

METAPHYSICS OF MODERNITY: THE PROBLEM OF IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE IN HEGEL AND HEIDEGGER

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the problem of identity and difference in Hegel and Heidegger and thereby attempts to shed light on the relationship between the critique of metaphysics and the critique of modernity. Both Hegel and Heidegger, it is argued, investigate identity and difference in relation to the problem of self-consciousness or subjectivity within the historical context of modernity. Their respective critiques of modern subject-metaphysics can for this reason also be viewed as critiques of the philosophical foundations of modernity. Two paths or lines of inquiry can be identified: Hegel's *dialectical-speculative* path, which attempts to supersede modern subject-metaphysics in favour of speculative philosophy, the form of thought adequate to the experience of freedom in modernity; and Heidegger's *ontopoetic* path, which attempts to detach itself from metaphysics in order to usher in a 'non-metaphysical' experience of technological modernity. These two paths are explored through a critical dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger as a way of showing the relationship between the critique of metaphysics and the critique of modernity.

Part I of the thesis considers the philosophical background to the identity/difference problem and its relation to the principle of self-consciousness within modern philosophy. The early Hegel's encounter with Kant and Fichte is explored as an attempt to criticise the (theoretical and practical) deficiencies of the philosophy of reflection. Part II considers Hegel's positive project in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, in particular the theme of intersubjective recognition and its significance for theorising self-consciousness in modernity. Hegel's critique of substance- and subject-metaphysics is examined in the *Science of Logic*, which integrates the logic of identity and difference within the threefold Conceptual unity of universal, particular, and individual. Part III then turns to Heidegger's explicit confrontation with Hegel, discussing Heidegger's project of posing anew the question of Being, and examining in detail Heidegger's "Cartesian-egological" reading of the *Phenomenology*. The later Heidegger's "non-metaphysical" or onto poetic evocation of identity and difference is further explored in light of Heidegger's critical engagement with the nihilism of technological modernity. In conclusion, it is suggested that the critical dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger can open up new paths for exploring the problem of freedom in modernity.

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Abbreviations

Aristotle:

Meta = *Metaphysics* (1980).

Descartes:

Med = *Meditations on First Philosophy* in *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes Volume II* (1984).

Fichte:

WL = *Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre*, 1794. English translation: *Fichte's Science of Knowledge*, trans. Peter Heath and John Lachs (1982). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

Hegel:

D = *Differenz des Fichte'schen und Schelling'schen Systems der Philosophie. Gesammelte Werke* Band IV, 1-92. English translation: *The Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, trans. H. Harris and W. Cerf (1977). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

Enz. = *Enzyklopaedia der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse* (1830), ed. F. Nicolin and O. Pöggeler (1969). English translation: *The Encyclopaedia Logic. Part I of the Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences with the Zusätze*, trans. T.F. Geraets, W.A. Suchting, H.S. Harris (1991a). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

GW = *Glauben und Wissen, Gesammelte Werke* Band IV, pp. 313-414. English translation: *Faith and Knowledge*, trans. W. Cerf and H.S. Harris (1977a). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

PhG = *Phänomenologie des Geistes, Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. IX. English translation: *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (1977b). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

PM = *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, trans. W. Wallace and A. Miller (1971b).

PR = *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, trans. Allen W. Wood (1991b).

VGP III = *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der Philosophie III, Werke in zwanzig Bänden*, Band 20 (1971a). English translation: *Lectures on the History of Philosophy. 3 Medieval and Modern Philosophy*, trans. E.S. Haldane and Frances H. Simson (1995). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

translation.

WL I = *Wissenschaft der Logik. Erster Band. Die Objektive Logik* (1812/1813). *Gesammelte Werke* Band 11.

WL I/1 = *Wissenschaft der Logik Erster Teil. Die Objektive Logik. Erster Band. Die Lehre vom Sein* (1832).
Gesammelte Werke Band 21.

WL II = *Wissenschaft der Logik. Zweiter Band. Die Subjektive Logik* (1816). *Gesammelte Werke* Band 12.

Heidegger:

HW = *Holzwege* (1994).

ID = *Identität und Differenz* (1996a). English translation: *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (1969).

KM = *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik*, fünfte, vermehrte Auflage (1991). English Translation: *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, fifth edition, trans. Richard Taft (1997b). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

N II = *Nietzsche* Band II (1961). English translation: *Nietzsche Vol. IV: Nihilism*, trans. Frank A. Capuzzi (1982). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

QT = *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (1977).

SG = *Satz vom Grund* (1957). English translation: *The Principle of Reason*, trans. Reginald Lee (1996b). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

SZ = *Sein und Zeit*, siebzehnte Auflage (1993). English translation: *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (1996c). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

WM = *Wegmarken* 3rd. edition (1996d), *Pathmarks* ed. William McNeill (1998). Cited with German pagination followed by English translation.

GA 28 = *Der Deutsche Idealismus (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel) und die philosophische Problemlage der Gegenwart* (1997).

GA 32 = *Hegel's Phänomenologie des Geistes* (1997c).

GA 65 = *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)*. (1999a). English translation *Contributions to Philosophy (From En-owning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Paly (1999b). Cited hereafter as (GA65: German/English pagination).

GA 68 = *Hegel: 1. Die Negativität. S. Erläuterungen der "Einleitung" zu Hegel's "Phänomenologie des Geistes"*

(1993b).

Hume:

T = *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1978).

Kant:

KU = *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1990c). English translation: *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (1987). Cited according to German pagination and then English translation.

KPV = *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (1990b).

KRV = *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (1990a). Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (1996). Cited according to the standard *Akademieausgabe* pagination (A and B editions) followed by the English (Pluhar) translation.

Locke:

Essay = *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1975).

Introduction

Dialectical history is multiple and complex, not as its critics would have it, unitary and simply progressive; it suspends the history of philosophy within the philosophy of history, and the philosophy of history within the history of philosophy.

Gillian Rose (1984, 3).

The problem of identity and difference is one of the most ancient concerns of philosophy, reaching back to Plato and Aristotle and even further to Heraclitus and Parmenides.^[1] At the same time, the problem of identity and difference is also a pervasive issue in much contemporary philosophy and critical theory.^[2] The philosophical background and provenance of this problem nonetheless remains rather obscure.^[3] Few contemporary theorists explicitly acknowledge the roots of the philosophical discourse of identity and difference or explain its critical significance for the understanding of modernity.^[4] Indeed, contemporary discourses on identity and difference, with their associated critiques of modern subjectivity, draw on a philosophical problematic stretching back at least to post-Kantian idealism. In what follows, I shall argue that two of the most important thinkers within the effective history of this problem have been Hegel and Heidegger, thinkers whose critiques of the metaphysics of modernity have shaped the discourse of identity and difference up to the present day.

The following thesis is devoted to analysing the problem of identity and difference in Hegel and Heidegger, and attempts by means of this analysis to shed light on the contemporary philosophical discourse on identity and difference. Hegel and Heidegger engage, I argue, in a critical thinking of identity and difference that is at the same time a critique of the metaphysical-conceptual bases of modernity. Hegel's suspension [*Aufhebung*] of metaphysics within speculative logic aims to "give difference its due" by overcoming the formalism and dichotomies of the analytic understanding; his critique of modern metaphysics aims to develop categories appropriate to the intersubjectivity of Spirit in modernity. Heidegger's overcoming of modern metaphysics, on the other hand, seeks to prepare a "non-metaphysical" thinking of the identity and difference between human beings and Being. In attempting to think the truth of Being as appropriative event [*Er-eignis*]—the mutual belonging together of humans and Being—Heidegger prepares for a thinking beyond the completed subject-metaphysics of technological modernity.

In each case, however, critical questions can be raised about the success of these Hegelian and Heideggerian projects. I shall consider whether Hegel consistently carries out this programme of preserving difference throughout his system and to what extent difference as particularity is integrated

into identity as universality. Furthermore, I shall argue that Heidegger's interpretation of Hegelian phenomenology and logic as the completion of subject-metaphysics ultimately remains one-sided. For it fails to adequately address the intersubjective constitution of Spirit and the complex threefold unity of universality, particularity, and individuality in Hegel's Logic of the Concept. Finally, I argue that Heidegger's "non-metaphysical" or *ontopoetic* thinking of the mutual appropriation between human being and Being cannot fully articulate or account for the relationship between (the non-metaphysically conceived) identity and difference. In sum, my contention is that exploring the critical dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger can help uncover the roots of the philosophical discourse of identity and difference, show the significance of their respective critiques of subjectivity, and open up new paths for thinking the problem of metaphysics in modernity.

