Chapter 4

KANT AND HEGEL
ON FREEDOM AND CAUSATION: COMPARISON AND CONTRAST
“it is moral law which leads directly to the concept of freedom” (by Immanuel Kant, CPrR).

“Pure practical reason now fills this vacant place with a definite law of causality in an intelligible world (causality through freedom). This is moral law” (by Immanuel Kant, CPrR).

“Freedom, I mean, is just as fundamental a character of will as weight is of bodies” (by G.W.F. Hegel, PR).

“ethical life is the concept of freedom developed into the existing world and the nature of self-consciousness” (by G.W.F. Hegel, PR)
CHAPTER-4

Kant and Hegel on Freedom and Causation: Comparison and Contrast

I, in this chapter, shall attempt to present a comparative account of Kant and Hegel on freedom and causation in context of their respective ontology, epistemology, dialectics and morality. I have divided this chapter into three parts. Part- I, Hegel’s critique of Kant’s antinomy between freedom and causality. I shall mainly bring out the critical comments of Hegel on Kant’s antinomies. Part-II, Hegel’s reinterpretation of Kant’s sensibility, understanding and reason. I shall critically compare and contrast the main philosophical positions affiliated to sensibility, understanding and reason in Kant and Hegel which are significant for the issues related to freedom and causation. Part- III, Kant’s dualistic and Hegel’s monistic exposition of freedom and causation. I shall explain the significance of dualism and monism in the philosophical systems of Kant and Hegel which has further given rise to other theories. Also, I shall critically compare and contrast Kant’s morality with that of Hegel.

PART-I

Hegel’s critique of Kant’s antinomy between freedom and causation

In Kant the antinomies are very powerful notion. These antinomies have drawn the attention towards the dogmatic and problematic sphere in philosophy. The antinomies have played an important role in Kantian philosophy and it had been a matter of great interest to other philosophers during his time and afterwards as well. The philosophers have tried to resolve them in their own ways but Hegel is very important in this aspect as being an immediate successor of Kant. He with his dialectical logic has resolved the antinomies of pure reason in Kant along with blaming him for introducing such a radical dualism in philosophy. I have already mentioned the details regarding Kant’s antinomies.
of pure reason in the second chapter so in this part I will analyze the criticism and comments by Hegel on Kant’s antinomies.

Kant’s antinomies of pure reason are based on the four cosmological ideas demanding absolute totality concerning, the composition, division, origination of appearances and dependence of existence of the alterable in the field of appearance. The antinomies are mainly the conflict inherent in the cosmological idea of the world as a whole and are also the conflict between opposing theories in rational cosmology. The antinomies are based on the table of categories and are four in numbers. Hegel says that Kant has mistaken, “...in thinking that there are only four cosmological antinomies. He also errs in his method of attempting to show this by using his table of categories as a guide”. Kant discusses antinomies in ‘transcendental dialectic’. The transcendental dialectic seeks to dispel the illusion that pure reason can give knowledge of what lies beyond the limits of sense experience. The categories of the understanding when thus extended to some supersensible substances such as the soul or God etc. then they produce transcendental illusions. Hegel here says for Kant that his mistake consists in apprehending the world as it appears and it is because of this that he has been prevented from achieving the right solution of the antinomies.

According to Kant antinomies are not contradictories but analytically and dialectically opposed to each other asserting more than what is required i.e. the assumption that the things in the world are given in experience as they are in themselves. The resolution of the antinomy requires the denial of this assumption common to both sides. He distinguishes between mathematical and dynamical antinomies. The former concerns the conditions homogeneous with the conditioned, i.e., spatiotemporal conditions which would be finite or infinite. In the first antinomy the different assertions regarding space and time involves the limited restriction of reason. The antithesis of the second antinomy states the contrary opposite of the thesis for the antithesis states about things while the thesis states about the substance. The antithesis does not contain the word substance for it is about the things in general. As a result we can say that through the antithesis Kant is suspending the old concept of substance. Hegel says that the thesis and antithesis of mathematical antinomies, “...are really not about space, time, substance

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or matter but about quantity”.\(^2\) Hegel means that Kant through the mathematical antinomies wanted to bring out the limitedness and controversies involved in the history of philosophy. For him the earlier versions were too about the quantity in general.

The dynamical antinomies concern the conditions heterogeneous with the conditioned i.e., something supersensible (free causes) as the condition for what is perceived asserting them in the theses or denying them in the antitheses. The theses and antitheses of the dynamical antinomies may all be true. The theses may be true of the supersensible world of noumena while the antitheses may be true of the phenomenal world. According to Hegel, “…the argument of the Second Antinomy is basically the same as that of the First, and that that of the Fourth is basically the same as that of the Third”.\(^3\) He basically means to say that either Kant could have confined the number of antinomies as two or infinite.

Kant uses the third antinomy to introduce the idea that despite universal natural necessity, there may be some uncaused causality. Hegel on the other hand simply tries to have the best of both worlds, that is, he builds on the metaphysical doctrine of our absolute negative freedom, while impugning traditional metaphysics and dismissing all particular argument to the doctrine. Hegel appreciates Kant for incorporating dialectics (Antinomies of pure reason) in his philosophy. He says that Kant left the task unaccomplished by including only one aspect of it i.e. contradiction which resulted in Kantian philosophy the, “…abstract negative aspect of dialectics, the result is only the familiar one that reason is incapable of knowing the infinite; a strange result for—since the infinite is the Reasonable—it asserts that reason is incapable of knowing the Reasonable”.\(^4\) Hegel through the help of dialectics accomplished this task left by Kant. Hegel incorporated the second feature of Socrates dialogue along with the first i.e. sublation and reconciliation along with contradiction.

Sublation and reconciliation was the basic concept of Hegel’s philosophy. Kant because of his dualism was unable to think about it. He only thought of the antinomies as two opposed different realms which are about the phenomenal in the mathematical and

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 91.
noumenal in dynamical antinomies. Kant never even gave a thought of reconciliation regarding his antinomies. For Hegel it is because of the fact that he used the power of reason for dividing rather than unifying. Reconciliation in Hegel, "refers to both a process and a state. The process is that of overcoming alienation from the social world, and the state, that of being at home in the social world, which is its result".\(^5\) By the phrase 'being at home' according to Hardimon provides the answer that alienation is quite intuitive. He writes, "The feeling of alienation can be understood as the feeling of being 'spilt' from the world, of not fitting in there; it is the feeling of not being at home in the social world".\(^6\) He means that the idea of reconciliation is mainly contained in the alienation. Apart from alienation the conflict is also an integral part of the reconciliation for it preserves the conflict and at the same time overcomes it.

Hegel while criticizing the third antinomy basically attacks the limitation of reason. Whatever we arrive before what is declared to be an absolute limit to reason, there we have an instance of what Hegel calls 'bad infinity' i.e. something which is only finite or relative has been falsely promoted to be an infinite absolute. The critical instances of this could be seen in the moral realm of Kant which is an absolute that we must obey without knowing it.

Hegel in substitute of bad infinity introduces 'true infinity' which concerns not the temporal but reason as well whose reflexivity penetrates the concept and essence of the world. For him reflection has the peculiar kind of endlessness suggested by the form of a circle, ever turning upon itself, whereas the non-spiritual has a merely linear form (and 'bad infinity'). This simply bypasses the original problem, the factual question of the world's physical dimensions, which remains even if there is the kind of necessary relation Hegel stresses between the concepts of the limited and the endless.\(^7\)

Hegel in his first Jena writing declared that freedom and necessity are not in real opposition. Freedom is the character of the absolute when the absolute is posited as something inner and necessity is the character of the absolute when it is observed as something external. In his latter work Hegel introduces true solution of antinomy through

\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^7\) Karl Ameriks, (1985), "Hegel’s Critique of Kant’s Theoretical Philosophy", etc., pp. 28-9.
reciprocity. For him reciprocity is causality itself because in reciprocity, causality and necessity is sublated. Necessity here is raised up to freedom as it is not determined by an external forces but is grasped and posited by the developing real itself. Kant has not given much importance to the reciprocity whereas for Hegel the effect operates on the cause as much as the cause operates on the effect and he states this relationship between cause and effect as reciprocity or action and reaction. For Hegel the category of reciprocity stands on the verse of spiritual and social life of man for Hegel regards the category of causality inadequate for this.

