic* model for cognition.

[End plan.]

A. Cycles, Plans, and Recollections:

1. Cycle:
    as "the cycle of action" in which individuality "exhibits itself simply and solely as the unity of the world as *given* and the world it has *made*." [*PG* 308]

    That is, the intention should not be identified with the plan operative at any one time-slice of the TOTE cycle of action. The plans change, but the intention endures. For "the intention is the universal content of the action," [*PR* 114Z] that which is common to all its particular phases. The certainty of the intention—its subjective side, that about which the agent is authoritative, that in virtue of which what is done is acknowledged as the agent's *own*—is the endorsed end or purpose. But "the truth of intention [the objective side, about which others are equally authoritative] is only the act itself." [*PG* 159]

  It is the TOTE—Test-Operate-Text-Exit—structure of a *cycle* of action in which the plan in force at any given time (endorsed as the current expression of a practical commitment) *changes* from stage to stage. At each time-slice in the evolution of the action, the then-operative plan stands to the purpose as the concrete, worked-out, contingency-incorporating, determinately contentful practical norm for actualizing that abstractly envisaged end. The content of the intention should then be understood as standing to the whole process, in relation to the guiding purpose, as the plan adopted at any one stage is to that time-slice of the process, in relation to that same purpose**. It is the concrete, worked-out, contingency-incorporating, determinately contentful practical norm for actualizing that abstractly envisaged end, regarded as something whose content does *not* change as its instantiation in the form of plans *does* change.**

a) The cycle of perception-thought-action and then the perception of the results of action is the final successor conception to

b) the experience of error, now incorporating the appreciation of *practical failure* as well as *cognitive error*, which Hegel appealed to in the *Introduction* to explain the fundamental distinction between what things are *for consciousness* (appearance) and what they are *in themselves* (reality)—

c) and which we saw to be rooted in the proto-consciousness of merely desiring organisms in our discussion of the tripartite orectic structure of desire epitomized by the triad of hunger, eating, and food, in which desire both *motivates* activity and serves as a (proto-)*normative standard* for the practical assessment of the *correctness* of the activity, in the sense of its *success* or *failure* at satisfying desire.

The process of carrying through an intention is a process of *self determination* or self-*constitution*: making oneself into a (more) determinately contentful self by identifying with some commitments and rejecting others. That is why "what the subject *is*, is the series of its actions," [*PR* 124] "individuality is the cycle of its action," [*PG* 308] and "an individual cannot know what he is until he has made himself a reality through action." [*PG* 401] The very same process that is the exercise of intentional agency is at the same time the expression of self-conscious individuality. "[T]he essential nature of the work... is to be a self-expression of... individuality." [*PG* 403]

According to the claim I have been calling "conceptual idealism", the second-order *relations* between what things objectively are *in* themselves and the experiential *processes* in which they show up as something *for* consciousness are to be understood in the first instance in terms of those subject-constitutive empirical-practical processes: *Erfahrung*, now understood as the cycle of action-and-cognition, culminating in the recollective rational reconstruction of the experience. This thesis is the assertion of an asymmetric explanatory priority of subjective processes over objective relations, downstream from (added to, built on top of) the symmetric reciprocal sense-dependence relations discussed under the heading of "objective idealism". The relations between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves are the relations between phenomena and noumena, appearance and reality, as Hegel construes them. In this chapter, I want to explicate the doctrine of conceptual idealism by showing what mutual illumination results from understanding recollection also as an account of the relations between *sense* and *reference*.

But by the time we have reached the discussion of *Reason*, we know that the process Hegel calls "Erfahrung" in general has the structure of a Test-Operate-Test-Exit cycle of action *and* cognition. In the cognitive phases of such a cycle what is revealed by an expressively progressive process of transformation of what it is *for* consciousness is what the world is *in* itself. But there are also the practical phases, in which what is revealed by an expressively progressive process of transformation of what it is for consciousness is what the *action* (and so, the *self*) is. The contents of concepts are clarified and expressed not only by the application of concepts in the undertaking of *cognitive* commitments that are *judgments*, eventually but inevitably leading to the acknowledgment of incompatibilities showing up as *errors*; **those**

contents are also clarified and expressed by the application of concepts in the undertaking of *practical* commitments that are *intentions*, eventually but inevitably leading to the acknowledgment of incompatibilities showing up as *failures*.

This is why "the individual human being *is* what the *deed is*," [*PG* 322] and why "Individuality is what *its* world is, the world that is its *own*. Individuality is itself the cycle of its action in what has exhibited itself as an actual world." [*PG* 308]

The notion of action can be realized only with the social mediation of others, not by contracting the self to a circle of transparence to cognition and action, but by expanding it to include the whole cycle of social linguistic practice returning to itself out of the mediation of reality in cognized action, which is the real *Sache selbst*.