The Hegel-Heidegger relationship

Philosophical interest in the relationship between the thought of Hegel and Heidegger has recently become a focus of scholarly research in the English speaking world.^[5] The problem of the relationship between these thinkers, moreover, has a long and interesting history.^[6] Heidegger himself devoted a lecture course in 1930-31 to the reading of the "Consciousness" section of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, and his 1942-43 essay, "Hegel's Concept of Experience," is well known. In addition, the later Heidegger returned to Hegel in essays such as "Hegel and the Greeks," and attempted to come to terms with Hegel in his 1957 essay on "The Onto-theological Constitution of Metaphysics".^[7] From 1933-1939, Alexandre Kojève's famous lectures on Hegel combined elements from Heidegger's *Being and Time*, particularly the role of finitude and time, with a Marxist interpretation of Hegel's account of the struggle for recognition, to produce an original interpretation that was to have a profound influence on the post-war generation of French philosophy.^[8] Hegel and Heidegger significantly influenced Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*—particularly his analyses of nothingness and negation, in-itself and for-itself, facticity, temporality, and freedom as transcendence—while interest continues in the Sartrean critique of Hegel's and Heidegger's accounts of the problem of the Other.^[9] Gadamer's hermeneutics—as a "mediation" between Hegel and Heidegger—draws on the Hegelian concept of the historicity of Spirit and combines this with the Heideggerian conception of hermeneutic phenomenology in order to develop a hermeneutics of the historicity of understanding and language.^[10] German Critical Theory was also significantly shaped by the philosophical appropriation and critique of Hegel and Heidegger.^[11] Adorno's *Negative Dialectics* developed an "immanent critique" of Heideggerian ontology and of Hegelian philosophy of history in the service of a negative dialectic aiming to uncover the conceptual roots of domination in identity thinking and to preserve the non-identical from its

destruction within administered society.[12] Contemporary French philosophy, and in particular Derridian deconstruction, owes a great debt to both Hegel and Heidegger as powerful exponents of the struggle with the metaphysics of presence and as opening up a thinking of difference as such.[13] A number of Derrida's texts have critically explored the Hegel-Heidegger relationship in the context of deconstructing metaphysics.[14]

In addition to this more general appropriation and transformation of Hegelian and Heideggerian themes, there is also a considerable history of explicit studies of the Hegel-Heidegger relationship. Although most of these works, both in German and English, have appeared since the 1960s[15] and in particular in the last two decades, among the earliest studies specifically devoted to the Hegel-Heidegger relationship is a 1953 work by Jan van der Meulen. The latter is a comparative study that seeks to articulate the philosophical encounter between Hegel and Heidegger according to the poles of *conflictuality* and *contradiction* as fundamental determinations of Being. The basis or mediating middle [*Mitte*] for this philosophical encounter is the problem of the "Logos as the truth of Being" (van der Meulen 1953, 7). Of particular interest in this study is the discussion of the Hegelian and Heideggerian conceptions of truth, the account of the difference between Hegel and Heidegger in relation to temporality, and the examination of the problem of ontological difference in regard to nature and history. Van der Meulen's "mediating" interpretation, which combines a critique of the Heideggerian reading of Hegel with an immanent critique of Hegel drawing on insights from Heidegger, sets the pattern for many of the comparative Hegel-Heidegger studies which follow. These can be classified, I suggest, according to two main problem-complexes: the *overcoming of metaphysics* and the *critique of modernity*. Most studies emphasise one aspect rather than the other, but both need to be acknowledged if we are to comprehend the significance of the confrontation between Hegel and Heidegger.

Hegel-Heidegger: Overcoming Metaphysics

A tradition of studies on the Hegel-Heidegger relationship has emerged which take their orientation from the topic of overcoming metaphysics. The most well known and influential of these is Werner Marx's *Heidegger und die Tradition*, published in 1961, which one commentator describes as "the most complete study to date of Heidegger's relation to Hegel".[16] Marx develops a detailed interpretation of Heidegger's confrontation with the tradition of substance-metaphysics, for which "the question of Being [*Sein*] amounts to the question of essence [*Wesen*]" (1971, 4), and which finds its roots in Aristotle's conception of essence/substance [*ousia*]. The basic *ousiological* traits of Being—namely selfsameness, necessity, "eternalness," and intelligibility—are transformed with Hegel into the self-

ordering and circular movement of thought as a dialectical process. Hegel's metaphysics, on Marx's reading, represents the culmination of the Aristotelian "ousiological" tradition, since Hegel's thinking "was still determined by the initial starting point of Being as substance and subject" (1971, 10). For Marx, Hegel's speculative account of the meaning of Being, Essence, and Concept thus provides an illuminating contrast with Heidegger's radical destruction of the ousiological tradition of metaphysics. Heidegger's revolution consists in posing "the question of Being *no longer* as a question about beings," and thinking Being "*no longer* in the sense of *ousia* as substance" (Marx 1971, 5). This break with the metaphysical tradition means that Heidegger opens a path for thinking an "other" essence along with the possibility of the arrival of the new in history.

The significance of Hegel, according to Marx, lies in marking the culmination of the "metaphysics of light"—the Greek vision of the total intelligibility of *ousia* grasped through the illumination of *noesis*—but also the acknowledgement of a "realm of darkness in the form of "untruth," "error," "evil," and death (1971, 54-5). In the struggle between the light and the darkness, the occurrence of truth and untruth, Hegel ultimately gives predominance to the traditional "metaphysics of light" in the progressive dialectical movement of thought.[\[17\]](#) Although Hegel prepares the transition to Heidegger's "other" thinking of Being, beyond the ousiological tradition, Hegel's commitment to the selfsameness and total intelligibility of Being leaves no room for the occurrence of "the new," the unforeseen emergence of difference in history. Compared with Heidegger, Marx concludes, "Hegel constructs his doctrine of subjectivity on the basis of the traditional doctrine of substance," with the unfortunate result that the relationship between Being and the human essence "remains in principle 'uncreative'" (1971, 82).[\[18\]](#)

The possibility of thinking the "advent of the new"—or unforeseen difference in the occurrence of Being as history—is an important issue in the confrontation between Hegel and Heidegger. Indeed, Marx describes this issue as defining our "present need of philosophy", namely, to think "the essence of essence in such a way that the advent of the *new* is found to be possible" (1971, 244). Marx reveals here his underlying commitment to Heidegger's project. For it was Heidegger, Marx contends, who first initiated this urgent question, one which has been largely neglected by contemporary philosophy (1971, 243). In this regard, Marx's study, which I shall address in more detail in later chapters, provides a paradigm for numerous recent studies that discuss the Hegel-Heidegger relationship from the viewpoint of the problem of *overcoming metaphysics*. Hegel and Heidegger are presented as decisive figures in philosophical accounts of the overcoming of the metaphysical tradition, but in many cases a tacitly "Heideggerian" interpretation is assumed which characterises Hegel as a metaphysician of subjectivity whose conception of the subject is ultimately based on the traditional doctrine of substance.[\[19\]](#)

Werner Marx's study is a paradigm of the approach to the Hegel-Heidegger relationship centred on the problem of overcoming metaphysics. This approach strongly emphasises the shared problematic between Hegel and Heidegger—overcoming the metaphysical tradition and forging a new mode of thought—and contrasts both thinkers according to the extent to which they successfully overcome metaphysics or else remain captured within it. For Marx, Hegel remains within the ontological tradition of the “metaphysics of light”, while Heidegger—for all the dangers his thinking presents^[20]—successfully overcomes the light in favour of the obscurity of the event of Being. Taken on its own, however, this approach displays a certain “one-sidedness” evident in the lack of any account of the historical-cultural significance of the critique of metaphysics.^[21] Marx does not address the significance of this overcoming of metaphysics in relation to Hegel's and Heidegger's respective *critiques of modernity*. This point is significant if we accept, as Habermas remarks, that Hegel was the first philosopher to develop an explicit concept of modernity, and to grasp the problem of *modernity's self-reassurance* as the fundamental problem of his own philosophy.^[22] The relation between the critique of metaphysics and the critique of modernity in Hegel and Heidegger must be examined further if we are to understand the significance of their attempts to overcome the metaphysical tradition.^[23]

Two recent examples of this “metaphysical” approach to the Hegel-Heidegger encounter, centred on the topic of overcoming metaphysics, are the studies by Dennis Schmidt (1988) and Karin de Boer (2000). Each author addresses the issue of overcoming metaphysics from the viewpoint of a specific organising theme or problem in Hegel and Heidegger: the meaning of *the finite* in the case of Schmidt, and the meaning of *temporality* in the case of de Boer. Each author also adopts what one could call a “Heideggerian” version of the reconstruction of the history of metaphysics and of Hegel's role in the culmination of the metaphysical tradition, although each at the same time is acutely aware of the problems associated with construing the history of metaphysics as a unified “tradition”.^[24] Moreover, each author is concerned to avoid the problem of presenting the confrontation between Hegel and Heidegger as though it were simply a matter of competing “positions” that one might compare and contrast. For this reason, both studies thematise a common problem or topic in the dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger, but reconstruct this dialogue from a largely “Heideggerian” perspective.