As a higher category reciprocity finds its most obvious examples in the higher grades and is applicable to the entire universe. Freedom according to Hegel is the internal harmony and truth of Notion. Hegel thus overcomes the duality between freedom and causation which was introduced by Kant. The discovery of Notion constitutes Hegel’s new discovery i.e. his advance beyond Kant.

The various phases of ideas dialectically developed in logic unfold themselves also in time in the successive systems of philosophy. In Parmenides and Heraclitus we have the series of categories being, nothing and becoming. In the modern pre-Hegelian world of thought by the categories of understanding and hence their essential concepts are constituted by the categories of essence. In the dialectical development of thought in Logic, we have the series, substance, causation, reciprocity etc. The essential category of Hegel, that in which he advances beyond all past philosophy is found in the Notion. 8

Hegel’s treatment of the third antinomy is no better than that of the first as it leaves the original question as well as Kant’s treatment of it untouched. The argument of the antinomy are dismissed as proving their own claims only by finding opposed views to be contrary to these original claims. Thus, the arguments are held to be entirely question begging. On the other hand a less charitable reading would have him asserting that the contradiction of freedom and necessity is not a mere appearance arising from the introduction of dogmatic premises and the misapplication of our reason but is rather a truth of reason about our nature as finite things. Hegel misses Kant’s most significant challenge to the metaphysical tradition, the challenge to explain how mere self reflection can give us determinate knowledge without reference to a public realm. Hegel did

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8 Stace, W.T., (1955), The Philosophy of Hegel, etc., pp. 219-20.
challenge the Cartesian tradition in many ways, but he often remained bound to its presumption of self perception (as in the metaphysical articulation of the forms of Geist) has a special privilege.\(^9\)

Further, the category of causation presupposes the notion of space and time while the unconditional causality or freedom excludes the notion of space and time. Thus Kant writes, “If one takes the attributes of the existence of things in time for attributes of things-in-themselves, which is the usual way of thinking, the necessity in the causal relation can in no way be united with freedom. They are contradictory to each other”.\(^10\) Also, even if one assumes one’s entire existence independent of any external cause such as God then also that would not convert that natural necessity into freedom as, “It would be continuous natural chain, and thus my causality would never be freedom”.\(^11\) Hence, as a result great difficulties turns up, “…when one wishes to explain them as united in one and the same action and thus explain this union itself…”\(^12\)

Theoretical reason does not affirm to noumenal realm and it is only possible through practical reason where the notion of freedom plays a crucial role. Freedom extends the field of supersensuous. Kant writes in this context, “…only the concept of freedom, among all the ideas of pure speculative reason, which brings [Knowledge] such a great extension in the field of the supersensuous”.\(^13\) Besides, it is because of the principle of morality that the causality and freedom are no more regarded as problematic. And, so now the reality of the intelligible world which is established from a practical point of view would be transcendent for theoretical reason and would be immanent for practical reason. It is only freedom which enables us to find the unconditional for the conditioned and the intelligible for the sensuous without going outside ourselves. Freedom extends the knowledge of practical reason by generating space for speculative reason.

Kant gives two account of freedom i.e. firstly the freedom which is proved by the law in the analytic and which is a condition of moral laws. And secondly freedom, which

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\(^11\) Ibid.
\(^12\) Ibid., p. 99
\(^13\) Ibid., 107.

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is merely postulated in the dialectic and is also the condition of the possibility of highest good. In the former freedom is practical reason while in the latter it is the postulate of practical reason. When Kant says that men are mutually obligated then he asserts that freedom is real. Freedom is only an idea of reason whose objective reality in itself is doubtful. The concept of freedom is transcendental concept and so indemonstrable. The moral law is the law of causality through freedom therefore as causality operates in the phenomenal world similarly freedom operates in the noumenal world and both of them are very much real according to Kant apart from being separate and mutually exclusive. Hegel’s concept of freedom too refers the notion of freedom and necessity like the third antinomy in Kant but Hegel gives it a dialectical twist.

In Hegelian philosophy, freedom has a very broader prospect. He defines it as an appreciation of causal necessity. The concept of freedom emerges from the category of causality and is further developed in the category of Notion where freedom is the truth of the Notion. The Notion exists only in the thinking subject and is characterized by freedom. The Notion further dialectically passes over to reality as in contrast to Kant who restricted thought to the sensuous reality which could not advance further whereas Hegel in overcoming the drawbacks and limitations of Kantian dualism lets his Notion enter into the objective realm after realizing itself. Freedom in Hegel is not an abstract concept for it enters the social structure and develops through world-history.

Freedom is the internalization of externality so that things remain bound to each other. The bonds are understood to be internal to the nature of things so that each is what it is only by being part of a whole. Kant’s concept of freedom represents the problem of ‘free-will determinism’. It is because of Kant’s dichotomy that the concepts of freedom and causality discussed in Critique of Pure Reason and Critique of Practical Reason turns out to be different. Hegel on the other hand because of the monistic approach rightly states that freedom can only be understood in its objective social context.

Besides, Kant’s dichotomy between the sensible and intelligible world provides the framework for explaining the autonomy of the moral agent. The essential and important part of Kant’s third antinomy is that while the moral agent as the part of the sensible world is bounded by the natural laws, he is also free in so far as his actions are objectively determined by an ought. This expresses the connection between his ideas as
belonging to the intelligible world and the faculty of reason and the actions performed in the sensible world.

The fourth antinomy is of little interest, since it concerns the problem somewhat similar to the third for the only difference being that in the third antinomy it was of denying and affirming free causality while in the fourth it is about affirming and denying the absolute necessary being i.e. God. Kant has attempt to provide the solutions to the third and fourth antinomies in the *Critique of Practical Reason* by considering freedom and God as postulate of morality which also is said out to be a contradiction to what he stated in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. But Kant very wisely defends himself under the shield of morality. However, I will discuss and evaluate more on Kant’s and Hegel’s morality, dualism and monism in part-III. For now I will critically analyze and examine Kant’s and Hegel’s position on sensibility, understanding and reason. As I mentioned earlier that it is essential to discuss the notion of freedom and causation in Kant and Hegel in the domain of their ontological, epistemological, moral and dialectical position so, it also follows from this to critically examine, analyze, compare and contrast their respective ontological, epistemological, moral and dialectical position.

**PART-II**

**Hegel’s reinterpretation of Kant’s sensibility, understanding and reason**

Hegel’s position on sensibility, understanding and reason is quite different from those of Kant. Hegel criticizes Kant on his theory of sensation. Hegel uses both the terms sensibility as well as sense-certainty. For Kant sensibility is intuition. Objects are given to us in space and time which are the forms of intuition. For Kant sensibility does not apply to thing in itself. Hegel’s account is quite in contrast to Kant on space and time as Hegel was more concerned to examine the nature of space and time i.e. whether they are in us or are things like Kant.

Hegel develops his theory of sense-certainty which is non-mediate, pure receptivity and free from any conceptualization. It gives us the richest and truest knowledge. It is immeasurably rich because nothing has yet been selected or abstracted or
put in a category with other object not now present. He himself criticizes his view and says that, sense-certainty lacks selectivity (conceptualization) and the very lack of selectivity condemns sense-certainty to emptiness. In saying so he is also developing the concept further to a higher level i.e. sense-perception which apprehends the universals. This implies that the individuality of an entity given in sense-certainty has its meaning and significance only in relation to universality otherwise it will fall to emptiness.