The first move in and key theme of the *historical* articulation of our understanding of practical agency is realizing that:
Talk of the *Vorsatz* is talk of the *pro*spective perspective on a doing.
Talk of the *Absicht* is talk of the *retro*spective perspective on a doing.
Only both together give on a proper view of it.
And neither is normatively-morally relevant to *assessments* of it (and so, at a remove, even to *deliberations*) to the exclusion of the other—as Kantians would have the *Vorsatz* be and utilitarians the *Absicht*.
(Those correspond to will or motive—motivating reasons—and consequences, available only to assessment, but projected in deliberation.)

The historical, normative, inferential structure linking unrepeatable demonstrative tokenings and repeatable anaphorically dependent tokenings on the cognitive or *theoretical* side of a subject's activity provides conceptual raw materials that are helpful also for thinking about the maturation of a prior general purpose into a later concrete doing on the *practical* side of a subject's activity. In this case, what matters is the sense in which an earlier description of what is to be done can be thought of as inheriting some of its content from the later demonstrative specification of what it is done, on which it is understood to be ==anaphorically dependent==. In the case of successful actions**, the demonstratively specifiable performance that fulfills the purpose or intention can be thought of as what was aimed at all along: "I meant to do *that*," or "*That* is what I intended to do."**

The content of the action can be specified either *de dicto* ('that'), in terms of the purpose that authorized it, or *de re* ('of'), in terms of what was thereby in fact authorized. Understanding the concept of action requires understanding actions as unities that necessarily involve this distinction of perspective, and understanding those perspectives as perspectives on one content. ==The content of the intention, in Hegel's use of 'Absicht', is the *content* of the action. The purpose and the accomplished==

==deed are then two perspectives on that content, two *forms* that content can take.== This is the agentive correlate of the cognitive hylomorphism that appeared already in Hegel's *Introduction*. Bimodal hylomorphic conceptual realism, now on the practical side rather than the cognitive side.

The development of an intention by the alteration of a plan involves *sacrificing* some commitments—to the rejected plan, perhaps to some of the sub-goals it endorsed—and thereby *identifying* with others. We saw that the process by which self-conscious individual selves constitute themselves (in a recognitive community) is a process of relinquishing or altering, in general sacrificing some commitments in favor of other, incompatible ones, which one thereby counts as identifying with.

We are now in a position to see that intentional action is a process that has just this *self-constituting* structure. The process of carrying through an intention is a process of *self determination* or self-*constitution*: making oneself into a (more) determinately contentful self by identifying with some commitments and rejecting others. That is why "what the subject *is*, *is the series of its actions*," [*RP* §124] "individuality is the cycle of its action," [*PG* §308] and "an individual cannot know what he is until he has made himself a reality through action." [*PG* §401] The very same process that is the exercise of intentional agency is at the same time the expression of self-conscious individuality. "[T]he essential nature of the work... is to be a self-expression of... individuality."[*PG* §403]

"The activity of individuality, all that it does, is in its own self an End…the present, real existence of the process of individuality." [*PG* §393]

Self consciousness is "reality in the form of an individuality that directly expresses itself, an individuality which no longer encounters resistance from an actual world, and whose aim and object are only this expressing of itself." [*PG* §359]

The element in which individuality sets forth its shape has the significance solely of putting on the shape of individuality; it is the daylight in which consciousness wants to display itself. [*PG* §396]

From this point of view, objective actuality just is the medium of self-expression. **In practical agency, expression is actualization. What one is implicitly *for* oneself becomes explicit as something actual, something with a nature *in* itself, available in that form *for* others, as well as for oneself in this new form.**

Conceptual idealism: the second-order *relations* between what things objectively are *in* themselves and the experiential *processes* in which they show up as something *for* consciousness are to be understood in the first instance in terms of those subject-constitutive empirical-practical processes: *Erfahrung*, now understood as the cycle of action-and-cognition.

To see our authority as agents as *opposed, resisted, frustrated* by recalcitrant actuality is to commit to a model of *pure independence* (Mastery): authority is not real unless it is *total*. We need to make the

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move from *independence* to *freedom* (*Verstand* to *Vernunft*), to understanding *genuine* authority as *always* and *necessarily* coming with correlative *responsibility*, for only so can it be *determinately contentful*. This is the structure of authority and responsibility of reciprocal recognition, here articulated both socially and historically.

Key point here is the **plan structure** of the evolution of a doing.
Paradigm is not flipping a swithch, but writing a book or building a house.
This is the **incorporation of immediacy**, mediating it.
That is what provides the model for the cognitive case.