Schmidt's inquiry takes the problem of the finite—“speaking and thinking the meaning of the finite” (1988, xiii)—to be that which Hegel and Heidegger attempt to think in a manner that challenges the metaphysical tradition. In rediscovering the meaning of the finite as the first topic of philosophy, Hegel and Heidegger each claim thereby to bring that tradition to its end. But whereas Hegel attempts “to think the finite in its infinite inner relation to the infinite” (1988, 15), that is, to overcome the ‘false’ metaphysical conception of the “finitised infinite” in favour of the true infinite of speculative reason, Heidegger abandons the infinite as a metaphysical ground or principle in order to think the finite

happening of Being as such. In this sense, the confrontation between Hegel and Heidegger concerns the issue of overcoming metaphysics—where the latter has traditionally implied a transcendence of the finite in favour of the ideal or unconditioned (1988, 3)—in order to legitimate “a truly nonmetaphysical form of philosophical discourse” (1988, 12).

Indeed, Schmidt’s purpose in studying the Hegel-Heidegger confrontation is not to correct the “mistakes” in Heidegger’s reading of Hegel, but to ask “just how far Heidegger has succeeded in undermining the all-embracing infinity of the Hegelian system” (1988, 17). At stake in such a confrontation is the question whether Heidegger succeeds in his basic project of overcoming metaphysics.^[25] In Schmidt’s account, Heidegger’s confrontation with Hegel provides the unifying thread for “the issues at the centre of contemporary post-Hegelian, and specifically postmodern, attempts to realize the overcoming of philosophy as metaphysics.” (1988, 22). These “postmodern” concerns with the ubiquity of the finite, and the plurality of discourses concerning finite Being, emerge at the conclusion of Schmidt’s inquiry. Heidegger partially succeeds in extricating his thought from Hegel’s “circle of reflection,” but this only means a recovery of the original topic of philosophy, namely thinking and living in “nonmetaphysical” harmony with the finite.

Schmidt’s detailed study of the various texts comprising Heidegger’s critique of Hegel follows their chronological and thematic development from section 82 of *Being and Time* to the 1958 essay in *Wegmarken* on “Hegel and the Greeks”. As a result, the dialogue between them tends to be dominated by Heidegger’s focus on the “ontological” aspects of Hegelian phenomenology and logic, and the Heideggerian, rather than Hegelian, understanding of the concepts of the finite and the infinite.^[26] Although Schmidt acknowledges that the significance of Heidegger’s overcoming of metaphysics is connected with the problems of modernity and postmodernity,^[27] there is no elaboration of this connection or of the pertinence of the topic of the finite for the experience of modernity. It is not just the overcoming of metaphysics, I would suggest, but rather the relationship *between* the critique of metaphysics and the critique of modernity which sets the agenda for much critical discussion in contemporary continental philosophy.

Karin de Boer’s recent work, *Thinking in the Light of Time*, develops further the topic of Heidegger’s critical encounter with Hegel, and does so within the context of a systematic reconstruction of Heidegger’s thinking of temporality. Like Schmidt, de Boer adopts Heidegger’s critique of Hegel as a unifying thread in her account of Heidegger’s confrontation with metaphysics: on the one hand, Heidegger’s Hegel interpretation serves to elucidate what is intended by the Heideggerian “deconstruction of metaphysics,” while on the other, Heidegger’s work “will be interpreted from the outset against the background of Hegel” (2000, 4). Unlike Schmidt, however, she

eschews chronological and comparative approaches in favour of a thematic study of the unity of Heidegger's thought. This unity is provided by the problem of *temporality* as the principle underlying Heidegger's deconstruction of metaphysics and of Hegel as a key thinker of the culmination of metaphysics.[28]

Part III of de Boer's text is specifically devoted to the Hegel-Heidegger confrontation in which "the projective preconception guiding Hegel's philosophy" is at stake (2000, 197). Heidegger, according to de Boer, must show that Hegel fails to meet the "total absence of presuppositions" essential to the formation of philosophical science. This unthematized presupposition, which provides the basis of Heidegger's interpretation of Hegel, is an experience of temporality that Hegel is unable to integrate into the speculative system. De Boer admits that Heidegger himself does not explicitly thematize the decisive role of temporality in Hegel, so that this thematisation must be carried out as part of her own systematic reconstruction of Heidegger's critique of metaphysics (2000, 199). For this reason, careful attention is given to Heidegger's critique of the relationship between time and spirit in §82 of *Being and Time*. [29] Indeed, one of de Boer's key theses is that Heidegger's philosophical method is based on the threefold structure of originary temporality, and that this provides a basis to critique Hegel's threefold movement of the Concept—from undifferentiatedness, the positing of a difference, to sublation of this difference in a higher unity—as a movement which privileges the Present over the other dimensions of temporality. [30]

The question of method can be addressed further in this context. As de Boer notes, both Hegel and Heidegger considered external comparison "to be an inferior mode of comprehension" (2000, 200). Like Schmidt, de Boer adopts a "Heideggerian" perspective, using Heidegger's critique of Hegel to illuminate Heidegger rather than Hegel. Once again, the legitimacy of Heidegger's critique of Hegel tends to be assumed in order to clarify Heidegger's project of overcoming metaphysics: "I will rather use Heidegger's interpretation of Hegel to show how Heidegger's thinking springs from metaphysics and turns itself against this origin, without turning back to it, yet equally without standing outside it. The history of Heidegger's discussion with Hegel, ... will be ordered by reading Heidegger's *actual* interpretations of Hegel in light of what I consider to be the *principle* underlying those interpretations." (2000, 200). This underlying principle, as remarked, is "the temporality that grounds every understanding of being" (2000, 200), which metaphysics, including Hegel, can neither recognise nor modify. The question of the validity of Heidegger's interpretation of Hegel is thereby minimised or subordinated to the issue of Heidegger's overcoming of metaphysics in the light of his thinking of temporality. [31] To be sure, de Boer tries to interpret Hegel charitably and to give as much attention to the omissions as to the emphases in Heidegger's Hegel interpretation (2000, 198, 200). Nonetheless, de Boer's adoption of this "Heideggerian" perspective leaves ambiguous decisive questions concerning the

Hegel-Heidegger encounter.[32]

Finally, de Boer's account of the Hegel-Heidegger confrontation returns us to the issue of the "one-sidedness" of the "metaphysical" approach. As with Schmidt, de Boer acknowledges a common underlying motivation for the radical confrontation with Hegel and the project of overcoming metaphysics, but leaves obscure the context and significance of this motivation (2000, 198). The thematisation of temporality does not include the question of historicity or the cultural-historical need that would motivate the overcoming of metaphysics. As I shall argue further, this omission is symptomatic of the "forgetting" of the historical-cultural condition of modernity as the source of Hegel's and Heidegger's respective projects for overcoming metaphysics. It suggests the need to acknowledge the philosophical problem of modernity in order to supplement the one-sidedness of the "metaphysical" approach.

Hegel-Heidegger: The Critique of Modernity

Another approach to the Hegel-Heidegger relationship has emerged which takes as its theme Hegel's and Heidegger's contributions to the philosophical *critique of modernity*. Indeed, Hegel is one of the first thinkers to develop a philosophical concept of modernity as an historical, social, cultural, and political constellation of knowledge, normativity, institutions, and autonomous subjectivity.[33] Habermas states the problem succinctly: Hegel was the first philosopher to investigate the problem of modernity's need for a self-generated normativity detached from any received body of traditions, institutions, or practices of the past (Habermas 1984: 16). Hegel raises modernity's need for "self-reassurance" [*Selbstvergewisserung*] concerning its self-generated normativity to the level of a philosophical problem (1984, 16). Indeed, for Hegel, Habermas remarks, the task of philosophy is that "of grasping *its own* time—and for him that means the modern age—in thought" (1984, 16).

Recent studies thematising the problem of modernity in the Hegel-Heidegger relationship include those by Robert Pippin (1991) and David Kolb (1986). For both authors, Hegel's critical legitimation of modernity, and Heidegger's deconstructive overcoming of its metaphysical origins, have fundamentally shaped the contemporary discourse of modernity.[34] The critique of modernity, they argue, is crucial for understanding not only Hegel's suspension of metaphysics but Heidegger's confrontation with Hegel as the metaphysician of modernity *par excellence*. On the one hand, Hegel's suspension of metaphysics is motivated by the need to overcome the "dissatisfactions" generated by social and cultural modernity, the need to construct appropriate categories in order to think the complexity of modern subjectivity and social institutions. On the other, Heidegger's confrontation with the metaphysical tradition is motivated by the need to overcome the nihilism of technological

modernity through a recovery of the obliterated sense of Being. This contextualisation of the Hegel-Heidegger relationship within the philosophical discourse of modernity helps to illuminate the significance their shared project of overcoming metaphysics.