Space according to Hegel is non-sensuous sensibility and a sensuous insensibility. It is utterly empty and abstract. It has no character, no feature and no determination of any kind. It is formless and an absolutely homogeneous continuous emptiness in which there is no differentiation. The space corresponds to the category of being which is a homogeneous emptiness and devoid of all determination. Charles Taylor writes in this context, “Space is exteriority itself; the first abstract, basis determination of nature, that it is external to itself. It is homogeneous, yet interruptible at any point. As pure exteriority it has no inner differentiation”.14 Spatial areas are distinct from and next to each other, but there is in space as such nothing to differentiate one area from another or to mark the point where one area ends and another begins. Thus, it could be said in this sense that there is no differentiation in space.

Space is something external and externality is the character of the space. Space has parts and the parts of space are only parts because they are external to and lie outside of each other and thus space in fact is externality. Space is the extreme opposition of thought for thought is absolute internality while space is the absolute externality. Nature is in space in its most extreme opposition to the Idea. Space is that which is most empty of mind, of thought, of reason while, in the succeeding stages of nature, reason gradually reawakens.

Further, according to Hegel, Space cannot exist as just external for long and therefore it is in contradiction. This negation is first noticed in point which further goes to line, the line into surface and surface into the whole space. In this context it is written, “But this immediate external existence has negativity in it because it cannot exist as just external, hence it is in contradiction. Hegel sees negation first in the point, the attempt to get out of externality to singular self-identity. But the nature of space is such that this is a

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negation of it, to have no extension, so the point goes into the line, the line into the surface, and this into the whole space”.\textsuperscript{15}

The negation of Space has the real existence as time. Space is in movement, “But this negativity has real existence as time. So space is no longer at rest, its parts just co-existing. Now it is in movement. Time is the side of Nothing, of becoming. It is the negation of the exteriority of space, but also in a purely exterior way”.\textsuperscript{16} It implies that, time is consequence of space. Time is itself becoming i.e. the coming to be and passing away. It is pure form of sensibility but it is not subjective. Temporality is the objective determination of things and it is therefore the process of actual things which constitutes time. Space and time are not just properties of things but are the very conditions of things as space and time are the external forms without which things would not be.

In the ‘Transcendental Aesthetic’, Kant maintains that our sensibility is purely passive or receptive and that space and time, the forms of sensibility are quite distinct from the concepts which arise from the understanding. Hegel has rejected this view of Kant and has replaced passivity with activity, “…it is the activity, the action of \textit{a-priori} sensibility to cast out the content [into space and time]…No doubt Hegel’s analogy is intended to ridicule Kant’s theory, but, unlike the other analogies, it also represents our sensibility as thoroughly active rather than passive and receptive”.\textsuperscript{17} Also, Kant argues that space and time should be completely empty although the emptiness of space could not be derived from experience. Hegel rejects this and maintains that space is essentially filled and empty space is an abstraction. Hegel agrees with Kant that space is subjective but denies it to time.

Kant’s mistake lies perhaps in considering sensibility first and then proceeding towards transcendental logic while Hegel reverses the order from \textit{Logic} to \textit{Philosophy of Nature}. In Hegel, \textit{Logic} establishes that nature must have certain general features and particular natural phenomena are seen to embody these features. The primary characteristic of nature is externality and therefore the first conceptual determination in nature is ‘self-externality’.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 356.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{17} Priest, Stephen, (1987), \textit{Hegel’s Critique Of Kant}, etc. pp. 52-3.
According to Kant, there is no relation between space and time but for Hegel time is the consequence and negation of space. Hegel moves further than this by stating that space and time unite and this unity is matter, “As space and time is boundaryless, continuing into other. It requires a reference system outside itself to be determined so it is external to itself; and we are once more in change. But now we have place changing, and this is movement…so far there to be real unity of time and space, there must be matter; a reality which is *partes extra partes*, and yet some unity”.¹⁸ It follows from this that, matter in Hegel constitutes the unity of space and time whereas for Kant space and time are two distinct and separate form of intuition which cannot unite. Hegel wanted to establish a necessary connection between space and time. For Hegel space becomes time. His account of time is phenomenological and not physical but of the time of human activity and history. Hegel rejects Kant’s subjective idealism but agrees that space is a mere form i.e. an abstraction.

According to Kant, time has only one dimension and it is a synthetic a-priori truth. Hegel on the other hand attempts to establish conceptually that time has three dimensions i.e. past, present and future. He also associates these dimensions with dialectic of being, nothing and becoming in *Logic*. Kant associates arithmetic with time for it is about the magnitude of series, and this finds concrete expression in temporal sequences of successive units. Numbers involves the addition of units, and if it is to have application to the world, these units must be temporal. And he associates geometry with space because it contains synthetic a-priori truths about space and the things in space.

For Hegel there is no science related to time as geometry to space. Also the dimension of time is not indifferent to each other like those of space. For example- An object cannot be past, present and future at the same time while it could have length, breadth and height. Unlike Kant, Hegel has no special motive for linking arithmetic with time for he does not regard it as synthetic.

Hegel’s concern with past, present and future shows that his interest in time goes beyond physics. The past, present and future are not strictly dimensions of times as we can assign a date and duration to an object or event, but we cannot measure it along dimensions of past, present and future. They differ in this respect from the spatial

dimensions. For Hegel eternity is prior in itself to time and eternity must not be conceived negativity as an abstraction from time. He defines the point as the 'negation of space' which is prior to it, but not in terms of the line, which is posterior. Further, empty time for Kant is conceivable though it is not empirically demonstrable. He expresses the transcendental identity of time by saying that they are in us merely as forms of our representations. Hegel challenges both these views by arguing that time is, rather than contains the changes of finite things and that the changes are changes in actual things and not simply in representations of our inner state. Time appears to be independent of things because they endure while time passes on.

Hegel’s main criticism of Kant’s theory of sensation is that it is undialectical. For Kant, sensibility gives us the object in terms of, ‘what it is in appearance’ and not as, ‘what it is in itself’ while for Hegel the identity of an object given in sense-certainty is either the very object it is or the sort of objects it excludes. So the self-identity of an object in sense-certainty depends on every moment of its self-distinction. Identity is therefore, identical-within-difference. This is what Hegel means when he talks about things having their being outside themselves and this is why Hegel criticizes Kant’s theory of sensation in terms that it is undialectical.

In Kant forms of sensibility cannot characterizes things in themselves and this conflict with the restriction thesis only if it gives determinate knowledge of things in themselves. This it does not do, for although it gives a kind of absolute knowledge, this is quite negative and indeterminate and not inconsistent with any thesis Kant wants to hold. The most famous Hegelian treatment of this reply is in the phenomenology’s introductory attack on critical philosophy, where Hegel suggests Kant’s inquiry gives news that is not so much illicit as vacuous. Thus, when a Kantian denies the spatiotemporality of things in themselves he admittedly does not determine positively what such things are like, but he surely has improved his understanding by overcoming a serious misconception (transcendental realism). Here, Hegel is basically attacking the dualism between the two realms as Kant claims that we cannot have knowledge of supersensible or noumenal. We can only think about them but can never see them. Hegel wants to make a point here that

19 Priest, Stephen, (1987), Hegel’s Critique Of Kant, etc., pp. 60-4
20 Ibid., p. 21.
the particular content of our sensible knowledge must be admitted as a part of the absolute i.e. as a part of what is absolutely free.