B. Practical as model of cognitive:

The relations between what things are for consciousness and what they are in themselves are the relations between *phenomena* and *noumena*, *appearance* and *reality*, *sense* and *referent,* as Hegel construes them.

Hegel's understanding of what corresponds to the Fregean notion of <u>sense</u> is in crucial ways quite different from Frege's:

- Hegel is a *holist* about the conceptual contents we grasp in thought and express in speech and action. As we have seen, for Hegel conceptual contents are identified and individuated by their place in a network articulated by relations of material incompatibility and (so) material inference (determinate negation and mediation). By contrast, however it might be with Frege himself, many contemporary neo-Fregean theories are thoroughly atomistic about senses.

- For Frege, senses and referents are different *kinds* of things. For Hegel, though, the way things are *for* consciousness can be just the same as the way they are *in* themselves. Noumena are a kind of phenomena. They are categoreally *homo*geneous: the same kind of thing. For the basic tenet of Hegel's conceptual realism is that both are *conceptually* articulated, that is, stand in relations of material incompatibility and material inference.

- Fregean senses are required to determine classes of referents whose boundaries are *sharp*, *fixed*, and *complete*. This is Fregean determinateness, or determinateness in the Fregean sense.

What one must *do* in order thereby to be taking it that one is talking or thinking *about* something is to perform a <u>*Erinnerung* </u>of the development of one's views. For constructing that sort of expressively progressive genealogy is exhibiting the sequential experiential transformations of what things are for one as governed, guided, and controlled by how things all along were in themselves. Distinguishing in this way between expressively progressive transformations and those alterations in how one applies those very same concepts that were not expressively progressive is treating *all* the prior applications of those concepts as subject to assessment according to the normative standard set by how things have been revealed (so far) really to be: the actual objective facts and intentions, and the material incompatibilities and consequential relations that really articulated their properties and relations. This

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is treating them all as appearances of that one reality, all phenomena presenting one noumenal situation.

On this Hegelian account, the link between sense and reference is in the first instance an *expressive* one: the senses express the reference, making (some aspects of) it explicit. It is a relation established *retrospectively*, by turning a past into a history, an expressive genealogy. It is in terms of this retrospectively discerned expressive relation that the *representational* dimension of concept use is explained. Expressive genealogies rationally reconstruct experiential processes into traditions.

We must reconstrue the concept <u>determinate</u>, so as to think of it in the first instance as a feature of the whole process of *determining* conceptual contents, and only derivatively of the snapshot stages of that process, rather than the other way around. We must distinguish d<u>eterminate</u>_{Verstand} from <u>determinate</u>_{Vernunft}.

<u>Determinate</u>_{Verstand} is what you get if you take *one* of the perspectives—the retrospective, Whiggish one, and understand the relation between the whole process, *including* the prospective shift to a *new* Whiggish story, on the model of how things look from *within* just one of those stories. This is one-sidedly mistaking one *aspect* of the process, one perspective on it, for the whole thing.

The model for the retrospective discernment of the implicit unity of a course of experience—the development of what things are for consciousness in the direction of what they are in themselves—is to be found on the practical side of intentional action. While the initially endorsed purpose, in virtue of which a process counts as intentional (and hence an action, something done) at all, embodies a *de dicto* specification of the intention (and hence at least in a speaker's referring way, the deed), it is only retrospectively, from the point of view of the accomplished deed that a *de re* specification of that intention is available. Retrospectively, we learn something about what we in fact intended. So we can see that very intention as being further *expressed*. Prospectively, since the consequence is not foreseeable (it hadn't happened yet), this same process appears as further *determination* of it.

Telling the right kind of retrospective story is giving the process of development that issues in the final sense (and so determines the referent) the shape of a *plan*.

Doing the *prospective* work of coming up with a new revision and doing the *retrospective* work of coming up with a new recollection that exhibits it as the culmination of an expressively progressive process in which what was implicit is made gradually but cumulatively more explicit are two ways of describing *one* task.

Core here is to see how the *Absicht* is the result of retrospectively recollecting the course of concrete development of the doing, as the *plan* that structures it evolves in response to local successes and failures.
It thereby incorporates the concrete, determinate actuality of its circumstances into the doing itself.

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The theme of Part II is that *this* feature of intentional agency is to be used to understand the determinateness of conceptual content generally.

This story begins by reconstructing senses and referents in accordance with the model of practical, plan-structured agency.

Because the understanding of determinate conceptual contents (on the deontic side) is in this way modeled on practical agency, the *semantic* theory shows up as a *pragmatist* theory. This is the *primacy of the practical* in Hegel's version, rather than Kant's. (Kant's has to do with understanding conceptual contents in terms of the process of *synthesizing* a constellation of commitments exhibiting the sort of unity characteristic of apperception. (Justificatory, ampliative, and critical task responsibilities). But that is all on the side of the theoretical, with an analogue on the practical side of maxims rather than judgements.