David Kolb's comparative study examines the critique of modernity presented by Hegel and Heidegger, two thinkers distinguished by their "refusal to take as final the categories of modernity's standard self-description" (1986, xi). On the basis of their respective accounts of modernity, Kolb constructs "a critique of each from the standpoint of the other" in order to take "advantage of the strategy shared by Hegel and Heidegger without falling into the traps that their mutual criticism illuminates" (1986, xv). According to Kolb, Hegel develops a critique of romantic subjectivity and of modern economic institutions or "civil society" together with a comprehensive interpretation of the "state" as a rational community (1986, xiii). Kolb emphasises, moreover, the role of Hegelian Logic as grounding the critique of modernity. Contra Taylor and contemporary "non-metaphysical" interpretations,^[35] Kolb argues that Hegel's criticisms of modernity cannot be fully understood "unless seen with their logical grounding" (1986, xii-xiv). Indeed, Hegel's critique of "civil society" is based on the dialectical criticism of basic categories of modernity—such as form and content, universal and particular—along with Hegel's speculative account of the "absolute form" of Spirit's movement (1986, xiii). Hegel then applies these mediations in the transition from civil society to state in order to show "how the typical modern dichotomies can be overcome in a form of life that is to blend the best of ancient substantive community and modern freedom" (1986, xiii).

Kolb's discussion of Heidegger's critique of modernity is centred on the confrontation with modern subjectivity within the context of modern technology. This critique is coupled with Heidegger's proposal concerning the possibility of overcoming modern subjectivity in the thinking of the "propriative event" [*Ereignis*]. Heidegger's confrontation with modernity, Kolb remarks, aims to "put modern selfhood in its place," and to explore the possibility of dwelling in the modern world in ways other than "the activity of manipulated manipulators, which our age assigns us to be" (1986, xiv). Hegel and Heidegger both agree on the prevalence of the phenomenon of empty subjectivity in modernity; both would also agree, Kolb claims, that the modern search "for self-certitude through distance and manipulation ignores the basic conditions that make modern subjectivity possible at all" (1986, 203). However, both disagree, Kolb argues, "on the extent to which individualism is essential to modern subjectivity" (1986, 203). Whereas Hegel affirms the historical realisation of individual freedom and autonomy in modernity, Heidegger sees the latter as caught within the destructive paradigm of self-willing subjectivity.

Indeed, Heidegger emphasises more than Hegel the domineering aspects of modernity, namely

“the will to power and the levelling of all modes of being to the one realm of presentable objects and standing reserve” (1986, 203). Although Hegel presented similar criticisms in the PhG, Kolb notes, these dealt with modern citizenship and freedom, irony and inwardness, rather than technology and the will to power (Kolb 1986, 203). There are doubtless historical reasons for this difference, which suggests that a comparison of Hegel and Heidegger on the problem of technology runs the risk of anachronism. Nonetheless, Heidegger’s criticism of Hegel’s conception of modernity amounts to the claim that “Hegel fails to understand the importance of will in the modern age because Hegel’s own solution for the problems of modernity is itself a hidden form of subjectivity as will” (1986, 203). Kolb characterises the Heideggerian criticism as comprising three interconnected points: that Hegel remains caught within the metaphysical determination of truth as correspondence and being as constant available presence; that Hegel adheres to the modern interpretation of being as self-certain subjectivity; and consequently, that Hegel fails to overcome modernity because, in accordance with tradition, he “is destined to forget our real finitude” in the drive towards a reconciliation in rationality, and in fact exacerbates the “drive for self-coincidence, self-certainty, and total presence that lies at the root of modern subjectivity and its will to power” (1986, 214).

We should note that this characterisation of Heidegger’s position seems to undermine Kolb’s earlier claim that Hegel and Heidegger both agree on the critique of empty subjectivity in modernity. Nonetheless, Kolb also takes issue with Heidegger’s claim that Hegel “remains within the traditions of Cartesian subjectivity and Western metaphysics,” arguing that, while Hegel remains committed to the basic metaphysical orientation towards grounds and presence, Hegel cannot be regarded as a “super-Cartesian” (1986, 215).^[36] On the other hand, Hegel would have a number of possible criticisms to level at Heidegger: that Heidegger provides no “phenomenological” account, in the Hegelian sense, of the connection between the thinking of Being and various phenomenological figures of modern subjectivity; and that Heidegger’s thinking of the history of Being reverts to an evocation of the immediacy and contingency of what Being itself grants us, without being able to supply a rational comprehension of the necessity of this history, or any determinate content for the mysterious “formal” event of appropriation. While Heidegger suggests that there is a mysterious connection between successive epochs within the West, this has more to do “with the wanderings of errance [*Irre*]” than human agency, leaving human beings with little, if any, role to play in the fate of modernity (1986, 224). Heidegger fails to overcome modernity, Kolb contends, “because he remains caught on its principle, the separation of formal process from content,” with the result that Heidegger ends up “by either locking us into a premodern world or reaffirming the ironic and distanced side of modernity” (1986, 228). Heidegger does not overcome the dichotomy between substantive tradition and formal rootless subjectivity so much as intensify their irresolvable oscillation (Kolb 1986, 228).

Apart from these general problems, however, the crucial question between Hegel and Heidegger is “whether what makes modernity possible, the *Sache* for thinking, gives itself or withdraws itself” (1986, 210). At stake between Hegel and Heidegger is the question whether the “metaphysical” origin of modernity is at all accessible, intelligible, and conceptually articulable. Does the “ground” of modernity give itself as “withdrawing and lack of totality or as presence, availability, and self-closure?” (1986, 210). For Hegel, it is the coming to presence of Spirit allows things to be revealed; for Heidegger, on the other hand, it is the withdrawal of the propriative event (1986, 210). Such closure and self-presence, for Hegel, is what allows us to overcome the dichotomies of modernity, while for Heidegger, it is what ensnares us further within the modern understanding of Being that generates these dichotomies (1986, 210).

Kolb’s critical comparison sheds welcome light on the relationship between the critique of metaphysics and the critique of modernity. Moreover, Kolb identifies two decisive problems facing contemporary interpretations of Hegel and Heidegger. The first point is that Hegel’s social, cultural, and political analyses must be thought in conjunction with his Logic, rather than excising the latter as unpalatable metaphysics. One must at least explain how one can endorse Hegel’s social and political analyses without reference to speculative Logic. For Kolb, this raises the question of whether an “open Hegelianism” is possible, an interpretation that moves away from the Hegelian emphasis on metaphysical closure within the Logic, but nonetheless remains true to the spirit of the Hegelian system as a whole.^[37] The problem here, as I shall discuss later, is whether Hegelian Logic indeed implies or is identical with a metaphysical closure that subordinates difference or particularity. The second point is that Heidegger’s emphasis on the immediacy and unity of what is granted in the propriative event, apart from any determinate content, means that it comes to resemble closely a quasi-transcendental formal condition. Heidegger must find a way of thinking the propriative event of Being without turning it into a metaphysical *arche*, ground, or a purely formal condition. Heidegger remains caught, Kolb argues, between these alternatives, which can be rephrased in the terminology of the ontological difference: does Heidegger’s thought of the ontological difference involve the separation of form and content and subsequent emphasis on the unity of technology in modernity?^[38] This question brings us to the heart of the debate between Hegel and Heidegger: does Hegel complete the metaphysics of identity and obliteration of difference in modernity, or does Heidegger, despite the claims for ontological difference, revert to a “metaphysical” emphasis on unity and identity, coupled with a separation of form from content, that Hegel had already exposed in his critique of metaphysics and the diremptions of modernity?

These questions are also raised in Robert Pippin’s study of philosophical modernism and the dispute between Hegel’s critical legitimation and Heidegger’s deconstructive overcoming of modernity.

While consonant with aspects of the Habermasian account of modernity, Pippin rejects Habermas' criticism that the mature Hegel abandons intersubjectivity and returns to the "philosophy of consciousness" (1991, 170 fn.21). Far from returning to the subject-object paradigm, Hegel overcomes it by radicalising, historicising, and completing the Kantian project of developing a comprehensive account of modern autonomy. Indeed, the central issue in philosophical modernism, argues Pippin, concerns the idea of rational autonomy. Being modern demands a radically critical attitude: the "modern subject can rely only 'on itself,' its own spontaneous self-legislation, in determining the agenda of an age freed from dogmatic dependence" (1991, 14). This project of rational autonomy raises the question of what normative criteria—both theoretical and practical—should be binding for such "collective self-legislation," criteria that can no longer be prescribed by the authority of tradition, recollected through Platonic metaphysics, or drawn from an immutable "human nature". Hegel proves to be the philosophical modernist *par excellence*, according to Pippin's thesis, because he is the philosopher who most adequately answers the challenges, and thinks through the aporias, of accounting for the modernist project of rational autonomy (1991, 14-15).