Hegel has criticized Kant for formulating the categories as a-priori and for the categories being transcendental and subjective. He says that Kant has committed a mistake by assuming that one could form the principles of thought and investigate their capacity prior to using them as if one could learn to swim without venturing into the water. This, in Hegel’s metaphor, is refusing to enter the water until one has learned to swim. Besides, the categories being subjective and psychological never allow us to know reality as it really is in itself but only as we are constrained to think. Thus, all our purported knowledge is subjective and not objective. Also, Hegel in *Science Of Logic* writes that, “To regard the categories as subjective only, i.e. as part of ourselves, must seem very odd to the natural mind... It is quite true that the categories are not contained in the sensation as it is given to us. When for instance, we look at a piece of sugar, we find it hard, white sweet, etc. All those properties we say are united in one object. Now, it is this unity that is not found in the sensation. The same thing happens if we conceive two events to stand in relation of cause and effect. The senses only inform us of the two several occurrences which follow each other in time. But that the one is cause, the other effect- in other words, the causal nexus between the two- is not perceived by the senses; it is evident only to the thought. Still, though the categories such as unity, or, cause and effect, are strictly the property of thought, it by no means follows that they must be ours only and not also characteristic of the objects. Kant, however, confines them to the subject-mind”.22

Thus, Kant by regarding categories as subjective has subjected himself for many criticisms. The solution according to Hegel is that, “the categories must examine themselves in their own employment, since their limitation will be revealed in their use...They must examine themselves in their own action they must determine their limits, and point out their defects”.23

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Further, Hegel accused Kant for limiting the number of categories to twelve and of conditioning them. Hegel maintained that there is infinite number of categories and they keep on increasing. Kant committed this mistake because he imparts the a-priority to categories. Hegel holds that Kant has no grasp to absolute knowing because he conditioned the categories only to the application of phenomena and denies its application to noumena. For Hegel, there is no thing in itself because the categories apply to reality as it really is in itself.

The ‘Understanding’ in Kant gives us Knowledge of only what appear to us i.e. phenomena and not of what that thing is in itself. There is a huge gulf between things as it appears and as it is in itself. Kant denies the speculative aspect to understanding and assigns this task to reason. Kant’s mistake according to Hegel was to create this dualism between understanding and reason. Kant failed to recognize that a complete description of the understanding requires both dialectic and speculation. For Hegel understanding always thinks in opposition, “The understanding just is the faculty that thinks in opposition: subject-object, mind-body, category-intuition, universal-particular. Only dialectic and speculation can produce synthesis, and the closet anticipation of this in Kant’s concept of the understanding is his triadic arrangement of the categories. The third in each list of three is synthesis of the first two”.24 This implies that Kant although started with triadic method but he failed to recognize it and also left the last unaccomplished. This task was accomplished by Hegel.

In Hegel, ‘Understanding’ is much wider concept for it perceives the pure universals such as touch, gravity, force, one, many, law etc. Unlike Kant there is no unbridgeable gulf between sensible and supersensible. Understanding connects the two realms with the mediating play of forces into the true background of things. The play of forces is immediate to the understanding while the truth is the inner world. Hegel does not differentiate between appearance and reality. For him the appearance is not a non-being but is the appearance of essence. The discovery that force is the substance of things gives the process of knowledge insight into the realm of essence.

According to Hegel the thing in itself is a mere abstraction, "An unknowable thing in itself is a mere abstraction-a caput mortuum".25 Thing in itself is nothing more than a content of consciousness than anything else, Kant therefore call it noumenal and the term phenomena he applies for the possible and scientific knowledge or more specifically in Kantian language as things as they appear to us. In Hegel on the other hand nothing is unknowable at least in principle and Hegel's main objection to Kant theory is that it leads to subjective idealism.

Kant in dialectic of pure reason demonstrates that the attempt to apply the categories of understanding to things in themselves leads to contradiction. Hegel agrees with the notion that thing in itself in Kant is unconditioned which is absolute. The categories of understanding on the other hand are finite by which the absolute cannot be determined. The absolute cannot be presented to sense-perception (wahrnehmung) and is not a phenomenon. The finite categories of the understanding apply only to phenomena. Hegel says that Kant treats the thing in itself in abstraction from determination of every kind and so it becomes a completely empty notion. The thing in itself simply remains something beyond thought.

In Hegel the truth of appearance is their very nature as mere appearance i.e. as merely sensible and finite. These require an ultimate explanation in a self-grounded notion of reason. Appearances have the truth in so far as they are grounded in reason and can be revealed through phenomenology (consciousness to self consciousness) in the course of time where the basic logical categories unfold to disclose the structure of the empirical world. In another words we can say that in Hegel's philosophy thing in itself has the potential to become phenomena in the course of time. For Kant on the other hand the gap between appearance and thing in itself is absolute. The truth of the empirical world lies not in its being grounded but rather in an internal consistency with the limited procedures of our empirical inquiries. Hegel's ultimate objection to Kant rests on a very elaborate claim about how appearance and reality entail each other for as we cannot apply the categories beyond the sensible and phenomenal conditions and thus the reality remains absolutely beyond the 'Notion' in Kant.

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25 Harris, E.E, (1983), An Interpretation Of The Logic Of Hegel, University Press of America, p. 64.
In Hegel, the concept of force explains the relation between appearance and reality. Force is necessarily determined by itself, it is itself a relation and acts as a middle term between appearance and reality. Hegelian force is not an entity in the world of perception nor is it a quality. We can only perceive the effect or expression of it for it is nothing apart from its effect. Its being consists in this coming to be and passing away. If the substance of things is force than their mode of existing turns out to be appearance. The appearance in Hegel is not a non-being but is the appearance the essence or it exists only as appearing.

Force wields a definite power over its effects and remains itself amid its various manifestations. It acts according to an inherent law. Knowledge finds that things exist under a law if they have gathered and preserved all the moments of their appearance into their inner essence and are capable of preserving their essential identity in their relation to all things. Force under law is what characterizes the self conscious subject.

The world of sense-experience and perception is the realm of appearance. The supersensible world is the realm of essence, beyond this changing and evanescent realm of appearance. Hegel calls this imperfect manifestation of reason because consciousness still finds its truth, ‘in the form of an object’, that is, as something opposed to the subject. The realm of essence comes forth as the ‘inner’ world of things. It remains for consciousness a bare and simple beyond because consciousness does not as yet find itself in it.²⁶

It means that it is the imperfect manifestation of reason so far according to Hegel which creates this duality and therefore veils the supersensible as something ungraspable. Reason in Hegel unifies all sort of dualism and so the understanding finds nothing but itself when it seeks the essence behind the appearance of things. The truth of understanding is self-consciousness and it is the concept of force which leads the transaction from consciousness to self-consciousness. Hence, behind the veil of appearance there isn’t any unknown thing in itself but the knowing subject. Self consciousness is the essence of things. The subject-object duality is overcome here.

Self-consciousness attains its satisfaction only in another self-consciousness. The truth of self-consciousness is not the ‘I’ but the ‘we’. This unity comes in objective spirit.

²⁶ Marcuse, Herbert, (1977), Reason and Revolution, etc., p. 110.
The \textit{Geist} here is reflected in the life of people which Hegel calls ethical substance. Reason plays an important role as it is the certainty of consciousness and is all reality. It rises to a higher stage of actualization of rational self-consciousness through itself and is the practical reason.

Hegel’s concept of \textit{Geist} is not only different but at the same time it is also an extension of Kant’s notion of transcendental consciousness. Kant’s transcendental consciousness (Unity of apperception) is ‘I’ centric, subjective and psychological whereas Hegel’s \textit{Geist} is the reflection of itself in itself in its totality. It is history as well as philosophy. It is the journey of consciousness which passes through various stages as I have already mentioned in the previous chapter. \textit{Geist} is social, historical and metaphysical transformation of the transcendental unity of apperception. Hegel’s \textit{Geist} has a universal appeal while Kant’s transcendental consciousness is individual.