The issue is how one *mediates* the *immediate*, that is, *conceptualizes* it.
Now bimodal hylomorphic conceptual realism (BHCR) says that everything is always already in conceptual form.
So how is there so much as *room* for immediacy?
The answer is that BHCR is the way things look *recollectively*, that is, *retro*spectively, that is, *after* the process of determination of conceptual content, which is the process of *digesting*, *incorporating* the immediate, *mediating* it has taken place—and before that digestion is rudely disrupted by the intrusion of error and failure.
*Pro*spectively we are faced with the task, not of *finding* the conceptual articulation of the immediate, but with *making* it, *imposing* conceptual shape on the deliverances of sense, the shaping of thought by being, of the subjective by the objective, of sense by referent.
"Immediacy" is our term for the *friction* (LW: "Back to the rough ground") that is the *incompatibilities* among our determinate commitments manifested in the experience of error and failure.

Here **the *cycle* of perception, thought, and action, a TOTE cycle, is the key unit of experience.**
Henceforth it is understood as the experience not just of cognitive *error*, but also of practical *failure* that needs to be put into the conceptual form of determinate material incompatibilities and implications. "Immediacy" is a term for that *aspect* of this process, *not* for an alien world we must interface with.
Compare: *food* is not something *outside* the process that includes hunger and eating. It is one aspect of it. And it necessarily involves the possibility that what is practically taken as food (eaten) be so taken *in error*.

So two key elements of the Hegelian dynamic historical model of agency (one which we are to model semantics) are:
Cycle of perception-and-action, and
Plan-structure of intentions.

Hegel draws conclusions about moral theories from his account of agency.
He thinks the tendency towards "one sided" theories that make either the will or the consequences the *only* morally relevant consideration come from "pearl necklace" metaphysics of agency (Kimian rather than Davidsonian). He thinks that if we think of things his way, we'll see that *both* aspects on the *doing* must potentially be morally relevant to moral (normative) assessments of the doing.
I'm not sure that this follows *necessarily*. Q: What collateral premises would make it do so?
But he seems to be right that his view at least *invites* what the other approach *discourages*: namely seeing both aspects as morally relevant.

Hegel's overall claim is that that notion of *determinate* conceptual contents is ultimately intelligible only in terms of the *process* of determin*ing* such contents—making them *more* determinate—by seeking the objective fulfillment of subjective practical commitments.

If we are to understand the sense in which subjective commitments and the objective states of affairs they are fallibly responsible to or authoritative over are determinately contentful, we must understand how the processes and practices that are the exercise of intentional agency are intelligible *both*

- as the mere expression, revelation, and translation from subjective to objective form of already fully determinate contents, *and* simultaneously
- as the means by which initially *less* determinate contents *become more* determinate: the process of *determining* conceptual contents.

The difference between an approach that presupposes a notion of determinate content without deploying the resources to make intelligible its nature, origin, or accessibility to finite knowers and agents, on the one hand, and one that concerns itself precisely with explaining determinateness of conceptual content in terms of the processes and practices by which such contents arise, develop, and are deployed by knowers and agents, on the other hand is just the difference between the standpoint of *Verstand* and that of *Vernunft*, as those Hegelian metametaconcepts have been brought into view here.

In the *Reason* chapter Hegel enriches the conception of *Erfahrung* as the experience of error, which he introduced in the *Introduction*. Here we consider the "cycle" of cognition and action: a Test-Operate-Test-Exit (TOTE) "cycle" of cognition and action that develops content through the experience of practical failure as well as cognitive error.

From this point of view, objective actuality just is the medium of self-expression. In practical agency, expression is actualization. What one is implicitly *for* oneself becomes explicit as something actual, something with a nature *in* itself, available in that form *for* others, as well as for oneself in this new form.

The process by which what Hegel calls "the Concept" develops, as constellations of conceptual contents-and-commitments are found wanting and replaced or revised—which is the same process by

which individual self-consciousnesses develop—must be thought of as both a process of ever greater *determination* of conceptual contents and of ever greater *expression* of them**.** Regarded *pro*spectively, the conceptual contents are being *made more determinate*, as features of how things really are in themselves are incorporated into how they are for consciousness by crucial experiential episodes. Regarded *retro*spectively, the conceptual contents are being gradually but inexorably (with retrospective necessity) revealed and expressed: what was all along implicit made more and more explicit.

The key to the Hegelian semantic vision is that talk of the process of sequentially and progressively *determining* (making more determinate) disparate *senses*, and talk of the process of sequentially and progressively *expressing* (making more explicit) *referents* are two ways of talking about the *same* process.