It is Heidegger, however, "who has formulated the most profound, disturbing, and influential criticism of such a modern spirit," (1991, 121) with critiques of modern philosophers from Descartes, Kant, Hegel, and above all, Nietzsche.^[39] Indeed, Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche provides a forum for examining the radical conclusions of the "counter-modernist" project, one which sees modernity not as the realisation of rational autonomy but rather as the epitome of technological nihilism. Heidegger radicalises the Nietzschean critique of modernity and recasts Nietzsche, along with Hegel, as enacting the completion of the metaphysics of subjectivity. In this sense, the fundamental philosophical issue at stake for Heidegger, argues Pippin, "is not historical discontinuity, or autonomy, or self-consciousness, or the will to truth; it is the meaning of Being in modernity" (1991, 121).

Modernity thus becomes a "metaphysical" problem for Heidegger; its historical inception is defined by a change in the meaning of the beingness of beings, with the latter now construed as grounded in self-representing subjectivity (1991, 122). The defining metaphysical characteristic of modernity, as the age of the world-image [*Weltbildes*], is that "man has risen up into the I-ness of the *ego cogito*," an uprising in which "all that is, is transformed into object" (HW 261/107). The modern "subjectivisation" of Being is an event that completes modern metaphysics and ushers in the epoch of global technology. As Pippin observes, Heidegger's characterisation of modernity as the "age of subjectness ... driving towards its consummation," concludes with a diagnosis of the utter nihilism of modernity: "The essence of modernity is fulfilled," Heidegger writes in the Nietzsche lectures, "in the age of consummate meaninglessness" (1991, 122-123). Indeed, the significance of Heidegger's critique of metaphysics can only be understood in the context of "his sweeping account of 'the history of

Being' and its 'consummation' in nihilism in modernity" (Pippin 1991, 123).

The dispute between Heidegger and modernity, for Pippin, concerns the apparently "epochal" character of Heidegger's thinking of the consummation of metaphysics. For Heidegger's stance, Pippin contends, inevitably relies on the language of metaphysical "closure" to define the completion of metaphysics in modern technology. Heidegger's thinking of Being as *Ereignis*—that would dissolve the nihilism of modernity and prepare the advent of a new beginning—depends essentially on such "closure," since it is only the completion of metaphysics that makes possible the experience of *Ereignis*. Heidegger's famous question of Being, moreover, itself cannot avoid a "genealogy", or indeed "phenomenology," to account for its apparently "binding" character for us.[40] For Heidegger's evocation of the saving power of the event of appropriation, "construed as a response to the *aporiai* of modernity, still betrays some hope for an intimation of ultimacy, for a 'clearing,' for what is 'outside' of, and determines, human self-assertion" even within the mutual appropriation of man and Being (1991, 140).[41] From the Hegelian-idealist viewpoint Pippin defends, Heidegger thus reverts to a sophisticated version of precritical metaphysics, an uncritical appeal to historical positivity.[42] Pippin's thesis thus crystallises into the following claim: that Heidegger fails to overcome the horizon of modernity, or indeed modern metaphysics, and that this failure makes plausible a return to Hegel in order to think through the antinomies of modernity.

Pippin's arguments for the connection between the overcoming of metaphysics and the problem of modernity, particularly in relation to Heidegger, deserve further scrutiny. For the moment, I simply note that his critique of Heidegger is centred on the *Nietzsche* lectures of the 1930s and 40s, which may not be representative of the later writings on metaphysics, *Ereignis*, and technology. Moreover, the representative figure in Pippin's discussion of Heidegger's confrontation with modernity is Nietzsche rather than Hegel, whereas the underlying argument in Pippin's account is manifestly between the Heideggerian and the Hegelian versions of the critique of modernity. The explicit Hegel-Heidegger relationship, however, is only dealt with obliquely from viewpoint of Heidegger's confrontation with Nietzsche, although it is implicit in Pippin's defence of Hegelian idealism as a plausible version of philosophical modernism. Nonetheless, Pippin succinctly formulates the fundamental issue in the Hegel-Heidegger relationship: the critique of Hegel as a metaphysician of identity and Heidegger's claim to think difference as such.[43] It is this dispute—the problem of identity and difference in the context of the metaphysics of modernity—that I explore in the following study.

One conclusion to be drawn from this brief overview of recent studies is that the “thinking conversation” between Hegel and Heidegger has yet to be explored in a truly “dialogical” manner. Comparative studies of Hegel and Heidegger sometimes presuppose a “neutral” standpoint that supposedly enables a straightforward adjudication between their respective “positions” on a certain topic.^[44] The difficulty is that this approach overlooks the fundamental differences and tensions between the Hegelian and Heideggerian approaches to the hermeneutics of the history of philosophy.^[45] The very meaning of “metaphysics” or “modernity”—let alone Being, Truth, Identity, or Difference—will alter significantly depending on whether one is thinking within a “Hegelian” or “Heideggerian” dimension. A critical hermeneutic awareness is therefore important in the interpretation and discussion of the Hegel-Heidegger relationship. On the other hand, studies that assume a “partisan” position can suffer from an uncritical acceptance of the Heideggerian interpretation of Hegel, or else a risk misunderstanding the originality of Heidegger’s confrontation with modern philosophy. This suggests the need for a “dialogical” approach to Hegel and Heidegger that attempts to mediate between these extremes on the basis of a shared problematic.

This raises the question of method, especially pertinent to any investigation of the Hegel-Heidegger relationship. For one of the shared themes emphasised both by Hegel and Heidegger is the need for a genuine philosophical encounter, rather than merely external criticism, between different projects devoted to the same matter or *Sache*. Hegel famously claimed that merely external refutation had no place in philosophy: the true refutation is the immanent critique that meets an opponent on his own ground, exposes the deficiencies of his standpoint, and integrates the latter into a more comprehensive unity.^[46] Heidegger too famously described the conflict between thinkers as a “lover’s quarrel,” a conflict devoted to the task of thinking the unthought of a philosophical system in order to reveal its concealed truth. A number of studies have explicitly thematised the problem of method in staging the Hegel-Heidegger encounter.^[47] Dominique Janicaud remarks that studies of the Hegel-Heidegger case “have until now tended to be too limited to the question of whether Heidegger succeeded in ‘freeing’ himself from Hegelian thought, as if the status of the latter were definitively settled and duly noted” (1999, 27). It is rather a matter of attempting a philosophical dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger, a dialogue between “two essential bodies of thought,” one which accepts Heidegger’s invitation “to begin a conversation [*Gespräch*] with Hegel” (ID 31/42), and does so in an open-ended inquiry aiming at enhancing our understanding of the matter [*Sache*] at issue (1999, 27).

In the spirit of Janicaud’s comments, and of Hegel’s and Heidegger’s own projects, I shall adopt a “critical-dialogical” approach to the Hegel-Heidegger relationship. By this I mean a critical inquiry into Hegel’s and Heidegger’s respective critiques of metaphysics and modernity, oriented by the shared problematic of identity and difference, and guided by the principle of dialogical reciprocity. This does

not mean searching either for a unifying or harmonising reconciliation between Hegel and Heidegger, which dispels all critical doubts, or a dogmatic and monological refutation of one thinker by the other, which ignores all differences in their philosophical projects and style. Rather, it requires a critical investigation of the philosophical problem at issue, oriented by an understanding of its history, in order to situate the Hegel-Heidegger dialogue within the context of an ongoing philosophical investigation of modernity. This critical-dialogical approach embraces the conflict and disputation required by genuine philosophical inquiry; it is not only a dialogue oriented towards shared understanding through reciprocal exchange, but a critical contribution to a contemporary philosophical debate.

It is my contention that the contemporary discourse of identity and difference finds its philosophical origins primarily in Hegel and Heidegger, hence that a critical dialogue between these thinkers is necessary in order to understand their project of overcoming metaphysics within the context of modernity. This dialogue on identity and difference is to be presented as an exercise in critical hermeneutics, that is, an inquiry not only conducted from within the shared horizon of philosophical and cultural modernity, but one which also makes this horizon part of the critical inquiry and questioning at issue. The “matter” or *Sache* of the dialogue—the problem of identity and difference—is a topic that is part of our historical and cultural situation, and one which allows us to understand the significance of overcoming metaphysics within the context of modernity. This critical-dialogical approach also attempts to avoid two “monological” tendencies discernible in Hegel and Heidegger and their relationship to the history of philosophy: the risk of *self-referential closure*, which turns each previous thinker into a deficient and superseded stage of one’s own philosophical trajectory towards final self-comprehension and systematic closure (Hegel); and the risk of an *originary precomprehension*, which takes each previous thinker as repeating an originary thesis or omission (concerning the event of Being) to which one has privileged but unarticulable access (Heidegger).