Kant and Hegel both accept the notion of a pure representation of the ‘I’ is not commonly expressed as the notion of a necessary synthetic unity of apperception but different from Kant Hegel identifies this faculty or Spirit with a unity that is the absolute identity of self-consciousness, which posits judgement absolutely out of itself. Kant did not say of such a positing absolute consciousness nor did he hypostatize the productive imagination. Hegel comments Kant for this that it leaves him with the absurd picture of an empty ‘I’. This picture is called absurd because Hegel thinks that the ‘I’ and the manifold make sense only as components abstracted from a successful synthesis. Karl Ameriks defending Kant says that it is only with a question begging assumption of absolute idealism that Hegel can force on to Kant.\(^\text{27}\)

Kant’s transcendental consciousness being the logical presupposition cannot be known. It is noumenal and when categories of understanding are applied to it there arise paralogisms. The paralogisms are metaphysical arguments which are formally invalid conclusions such as—the soul is simple, substance, separate or opposed to matter etc. Here, the term soul is taken as a predicate. Hegel approves Kant’s criticism and says that the soul’s simplicity is its indivisible wholeness and is constituted by the cohesion and inseparability of its diverse traits, aspects, and activities.

Hegel appreciates the subject-object distinction of consciousness which is only possible when the subject is set over against an object. Consciousness constitutes the stage of Spirit. Hegel divides the Spirit (Geist) into Subjective, Objective and Absolute Spirit while there is no such classification in Kant. Freedom or freedom of will is central to Kant’s transcendental consciousness (Unity of apperception) whereas in Hegel the Spirit (Notion, Ego, Pure consciousness) is the sphere of freedom and reason.

Further, reason in Kant generates contradiction and is responsible for antinomies and paralogisms. It falls to the prey of infinity. It is the cause of dialectics. Thus, Kant attributes all sort of negativity to ‘reason’ but there is a positive aspect which gives his ethics content. Hegel criticizes Kant for his dualistic claim to reason in *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critique of Practical Reason*. He says that, reason must be regulative for *Critique of Pure Reason* but normative for *Critique of Practical Reason*. Hegel maintains that the transition from the concept of reason of the first *Critique* to second *Critique* is dialectical. The over-empirical idea of reason of the *Critique of Pure Reason* is found to be inadequate in thinking moral subject matter. He thinks that a contradiction obtains between his two claims. He writes, “On the one hand, reason’s only appropriate subject matter is the objects of possible experience. Hegel says this implies Kant’s epistemology contains no conception of reason as truly infinite, but only as constrained by a finite empirical employment. It cannot be used to know the whole. On the other, for his moral philosophy, Kant needs a concept of reason as freedom. Freedom though, properly understood, is infinite in the sense of ‘unconstrained’, it is ‘absolute spontaneity and autonomy’. If we accept Hegel’s metaphysical claim that freedom and reason are in the last resort ‘identical’ and are prepared to stretch the semantics of ‘infinite’, then Kant’s view as thus represented can be made to yield a contradiction: reason is both infinite and not finite”.

Kant was the one to signalize the distinction between reason and understanding and reason perhaps is partly due to an impoverished concept of infinity as Kant’s concept of infinity stands in semantic contrast with finitude. He denies ‘reason’ the power to desire infinity while for Hegel infinity is only fully known by reason. Thus, Hegel maintains that the understanding fails to present genuine knowledge as the knowledge

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yield by understanding is 'subjective' and 'finite'. Hence Kant never achieves the true objectivity which is the synthesis of subjectivity and objectivity and also not the true infinity which is not contrasted with finitude. Hegel’s philosophy accepts and further develops the distinction manifested in Kant between understanding and reason. Hegel on the other hand holds that the task of reason is unification. The only real or true infinity must be the unity of finite and infinite that is the whole.

For Hegel understanding through the process of abstraction presents contradiction between universal and individual, identity and difference and so on. And the role of reason is to unify which the understanding has divided. Reason shows that the function of understanding is to define things in their isolation and it constitutes abstraction while the function of reason is to make manifest the concrete relation in which an idea, concept or thing subsists. Reason becomes spirit, when it achieves the full consciousness. It evolves and attains a higher stage. It does not perceive itself passively in an object but it imposes itself more actively in the world.

In Kant, we can see the dualism of all kinds such as analytic and synthetic, apriori and aposteriori, understanding and reason, freedom and causation etc., the element of which it holds apart while declaring them to be inseparable. Kant retains and preserves the main metaphysical tenets of empiricism along with trying to clamp on to it the freedom of self-determining rationality, which he affirms in common with rationalism but these two refuses to unite in his thought. We will discuss more of these issues further in the next section.

**PART-III**

**Kant’s dualistic and Hegel’s monistic exposition of freedom and causation**

Kant advocates dualism while Hegel advocates monism between freedom and causation. The dualism between freedom and causation is of great significance in Kant because of which Kant is able to preserve the two realms of knowledge i.e. one of sensible and the other of supersensible or moral. Dualism is any theory or system of thoughts that recognizes two and only two independent and mutually irreducible principles or substance. The polarities of a dualism are distinguished from the thesis and antithesis of a
dialectics as the former are stable and mutually exclusive while the latter are dynamic. Kant has given a philosophical foundation to dualism. His philosophy coherently is the culmination of dualism from beginning till end such as analytic and synthetic, *apriori* and *aposteriori*, understanding and reason, freedom and causation and so on. The dualism is significant and has been put to great use by Kant. According to Kant nature can be understood scientifically only under the principle causal necessity. In phenomena causality is outside while on the other hand in noumenal realm another kind of causality operates which is termed as freedom. This causality is internal.

Kant's construction of freedom in the noumenal world leaves an unbridgeable gulf with the causal series in the phenomenal world. Hegel criticizes the unbridgeable gulf between two modes of being i.e. the being of the scientific knowledge on the one hand and the being of moral subject on the other. The dualism between freedom and causation is a deeper one i.e. an ontological dualism of phenomena and noumena. The dualism appears to be more prominent in the second *Critique*. Hegel through the application of dialectics into logic tries to overcome the duality of all sorts in Kant. Kant differentiates between dialectics and logic whereas for Hegel it is dialectical-logic. Hegel opts for a different methodology than Kant. For Hegel freedom is an appreciation of causal necessity in nature and society. The philosophy of freedom thus turns into the philosophy of necessity operating in nature and society. Also the freedom of will can be explained by a reference to the physical world.

Hegel rejects Kantian dualism of any sort and advocates monism. Monism is the system of thoughts to which all of reality is of one kind and hence there is no duality. And what appears to be the reflection of itself by itself. It is not something alien but its own negation which at some time returns back to itself enriched and elevated.

Hegel further illustrates his monism in terms of in itself (*an sich*) and for itself (*fur sich*). He goes back to Aristotle's original doctrine of the transition from potential being to actual being. There are several Aristotelian ideas that have a greater relevance to Hegel's attempt to overcome Kantian dualism. One is the doctrine that things or at least
substances have essences.²⁹ Hegel attempts to overcome the gulf between phenomena and thing in itself of Kant through the category of essence.

Hegel appreciates Spinoza’s idea of freedom, and he too defines freedom as an appreciation of causal necessity. Apart from this he differs from Spinoza and agrees with Kant in holding that the most significant aspect of freedom is human self-determination and not the determination of nature. Hegel also differs from Kant because for Kant there is a fundamental dualism between freedom and causality.³⁰ Hegel also like Spinoza believed in the unity of everything in the absolute. Everything is linked in a totality which is dependence on the Absolute or substance according to Spinoza. Spinoza knew how to resolve and assimilate the determination in which these assumptions conflict. But the only mistake he committed was that he did not go beyond ‘Substance’, “the philosophy which adopts the standpoint of substance and stops there”.³¹ Spinoza’s Substance is one individual totality and there is no determinateness that is not contained and dissolved in this substance but it is itself self-determined.

Kant in his dialectical exposition has discussed about thesis and antithesis whereas Hegel along with both the terms brings out synthesis which is the sublation (aufhenben) of thesis and antithesis. For Hegel there is no distinction between cause and effect. The effect like the cause is a substance which is absolutely negativity. The effect operates on the cause as much as the cause operates on the effect. In Kant causality is a category while for Hegel it is the relation between cause and effect. Apart from the table of judgement Kant also discusses causality in analogies of experience where he is said to be inspired by Newton’s, matter, force and reaction.

Kant tries to show that cause-effect relationship in the sphere of phenomenon is introduced by the apriori activity of the human mind. He states that every succession must have a rule through which emergence of an object can be regarded as caused by some other object for our knowledge of the succession of an object is possible only through the apriori activity of our mind. As a result, arises the infinite regress from cause to cause and so on. In Kant, the infinite regress removes the unity between cause and

²⁹ Singh, R.P., (2000), Freedom And Causation with Special Reference To Hegel’s Overcoming Of Kant, Om Publication, Faridabad, p. 84.
³⁰ Ibid., pp. 86-7.
effect making them separate as cause and effect. According to Hegel Kant was a victim of this infinite regress because of which he advocated dualism. Kant placed this into the dialectical part making one thesis and other as antithesis. His mistake according to Hegel was that he never thought of the unity and sublation of these two separate realms. For Hegel on the other hand, actuality is necessity and it arises when the distinction between inner and outer is sublated. Actual is that which at least in principle entails individuality, definiteness and a sensuous concreteness of being here and now. In actual the possibility of necessity becomes the real. Hence, cause becomes the effect and effect further becomes the cause and so on.

The conflict between natural necessity and freedom was resolved by showing that there is no true conflict if the events and even the world in which they occur be regarded as only appearances. This is possible because the same acting being as appearance has causality in the sensuous world with the mechanism of nature whereas, as an acting being he regards himself as noumenon. Therefore, it is possible for him to contain a determining ground of that causality according to natural laws, and this determining ground of natural causality itself is free from every natural law. Kant writes, “But not only since I am justified in thinking of my existence as that of a noumenon in an intelligible world but also since I have in the moral law a pure intellectual determining ground of my causality (in the sensuous world), it is not impossible that the morality of intention should have a necessary relation as cause to happiness as an effect in the sensuous world; but this relation is indirect, mediated by an intelligible Author of nature”.32 Through these Kant means that it is only with moral laws that this is possible and also that this combination is only contingent and indirect.

For Kant, it is because of dualism that the morality is possible otherwise there would have been contradiction between the two realms. If freedom could be explained with empirical principles like other natural abilities then it would be regarded as a psychological property and its explanation would have concerned in the investigation of the nature of soul, the incentives of the will rather than the transcendental predicates of causality of a being which belongs to the world of sense. Thus, such theories according to Kant, “…deprive us of the great revelation which we experience through pure practical

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reason by means of the moral law—the revelation of an intelligible world through realization of the otherwise transcendent concept of freedom; they deprive us of moral law itself, which assumes absolutely no empirical ground of determination”.33 He means to say that only because of practical reason freedom is possible in the empirical sphere otherwise humans would have been deprived of morality.

Kant in *Critique of Pure Reason* takes freedom as a third antinomy of pure reason whereas in *Critique of Practical Reason* he takes it as a postulate of morality or an idea of reason along with Immortality of soul and God. Kant has said that no theoretical proof could be provided to demonstrate that God exists, that the will is free and that the soul is immortal but that these things could not be proved impossible either. We cannot obtain empirical Knowledge of God, freedom and immortality of soul since they transcend anything the senses could reveal. We can never link God and immortality of soul as causally interacting substances in the empirical world.

Hegel discusses morality in *Phenomenology of Spirit* in the context of Geist as well in *Philosophy of Right* where morality is the second embodiment of freedom. In Hegel the concept of morality emerges with the notion of wrong and injustice in society. Here morality expresses something higher and it is fulfilled in ethical life (Sittlichkeit). The ‘ought to be’ becomes an ‘is’ only in ethical life. The duality between ‘ought’ and ‘is’ is synthesized in Sittlichkeit.

For Kant in order to understand the moral laws we have to assume these postulates because it can never be explained by mechanism of nature. Kant writes in this context, “...morality first reveals the concept of freedom to us while practical reason deeply perplexes the speculative with this concept which poses the most insoluble of problems, is shown by the following considerations. First, nothing in appearance is explained by the concept of freedom, but the mechanism of nature must be the only clue. Second, there is the antinomy of pure reason which arises when reason aspires to the unconditioned in a causal series and which involves it in inconceivability on both sides, since at least mechanism has a use in the explanation of appearances, while no one would dare introduce freedom into science had not the moral law and, with it, practical reason

33Ibid., p.97.
come and forced this concept upon us".\textsuperscript{34} It implies that in order to avoid the fallacies and contradictions it is necessary to accept these postulates of moral laws.

The 'Immortality of soul' is necessary in order to attain the highest good. In highest good inheres virtue and happiness. Unlike Kant in Hegel Geist is essentially a subject and it is the representation of Absolute. It is unlike the traditional notions of soul which have been dominated philosophy so far. It is modern and belongs to the modern age and religion. It has two realms i.e. hard or outer reality of a world of culture and inner reality or world of faith and insight. The diffusion between both the realms is known as Enlightenment and the conflict between them is resolved in morality. The Geist in Hegel is not a postulate but very much concrete and belongs to the world. Dialectically, the Objective spirit is the negation of Subjective spirit and both of these assimilate and sublate into Absolute spirit. The Absolute spirit is the pure continuity of the universal. The Geist is the sphere of freedom and reason while in Kant freedom of will is central to his Unity of apperception. Kant in the sphere of epistemology regards the soul as transcendental while in morality, it is transcendent. For Hegel on the other hand there is no such distinction.

Further according to Kant, the same law which leads to immortality of soul also leads to the concept of God and that law is the moral law. Without moral law these cannot be explained. As being a postulate, God is a necessary being for the possibility of highest good. Kant writes, "...it must postulate the existence of God as necessary belonging to the possibility of the highest good".\textsuperscript{35} The causality of this postulate i.e. God is through his will, "Therefore, the supreme cause of nature, in so far as it must be presupposed for the highest good is a being which is the cause (and consequently the author) of nature through understanding and will i.e., God".\textsuperscript{36}

The postulate God further is also the postulate of a highest original good, namely, the existence of God. The existence of God is necessity to promote the highest good and thus, "it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God".\textsuperscript{37} In the, 'kingdom of God'

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid., pp.29-30.
\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., p.129.
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., p.130.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
nature and morality come into a harmony through a holy author of the world, who makes possible the derived highest good.

Moral laws lead to religion and religion is the recognition of all duties as divine commands and not as sanctions. Moral laws deal only with rational conditions and not with means of achieving it. Moral laws are not the doctrine of how to make ourselves happy but of how we are to be worthy of happiness.

Kant has directed his criticism to the traditional branches of the old metaphysics i.e., ontology, rational theology, cosmology and rational psychology. Besides, he has also consented to these in some aspect by leaving room for faith or as postulates. Hegel too agreeing with Kant directs his criticism to all above branches of knowledge. But as for Kant the ideas of reason are illegitimate and illusory (because they result from the attempt to bring things in themselves under the categories); for Hegel they are proper object of reason or in more appropriate terms reason itself. Rational or natural theology if remaining on the level of the understanding conceives God and his attribute merely in imaginatively infinite terms and thus as a result becomes entangled in contradictions. This happens because the categories of understanding are finite and limited.

According to Hegel, God's existence if God is adequately conceived cannot depend upon anything other than himself. There can be no extraneous ground for his existence, for God is the universal ground for everything that exists.38 Besides, Hegel like Kant too maintained that mere 'existence' is the poorest of predicates. Finite things exist in space and time but it is in God that spatio-temporal phenomena exit. Hence, we neither can nor should wish to prove that God exists as a phenomenon in the way finite things exist.