In conclusion I propose that investigating the problem of identity and difference can interconnect the two dominant topics in studies of the Hegel-Heidegger relationship—the overcoming of metaphysics and the critique of modernity—. This problem provides a basis for the critical dialogue between Hegel and Heidegger on the metaphysics of modernity. In this manner, the risk of a “onesided” emphasis either on the overcoming of metaphysics or on the problem of modernity can be resolved within a more integrated and dialogical approach.

Design of the Thesis

The following study aims to critically reconstruct the problem of identity and difference in Hegel and Heidegger, and thereby to make a modest contribution to the philosophical understanding of

modernity. Hegel's overcoming of substance and subject-metaphysics, I shall argue, depends on the suspension or supersession of the categories of identity and difference—what Hegel called the logic of reflection—in order to think the speculative “identity-in-difference” of universal, particular and individual in the Hegelian Concept. In Heidegger's case, overcoming metaphysics means to retrieve and think the obliterated ontological difference between Being and beings in order to evoke the experience of the non-metaphysical unity or mutual appropriation of human beings and Being. The critique of modernity, for Hegel, is motivated by the need to overcome the atomised subjectivity and social-cultural diremptions of civil society in favour of a rational totality that integrates universality, particularity and concrete individuality. For Heidegger, the confrontation with modernity rests on the need to prepare for another, non-metaphysical, experience of the event of Being beyond the instrumental ordering and objectification of beings (and human beings) within modern technology. This critical-dialogical approach to Hegel and Heidegger, I suggest, will cast light on the origins and prospects of the contemporary discourse of identity and difference.

Part I introduces the problem of identity and difference and discusses how this problem figures in the early Hegel's confrontation with Kantian and post-Kantian idealism. Chapter One develops a brief historical-conceptual overview of the problem of identity and difference, focussing on its relation to the principle of self-consciousness on the one hand, and personal identity on the other. The question of the relationship between these ‘empirical’ and ‘transcendental’ forms of self-consciousness sets the stage for Hegel's contribution to the identity/difference problem. In brief, Hegel attempts to overcome Kantian formalism and dualism, and to construct a speculative conception of reason and historical Spirit that integrates both identity and difference without falling into intractable dichotomies or dissolving particularity. Chapter Two analyses Hegel's *Differenzschrift* and *Glauben und Wissen* in order to show how Hegel attempts to resolve the problem of the *formalism* generated by an abstract conception of identity without difference belonging to the philosophy (and culture) of reflection. The task of unifying the critique of metaphysics with the critique of modernity is already discernible here in Hegel's confrontation with the reflection philosophy of subjectivity and the dirempted culture of reflection. Hegel's thesis on identity, difference, and modern subjectivity is outlined as follows: the formal or abstract identity of the analytic understanding [*Verstand*] is the principle of modern culture, but this abstract identity, and the formalism it generates, leaves open the potential for domination-relations between atomised subjects construed as objects of manipulation. Hegel's critique thus argues for a regeneration of the sundered unity of reason, a speculative identity of identity and difference, and a conception of freedom as the unity of universal and particular which prefigures his later thought.[\[48\]](#)

Part II of this thesis examines Hegel's engagement with these problems in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* and *Science of Logic*. Chapter Three is devoted to Hegel's phenomenology of the experience of

consciousness in its development towards self-comprehending Spirit. The focus of my interpretation is on the theme of identity and difference and its relationship to the problem of intersubjective recognition throughout key sections in the PhG. These include the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness and the dialectic of independent and dependent consciousness, the experience of the unhappy consciousness, and reason as the truth of self-certainty. The problem of reciprocal versus non-reciprocal recognition, I shall argue, is at stake throughout, an issue that Hegel is the first to explore but does not entirely develop. I suggest that Hegel's difficulties in fully accounting for the problem of mutual recognition in the *Phenomenology* (which ultimately conceptualises such recognition in the form of absolute knowledge) suggests certain difficulties in Hegel's working through of the problem of identity and difference within the speculative system as a whole.

Chapter Four explores Hegel's critical presentation of the categories of identity and difference, the suspension of the logic of essence or reflection into the logic of conceptuality. The enormous topic is confined to the parameters of the problem of identity and difference; hence this chapter concentrates on analyses of specific sections of Hegel's *Science of Logic* without attempting any comprehensive overview. The chapter considers the analysis of determinate being, something and other, in the Logic of Being; the movement of identity, difference, contradiction, and ground in the Logic of Essence; and the meaning of the speculative unity of universality, particularity, and individuality, in the Logic of the Concept. The organising theme is that Hegel attempts to suspend both substance- and subject-metaphysics within his speculative logic, and that this project is driven by the need to think the "identity of identity and non-identity," or self-grounding freedom of self in otherness, that metaphysics hitherto has failed to comprehend. Hegel's critical confrontation with the logic of the metaphysical tradition and of modern philosophy is driven by the need to overcome the objectifying tendencies of thing-ontology and the potential for domination-relations connected with the subject-object paradigm of modern metaphysics. Speculative Logic ultimately aims to be a logic of freedom understood as self-being in otherness. The question of Hegel's success or failure in this Logical project of overcoming metaphysics allows us to make a transition to Heidegger's confrontation with metaphysics and modernity.

Part III turns specifically to Heidegger's contributions to the philosophical problem of identity and difference, and explores Heidegger's confrontation with Hegel in the context of Heidegger's own attempt at a "non-metaphysical" rethinking of identity and difference in the relationship between human beings and Being. This "ontopoetic" thinking of a non-grounding experience of the unity of human beings and Being, for Heidegger, points to the possibility of a new experience of Being as event of appropriation [*Er-eignis*] beyond the essence of modern technology. I shall argue, however, that Heidegger's critique of Hegel remains "onesided" in that it does not acknowledge Hegel's own

speculative treatment of (ontological) difference, fails to acknowledge Hegel's thinking of intersubjective recognition, and misconstrues the hermeneutics of Hegel's reading the history of philosophy. Despite his avowed project of thinking the (ontological) difference as such, Heidegger ultimately emphasises a (non-metaphysically thought) unity or identity. Heidegger's non-grounding, onto-poetic thought, however, eschews any explicit conceptual or grounding account of the relationship *between* identity and difference as such.

Heidegger's task of thinking the question of Being is introduced in Chapter Five, which examines Heidegger's brief critique of Hegel's conception of time and Spirit within the context of Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology. The chapter then develops a critical analysis of Heidegger's onto-ego-logical or Cartesian-Fichtean interpretation of Hegel as an exemplar of the culmination of modern subject-metaphysics. The validity of Heidegger's interpretations takes on a crucial significance, since Heidegger's criticisms of the metaphysics of modernity gives a decisive role to Hegel. I shall explore the thesis that the difficulties of Heidegger's reading of Hegel arise from his narrow construal of the metaphysical bases of modernity, above all in regard to the meaning of autonomous subjectivity and possibilities of historical intersubjectivity.

Chapter Six considers the later Heidegger's own project for thinking the identity and difference between human being and Being in an "ungrounded," non-metaphysical manner. The theme organising this chapter is the problem of the ontological difference as it emerges and is transformed throughout Heidegger's "path of thinking". In particular, I discuss Heidegger's shift from the problem of thinking the difference between Being and beings, presupposed but obliterated by metaphysics, to preparing for a non-metaphysical thinking of the truth of Being as appropriative event. These issues will be addressed in Heidegger's most explicit essays on our topic, "Identity and Difference," and "The Onto-Theological Constitution of Metaphysics". These essays also represent Heidegger's mature relationship with Hegel, no longer a polemical opposition or deconstructive overcoming but rather an "enveloping appropriation" (Souche-Dagues 1992, 247). Heidegger attempts to develop a "thinking conversation" or dialogue with Hegel concerning identity and difference which attempts to elaborate the task of thinking through a recovery [*Verwindung*] of (and from) metaphysics in modernity. Heidegger's proposal is that the modern experience of Being as *technology*, whose essence is the universal en-framing or *Ge-stell*, opens up the possibility of another, non-metaphysical experience of the event of appropriation [*Er-eignis*] between human beings and Being.

Heidegger's account of the relationship between technology and the appropriative event remains confusingly obscure. Can Heidegger maintain a 'critical' stance towards modernity as the epoch of global technology without acknowledging the role of self-willing subjectivity within this critical relationship? Or does the attitude of releasement [*Gelassenheit*] entail an abandonment of any critical

relationship to the way Being discloses itself, a fatalistic submission to the inscrutable sendings [*Schickungen*] of Being itself? Heidegger's thinking of identity and difference, I contend, remains onesided in that it does not articulate the relationship between the ontological difference as the unthought element of metaphysics up to Hegel, and the non-metaphysically conceived identity between Being, man, and beings. Heidegger's alternative to Hegel's thinking of freedom in modernity is to promote an onto-poetic attitude of "releasement" towards the appropriative event, an event about which ultimately nothing can be known, over which we have no control, and which presents itself as an obscure historical destiny.^[49] The difficulty Heidegger faces is that to articulate any account of this event of appropriation means to speak of it *as* something, and hence in terms of the way it is manifested through beings or human beings: the attempt to think the (ontological) difference as such cannot avoid having recourse to the discourse of identity or else to a speculative discourse which strives to supersede the paradigm of reflection.