The process from finite premises to infinite conclusion is the process of intellectual and moral advance from finite experience to the knowledge of God. It is the process of self-development of the finite in which the infinite is immanent as the concrete self-specification of the absolute, which is the supreme result of the process.39 According to Hegel, God is represented as the sum of all possible perfections or positive predicates excluding all negation and thus reduced to empty abstraction. The concrete content that

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38 Harris, E.E., An Interpretation Of The Logic Of Hegel, etc., p. 57
39 Ibid.
the mind seeks is one which contains in itself its own determination. It specifies and differentiates itself on its own principle of organization, which distinguishes within it the differentiae that negates one another. It contains the negation within itself.\(^{40}\)

Further, according to Hegel, God is the absolute spirit which has developed dialectically from subjective spirit and objective spirit. God as absolute spirit is the realized Idea or concrete universal holding all its particulars within itself. To say that God does not exist will be non-sensical and also to say that He exists will equally be inadequate (to the fullness of his reality). The leap from the finite to the infinite is illegitimate unless this process is grasped in its true form and traced through its continuously growing elaboration and unless the final outcome is rightly conceived as sublating the entire process.\(^{41}\)

The next postulate i.e. freedom is basically the autonomy of will. Bernard Carnois in his book, *The Coherence of Kant's Doctrine of Freedom* writes, “In the Doctrine of Method of the first *Critique* these two types of freedom were clearly distinguished; in the Dialectic, they were united in the fundamental relation; in the second *Critique*, they are identified through the notion of the autonomy of the will”\(^{42}\). The idea of autonomy of the will includes independence with respect to the laws of nature. Freedom as postulate is therefore the condition of moral law which is again causality through freedom. Kant writes, “The moral law is, in fact, a law of causality through freedom and thus a law of the possibility of a supersensuous nature, just as the metaphysical law of events in the world of sense was a law of causality of sensuous nature; the moral law thus defines that which speculative philosophy had to leave undefined”.\(^{43}\) The moral law is thus the law of causality through freedom which makes possible the supersensuous in the sensuous. It simply defines what is undefined.

The will however is a type of causality which belongs to human beings. Freedom understood in negative sense is that property of this causality by which it can be effective independent of foreign causes determining it. Even if free-will did not confirm to the laws of nature it does not mean that it would be removed from all lawfulness. The

\(^{40}\) Ibid., p.56
\(^{41}\) Ibid., p.70
concept of causality implies the concept of law. A free-will which did not act according to a law would be pure nothing and its concept would be contradictory. The analysis of free-will far from leading us to replace conformity to the laws of nature with a mere absence of law invites us to determine what that law is according to which it acts. This can only be the moral law, a law which is not imposed on the will, since it is posited by it. The freedom of the will is nothing else in this way but the property of the will to be a law to itself. And the autonomy of the will which is nothing else then freedom understood in its positive sense. It is opposed to both lawlessness and to heteronomy.

The autonomy of will, pure practical reason and the moral law are three concepts so intimately connected that their objective reality is revealed in one and the same fact. Freedom cannot be known immediately. Its reality is demonstrated not directly but indirectly through the mediation of moral law. The notion of autonomy of the will adequately expresses the freedom of the finite being. The divine will is fully free precisely because it is necessarily determined to follow the moral law.

Kant's aim was to cut loose altogether from this reliance on nature and to draw the content of obligation purely from the will. Rationality involves thinking in universal terms and thinking consistently. If we cannot do this, then we cannot as rational wills consistently undertake this action. A will operating on this principle would be free from any ground of determination (*Bestimmungsgrund*) in nature and hence truly free. A moral subject is thus autonomous in a radical sense. He obeys only the dictates of his own will. Reason, a rational will, is now the criterion, but in a third sense, one opposed to nature.44

Hegel on the other hand reconstructs the notion entirely on new basis. He fully endorses the modern rejection of the meaningful order of nature. Hegel's notion of spirit as freedom cannot accommodate anything merely given. Everything must flow on necessity from the idea, from Spirit or Reason itself. Hence Spirit must ultimately rebel against anything merely given. Hegel for this reason sees the modern affirmation of a self-defining subject as a necessary stage. And he sees it necessary culmination in the radical Kantian notion of autonomy. Autonomy expresses the demand of Spirit to deduce

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its whole content out of itself, not to accept as binding anything which is merely taken up from outside.\textsuperscript{45}

In \textit{Philosophy of Right}, he characterizes the will as self-determining universality and hence as freedom. It is thinking that is getting its own way in the will. It is only as thinking intelligence that the will is genuinely a will and free. This free will is also truly infinite and universal. This will which is determined purely by itself, and hence by thought or rationality is the ultimate criterion of what is right. It is designated the ‘ground of right’ and is the basic principle of the fully realized state.

Hegel gives principle of autonomy an entirely new twist. The problem with Kant’s criterion of rationality is that it has purchased radical autonomy at the price of emptiness. The criterion of the right is to be purely formal. Kant believed that this gave him a viable theory because he thought that the formal criterion would actually rule some actions in and others out. Moral autonomy has been purchased at the price of vacuity. This is the criticism that Hegel never tries of addressing to Kant.\textsuperscript{46}

Kant was unable to derive the notion of polity from freedom like Hegel as Kant has a very formal notion of freedom. It could be said that Kant’s moral theory remained at the edge of politics while for Hegel in contrast morality can receive concreteness only in politics within the society. Hegel’s \textit{Philosophy of Right} is an attempt towards attainment of freedom which is embodied in abstract right, morality and ethical life. The ‘right’ in Hegel has a very rich meaning as it constitutes morality, ethical life and world-history. The system of right is the realm of freedom made actual. There are certain sets of obligations which further sustained a society to which Hegel calls \textit{Sittlichkeit}. \textit{Sittlichkeit} brings about what is already there and in this the dualism between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ is overcome while for morality the opposite holds. In morality we have an obligation to realize something which does not exist. Morality expresses something higher but it is only abstract in terms and acquires concreteness in Ethical life (\textit{Sittlichkeit}).

Hegel’s ‘universal self-consciousness’ is a close approximation of his conception of ethical life or \textit{Sittlichkeit} which is something more than the Kantian self determination of the will. It is something like a common culture consisting of a set of shared ideas,

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p.369.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., pp.370-71.
norms and values. The practices and institutions of ethical life, family life, economic activity and politics are not just limitations on the will’s activity but are the social context within which freedom is possible.

Further, Hegel’s aim in *Philosophy of Right* was to seize on the essential nature of the modern ethical world, which meant disentangling and doing justice to various elements which are actually active in that world. Kant gave morality a restricted meaning i.e. being moral for Kant was primarily a matter of personal concern. For him, the will of the moral agent must be self-determining. Man cannot control what happens in the world but he has absolute power over his motives. Morality for Hegel is primarily social rather than personal phenomena, although in *Philosophy of Right* the section on morality occupies only about few pages but Hegel has extended it in *Sittlichkeit*. This section is mainly devoted to an analysis of the main component of modern social life, the family, civil society and the state. Hegel holds that these are very important aspects and are proceeding dialectically into concrete form.

Kant makes a sharpest distinction between himself as a pure moral being and nature in which he acts. According to him, nature is governed by one set of laws and the moral agent by another. Nature has no concern with moral consciousness; similarly moral consciousness has no concern with nature and the only thing which matters to it is inner purity. 47 For Hegel on the other hand, nature is not something external, it is its own i.e. sensibility in the shape of impulses and inclinations. It has specific purposes and therefore it is opposed to pure will. But pure thought and sensibility are in unity and so inherently one consciousness. Hegel writes in this context, “Nature is not merely this completely mode in which, as a bare pure object, consciousness has to realize its purpose...This nature, which is properly its own, is sensibility, which, taking the form of volition, in the shape of impulses and inclinations,...Both of these, pure thought and sensibility, are essentially and inherently one consciousness”. 48

Besides, the moral view of the world that harmony between morality and sensibility is something which can never be fully achieved but at best approached asymptotically. Kant himself felt the need to postulate an infinitely enduring existence

i.e. God, in the course of which the moral agent is engaged in an endless progress towards moral perfection. But, according to Hegel the moral view of the world is at bottom radically incoherent and the postulates only distracts attention from the fact, for the moral activity as here conceived is a fraud, and the moral man at best confused, at worse a conscious hypocrite.49

Hegel while saying so forgets that Kant has also put forward the notion of holy will. Will is manifested in the fostering and maintaining of virtuous dispositions. When Hegel accuses the moralist of fraud and hypocrisy he makes a plausible case only by comparing unlike i.e. the situation we are actually in and the situations we should be in if everyone acted automatically as he ought. He says the moral agent does not want to bring about the latter situation. Hegel himself fails to do justice to moral diversities in Philosophy of Right as there are pluralities of moral schemes and views whereas Kant’s moral principles being formal still have uniform and universal approach.