In conclusion, I suggest that Hegel's treatment of the identity/difference problem—recast within the problematic of intersubjective recognition—offers further possibilities for contemporary thought. For the difference between the Hegelian and Heideggerian critiques of metaphysics ultimately rests on their differing attitudes to the project of modernity. Hegel's critical justification of modernity exposes its limitations but nonetheless aims at a dialectical suspension and preservation of its historical and social achievements. Heidegger's overcoming of the metaphysical foundations of modernity in favour of an onto-poetic releasement from the grip of modern technology abandons the legacy and horizon of modernity itself. While Hegel's project suffers from the difficulty of attempting to force the comprehension of modernity into the metaphysical closure of the speculative system, Heidegger's onto-poetic path suffers from the problem that Hegel strove to overcome: it does not provide a conceptually articulated account of the relationship between (non-metaphysically conceived) identity and difference. A critical rethinking of Hegel's legacy can therefore enable us to critically appropriate Heidegger's critique of metaphysics, to understand more deeply the origins of the contemporary discourse of identity and difference, and to suggest other paths for thinking through the experience of modernity.

[1] See Beierwaltes (1980) for a useful conceptual-historical reconstruction of the problem of identity and difference. His account emphasises the neglected role of figures in Neoplatonism (Plotinus, Porphyry) and medieval Trinitarian theology (Victorinus Marinus) for the transition to the modern conception (Schelling, Hegel) and critics of the metaphysics of identity (Adorno and Heidegger).

[2] Cf. Gasché: "Were one to write a general philosophical history of the concept of difference, one might be tempted to view it as the history of the progressive emancipation of difference from identity."

Beginning with the Parmenidean conception of pure identity, of Being free from all difference, such a history would document the movement of difference from its position, in Plato, as one pole of a dialectical structure to its acquisition of the dominant role in the constitution of identity, or the Absolute, in German Idealism.” (1994, 82).

[3] See Henrich’s study on the history of the concept of identity (1979, 133-186). See also Marquard (1979, 347-369), who argues that the temporal acceleration of social change within modernity results in a sense of threat to social identity as universality and personal identity as particularity. The philosophical discourse of identity has thus returned in the demand for universal-identity on the one hand, and in the problem of a deficit of particularity on the other.

[4] Cf. Taylor’s (1989) argument that the conception of moral inwardness—deriving from Augustine but developed in the disengaged self of Descartes, Locke, and Enlightenment thinkers—provides an important source for the identity of the self in modernity. However, Taylor does not deal with the “metaphysical” aspects of the problem of identity and difference central to the Hegel-Heidegger debate.

[5] Recent works on the Hegel-Heidegger relationship include: R. Comay and J. McCumber eds. (1999), Gillespie (1984), Kolb (1986), Schmidt, (1988), de Boer (2000). There is also significant literature on specific topics in the Hegel-Heidegger relationship, such as time, Dubsy (1961), Stambaugh (1974), Surber (1978-79); negativity, Biemel (1992), Pöggeler (1995); self-consciousness and identity, Pöggeler (1980), (1990); Hegel’s role in SZ, Emad (1983), or Heidegger’s reading of the PhG, Sell (1998). While some studies adopt a distinctly Heideggerian perspective concerning Heidegger’s critique of Hegel, for example Smith (1968) (1971), Emad (1983), and Krell (1976), others launch a Hegelian defence of Hegel against Heidegger’s interpretation, such as Souche-Dagues (1992), Pippin (1994), and Williams (1989).

[6] See Gadamer’s “Afterword” (1981, 53-63) for a historical sketch of the background to the Hegel-Heidegger problem in Germany.

[7] Heidegger, (GA 32, 1980); (HW, 115-208).

[8] Kojève claims that Hegel and Heidegger are the most radical atheistic philosophers, remarking that the PhG “would probably never have been understood if Heidegger had not published his book [*Being and Time* —R.S.]” (1980, 250, fn.41). See Descombes’ account of Kojève’s reading of Hegel and its influence (1980, 9-48). Descombes describes how Kojève’s interpretation of the movement of Being and Nothing, transposed into that of Identity and Difference, along with Kojève’s account of the end of history achieved with the revolutionary overcoming of bourgeois society, set the agenda for much French philosophy that was to follow.

[9] Sartre (1969, 233-252). Theunissen (1984, 167-254).

[10] See Gadamer, (1994, 254-271). Indeed, Gadamer remarks that “Dialectics must be retrieved in hermeneutics”; Hegelian thought must be appropriated and transformed, drawing on the Heideggerian notion of horizon, into an historical hermeneutics (1976, 99).

[11] Marcuse wrote his dissertation *Hegels Ontologie und die Theorie der Geschichtlichkeit* under the direction and clear influence of Heidegger. See Benhabib’s “Introduction” to the English translation (Marcuse 1987), See also Robert B. Pippin (1985, 181-206), who argues in for a continuity between the theme of historicity in *Hegels Ontologie* and in Marcuse’s later *Reason and Revolution*. Cf. Adorno’s studies on Hegel (1993), and his well-known later critiques of Heideggerian ontology in (1973a) and rhetoric in (1973b).

[12] Cf. “If Hegel’s dialectics constituted the unsuccessful attempt to use philosophical concepts for coping with all that is heterogeneous to those concepts, the relationship to dialectics is due for an accounting insofar as his attempt failed.” (Adorno 1973a, 4).

[13] Derrida writes that “Hegel is *also* the thinker of irreducible difference ... the last philosopher of

the book and the first thinker of writing” (1976, 26). Derrida’s debt to Heidegger is signalled in his remark concerning the proximity of *différance* and Heidegger’s thought of Being and the ontological difference between Being and beings (1982, 22), while the “relations of profound affinity” between *différance* and Hegelian dialectics signal the “infinitesimal and radical displacement” it attempts to perform on the Hegelian discourse (1982, 14). See the recent collection edited by Barnett (1998).

[14] Cf. Derrida’s remark: “We will never be finished with the reading or rereading of Hegel, and, in a certain way, I do nothing other than attempt to explain myself on this point.” Quoted in Barnett (1998a: 1).

[15] Other important studies include E. Coreth (1954), Walter Schulz (1959), Alphonse de Waelhens (1960), which deals specifically with Heidegger’s 1957 texts “Identität und Differenz” and “Die onto-theologische Verfassung der Metaphysik”. A critical discussion can be found in Peperzak (1989), which takes issue with the Heideggerian interpretation of Hegelian metaphysics as a “philosophy of grounds and of grounding in the sense of a representing subjectivity” (1989, 64), and for its forgetting of the practical-moral significance of relationship to the Other in modern philosophy since Kant. Heidegger thus “leads the intellectual monologue of modern philosophy to its conclusion” (1989, 72).

[16] Cf. Williams’s remark that W. Marx, who “moreover sides with Heidegger,” “explicitly repudiates Heidegger’s reading of Hegel as a Cartesian” (1989, 141).

[17] Cf. “Though each stage of truth attained in the dialectical process again becomes an untruth, each synthesis taken for itself is nevertheless “higher” than its antithesis and thesis. And within the total process of the Logic each succeeding synthesis is understood as the “higher” stage of the preceding syntheses, the final synthesis being the “highest” stage. Although this highest stage, the Absolute Idea, the full truth, contains, in Hegel’s words, “even the harshest opposition,” it nevertheless “eternally overcomes” it. The dialectical order thereby guarantees the conclusive victory to the light, to the truth undisguised by the untruth.” (1971, 57). See Williams (1989) for a criticism of Marx’s reading of this passage.

[18] Marx uses the notion of “creativity” to define *poiesis* in Aristotle, the Absolute Idea in Hegel, self-consciousness in Kant, and the “creative occurrence of Being” in Heidegger. (Marx 1971, 139).

[19] Marx’s “Heideggerian” approach is discernible in his emphasis on the significance of the phrase in the Introduction of the PhG concerning the will of the Absolute to be with us (1971, 69), his discussion of Hegel’s account of the concept of “natural” time in the *Encyclopädie* (1971, 67-70), and the claim that “the principle of selfsameness lies at the basis of the entire movement of the *Logic*.” (1971, 60).

[20] Cf. Marx’s serious reservations about Heidegger’s conception of the equiprimordiality of truth and untruth and the unresolved question of the “binding” character of Heideggerian thought. The result is that Heidegger could “give no rules for either the realm of theory or the realm of practice with regard to how to distinguish between a truth in which error and sham dominate and a truth which these “equal partners” have not disguised” (1971, 248). Heideggerian “forethinking” abandons moral normativity and has “arrived at no standards which can decide whether a specific interpretation or action is ‘good’ or not.” (1971, 248).