Hegel’s concept of freedom was not simply an after thought to his disaffection with Bonapartism. In its theoretical side it was an effort to overcome the antinomies created first by Hobbes mechanical rendering of the question of political power in an egocentric world, and second by Kant’s abstract, rationalist approach to politics in a cosmopolitan, universalistic world. History became Hegel’s way out of the dilemmas created by both mechanism and transcendentalism.50 The problem of the scope and nature of political freedom occupies an analogous technical status in Hegel’s thought to the issue of causality in natural philosophy. Hegel was faced with the task of re-establishing the grounds of causality in order to make history scientific and overcome the indeterminism of Locke’s Essay’s concerning Human Understanding. He confronted a similar problem of demonstrating that (contrary to theories based on custom and volition) freedom is inextricable tied to social necessity.51

Hegel pictured freedom as the unity of thought and reality but his real problem was to assume that concrete reality is revealed through philosophic contemplation. The essence of freedom in Hegel is a derivative of logic—a comprehension of the forms of

49 Walsh, W.H., (1969), Hegelian Ethics, etc., pp. 30-31
51 Ibid.
actual development. Hegel was compelled to satisfy the requirement of his idealism by ultimately conceiving of freedom metaphysically and then politically. Freedom has a very restricted meaning in Kant while for Hegel desired to move beyond personal freedom to universal freedom. He proceeds through the dissolution of the family to a consideration of freedom in terms of civil society and the political state which represent the social realization of freedom.

According to Hegel, the evolution of human thought is no less an evolution in the positive freedom of civilization. The social role of science is the expansion of freedom through knowledge while absolute knowledge is that which binds objectivity to subjectivity. It unfolds as law, ethics and religion i.e. knowledge as social function. Hegel’s idea of freedom is tied to an evolutionary or progressive theory of history. History is part of man’s freedom. It is only in the institutions of the modern constitutional state does one find the kinds of practices and institutions that embody the actuality of concrete freedom.

For Hegel everything that exists is part of the absolute spirit (He also call it God). The world that ought to be is simply the present culmination of history on its course to absolute freedom guided by the spirit which embodies humanity in its entirety. Absolute freedom is the aspiration to remake the world entirely according to the prescription of rational will. The world as posited by the spirit and identified by man responds to the will, “Spirit thus comes before us as absolute freedom. It is self-consciousness which grasps the fact that its certainty of itself is the essence of all the spiritual ‘masses’, or spheres, of the real as well as of the supersensible world, or conversely, that essence and actuality are consciousness’s knowledge of itself”. Thus, it is the spirit which posits itself as absolute freedom can be understood as the circumstance of not being limited by or dependent on anything that is other than oneself. Absolute freedom is to realize an unrestricted, unconditional freedom.

Absolute freedom is the phenomena that Spirit experiences when it actually attempts to assume the universal as the reality of self and society. Absolute freedom is the will taken beyond the limits of all social structure. The will as universal has no way to be determinate and is thus pure power. It has no internal principle of self-regulation. Thus, it

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is meaningless in itself. To have any effective form of itself at all, it yields to the phenomena of the faction. The faction is what is able to seize actual power and act in a wrong way it can to make itself the lord and the master of all else. Its sense of negation is simply that of null class.\(^{53}\)

Hegel’s conception of absolute freedom has negative and a positive side. Negatively absolute freedom consists in not being limited by, restricted by or dependent on anything that is other than oneself. This negative aspect of absolute freedom is destructive and Hegel also calls it ‘freedom of the void’. Hegel writes, “Universal freedom can produce no positive work or deed; only negation action remains to it; it is only the fury of destruction”.\(^{54}\) In Hegel’s view, terror, or at least destructive fury, is endemic to the drive for absolute freedom itself. It cannot brook any standing structures, even its own past creations which are an emancipation of contemporary active will.\(^{55}\) The positive side of absolute freedom flows naturally from the negative side. It consists in being limited, dependent on itself alone.

Hegel seems to have in mind the difference between a rationalist first principle and materialist first principle. Common to both these approach is the abstraction of pure self thinking. This goal ushers a new stage of consciousness—absolute freedom.\(^{56}\) This absolute freedom is the ultimate sense of freedom. The absolute freedom of Hegel has been subjected to lot many criticisms by the post Hegelian philosophers.

To conclude this chapter, we can say that Kant and Hegel both have left very deep impression in the history of philosophy. Although both have very different way of philosophizing as Kant admits dualism while Hegel advocates monism but still there is a continuation from Kant to Hegel which is very obvious as Hegel proceeds with the unaccomplished task left by Kant. He tries to solve them by his dialectical method. Hegelian dialectics has been a great instrument with the help of which anything can be enriched in its higher form. Kant bridged the gap between rationalism and empiricism through his transcendental philosophy but he himself left the most serious and cogitative

\(^{53}\) Verene, Donald Philip, (2007), Hegel’s Absolute: An Introduction to Reading the Phenomenology of Spirit, Sunny Press, p. 86. From [www.books.google.co.in](http://www.books.google.co.in), retrieved on 05-13-09.

\(^{54}\) Quotation taken from, Taylor, Charles, (1975), Hegel, etc. p. 416.

\(^{55}\) Ibid., p. 418.

\(^{56}\) Verene, Donald Philip, (2007), Hegel’s Absolute: An Introduction to Reading the Phenomenology of Spirit, etc., p. 84.
problem through the third antinomy between freedom and causation. He although tried to solve the dualism between freedom and causation but in vain. Hegel says that it is because he considered only two features in his dialectics i.e. thesis and antithesis and obviated from synthesis altogether. Kant veiled himself behind moral laws stating that if freedom and causality can come under a single roof then it is only possible through moral laws.

Besides, the dualism between freedom and causation which Kant has introduced is not only a problem but has been also of great importance for it opened up an entire new realm of faith. Hegel on the other hand develops the notion of freedom out of necessity in nature attributing it as a property of Notion. Notion is the sphere of freedom and reason. He then brings freedom back to the objective world from subjective world. In this objective world freedom develops into absolute freedom which is a kind of threat to others. This absolute freedom needs to be balanced for the society to run smoothly. Freedom thus becomes embedded in social institution, laws etc. The more we understand our involvement in these institution and laws the freer we are.

Further, the monism between freedom and causation helped Hegel to develop the polity out of freedom. For him freedom was embedded in abstract right, morality and ethical life. The essence of freedom in Hegel is a derivative of logic—a comprehension of the forms of actual development. Hegel was compelled to satisfy the requirement of his idealism by ultimately conceiving of freedom metaphysically and then politically. Kant on the other hand restricts the scope of freedom and thus is unable to move beyond morality. Hegel desired to move beyond personal freedom to universal freedom. He proceeds through the dissolution of the family to a consideration of freedom in terms of civil society and the political state which represent the social realization of freedom. Hegel criticizes Kant for his morality being too formal and also for introducing the dichotomy between ‘is’ and ‘ought’. Hegel also overcomes the duality between ‘is’ and ‘ought’ in ethical life as for him in ethical life morality is fulfilled achieving a concreter form.