[21] The significance of thinking the advent of the new is described with allusions to “the experiences of history,” but Marx does not elaborate how this experience of “diremption”, and “contradiction” is connected with Hegel’s overall philosophical critique of modernity.

[22] Habermas (1987, 4, 16). As Dennis Schmidt remarks, “Hegel is the first to develop a clear concept of modernity, but unlike Heidegger his intention is to preserve the genius of modernity in that concept” (1988, 13).

[23] Cf. Marx’s remark that: “the ‘influence’ of the ‘Meta-physical’ on the social institutions of the

various epochs should be demonstrated more concretely” (1971, 252).

[24] Schmidt (1988, ix-xiii) de Boer (2000, 1-6). Cf. Schmidt’s statement: “That is the real purpose of this confrontation between Hegel and Heidegger: to ask what Heidegger has left as a legacy for contemporary thought.” (1988, 20). De Boer repeats this “Heideggerian” focus: “My investigation therefore consists not so much in comparing certain themes in the thought of Heidegger and Hegel, but in clarifying the basic structure and dynamic of Heidegger’s thinking insofar as it enacts a movement that also determines our present cultural situation: the attempt to overcome Hegelian thinking from within.” (2000: 4).

[25] Schmidt summarises his project as an attempt to answer Gadamer’s question (see Gadamer 1976, 101-103): “Whether or not the all-encompassing dialectical mediation of all the possible paths of thought, which Hegel undertook, necessarily gives the lie to every attempt to break out of the circle of reflection in which thought thinks itself. In the end, is even the position which Heidegger sought to find against Hegel caught in the circle of the inner infinity of reflection? ... or is his questioning radical enough and comprehensive enough not to omit any of what Hegel asked and yet to inquire behind Hegel’s position?” In significant respects that is the historically couched form of the question confronting the continental tradition of philosophy today: our update on the ancient *gigantomachia perites ousias*.” (1988, 16). Gadamer’s question also guides my study of Hegel and Heidegger.

[26] Schmidt notes that “Hegel’s effort to think the finite in its inner relation to the infinite posed a special challenge to Heidegger’s own effort to legitimate a phenomenological ontology of finite Being” (1988: 15). However, Schmidt does not discuss Hegel’s analysis of the categories of finitude nor his conception of the “true” versus the “spurious” infinite. This omission makes it difficult to establish a “dialogue” between Hegel and Heidegger.

[27] Schmidt remarks that “Heidegger’s work belongs essentially to the historical debate that is still carried on today: the debate arising from the problems and unresolved questions of modernity and the claims of postmodernity. Heidegger, like the best of his predecessors in this debate, recognised Hegel as the Janus-faced figure he is and so as sitting squarely in the interstices opened up by the historical clash between modernity and postmodernity, metaphysics and its overcoming.” (14, cf. 20).

[28] Cf. “I will try to show that [Heidegger’s] interpretation of Hegel is always based—even though this is often far from explicit—on the idea of a temporality which sheds the light that allows the being of beings to appear as itself or not as itself” (De Boer 2000, 199).

[29] Cf. de Boer (2000, 255-262). Cf. fn.27 376-378, which takes issue with other interpretations of Heidegger’s critique of Hegel’s concept of time as now-time.

[30] Cf. “I am convinced that Heidegger wanted to show how Hegel’s methodical principle is grounded in a temporal projective preconception in which Present overshadows the proper character of the other ecstases.” (de Boer 2000, 276).

[31] De Boer acknowledges that “[Heidegger’s] deconstruction of Hegel’s philosophy, although not really elaborated, can serve as an example of his attempt to overcome the narrow perspective of metaphysics” (2000, 5); but she also claims that, given Heidegger’s oblique remarks on the *Science of Logic*, “one may doubt whether he intensively studied the entire work” (2000, 200). This is a serious failing, given that de Boer sees Heidegger’s confrontation with Hegel to be centred on “the meaning of dialectic, negativity, and movement” (2000, 199) as these are developed in Hegel’s *Logic*.

[32] Cf. “Heidegger regards the absolute as the greatest self-alienation of being. The question is, however, whether Heidegger does not thus necessarily take up a standpoint that is even more absolute than that of Hegel. For how can Heidegger see more than Hegel without thereby denying the finitude of every insight?” (2000, 310). De Boer’s answer to this question is ambiguous: Heidegger, on the one hand, “designates his own thinking as the only thinking which no longer depends on what it does not itself have within itself,” a sign of metaphysical hubris. On the other, “[t]he temporal principle that

guides Heidegger's thinking makes every self-sufficiency impossible; it is a ground that continually threatens to fall apart" (2000, 311). This ambiguity between Heidegger's metaphysical hubris and his commitment to the finitude of 'groundless' thinking leaves undecided the question of whether Heidegger successfully overcomes Hegelian speculative thought.

[33] Habermas (1984) describes Hegel as one of the originators of the philosophical discourse of modernity. Drawing on Weber and Koselleck, Habermas defines the concept of modernity as having a historical meaning, defining the epoch of Western history since 1500, marked by the discovery of the New World, the Reformation, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution. It has a social meaning, drawing on Weber's account of societal rationalisation, in the development of free market economics and bureaucratic state organisation; it has a cultural meaning, defined by the development of autonomous "value spheres" of science, law/morality, and art, each with their own logics of validity; and a political meaning, defined by the development of liberal and social democratic forms of government. Coupled with these changes is a heightened consciousness of time, defined by a break with past traditions, a valorisation of the present, and an open orientation towards the future; the development of historical narratives of progress but also of decadence and decline; and the recognition of the "right of subjectivity", of individual freedom and the need for a rational legitimation of norms, practices, and institutions. Finally, with the experience of modernity comes the risk of a "legitimation deficit" resulting from the increased formalisation and functionalisation of society, a deficit calling for philosophical comprehension of the normative basis of modernity, and a critique of the social pathologies—social alienation, anomie, fragmentation, loss of meaning—resulting from the "colonisation of the lifeworld" by the functionalist systems of economy and bureaucracy.

[34] Pippin remarks: "In the interpretation I shall present, the most successful and comprehensive formulation and assessment of the nature and legitimacy of modernity began in the German Idealist tradition, particularly, first, in the work of Kant and Hegel, and then in two thinkers greatly influenced by if highly critical of that tradition, Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger" (Pippin 1991, 9-10). For Kolb, although Hegel and Heidegger share "the same overall strategy in approaching modernity, they came to quite different results"; by examining the Hegelian and Heideggerian approaches, "we can learn better the possibilities and pitfalls of that approach to modernity" (1986, xii). See also the recent debate between Pippin and Kolb (1999).

[35] See Taylor (1975), Hartmann (1966, 1976), Wood (1991), Williams (1997). Woods' strictly "non-metaphysical" interpretation attempts to salvage the "useful" and "relevant" aspects of Hegel's ethical and political thought from the "total failure" that is Hegel's Logic. Williams suggests that Kolb's focus on the logic and the logical relation between civil society and the state means that he tends to neglect the deeper sense of recognition involved in ethical life and the state (1997, 4).

[36] Kolb maintains that Hegel can to some extent be regarded as metaphysician of *subjectness*—in the demand for grounding and self-coincidence—but not of *subjectivity* in the sense of the egological interpretation of Being as grounded in self-certain representation (1986, xiv).

[37] Cf. "Our problem is to keep something like Hegel's motion and mutual relation while foregoing his closure and self-transparency. He worked hard, however, to make these inseparable, and we cannot just accept part of his system. Its basic ideas need to be rethought" (1986, 286 fn.8).

[38] Kolb asks: "to what degree does the ontological difference involve a distinction of form from content, and to what degree must it involve immediacy and unity in the meaning of being granted to us?" (1986, 287 fn. 14). Answering this question would require a detailed analysis of Heidegger's criticism of metaphysics, and investigating further Heidegger's emphasis on unity within our modern experience of Being as technology.

[39] Nietzsche is Hegel's most "problematic opponent," the thinker who most radically challenges the legitimacy of the modernist project of rational "self-reassurance" (1991, 15).

[40] Pippin argues that “the emergence of the sensibility promoted by Heidegger—the dependence of any human self-assertion on ‘principles’ that are themselves mere events or historical happenings—cannot itself be viewed ‘dogmatically,’ as a discovery, or truth or epoch-ending disclosure by Being” (1991, 140).

[41] From Pippin’s point of view, “it would never be possible to speak simply of ‘the’ technological event or enframing. There could be no such thing as, simply, ‘technology,’ or *Machenschaft*, but only differing, historically situated, socially mediated experiences of human power and limitation, a ‘technology’ appropriate to a certain social and economic order, experienced within a certain ‘ethical life,’ and differing from a technology expressing and functioning within a different historical community” (1991, 146).

[42] In other words, “a return to a view that such an event should not be understood as a contemporary social achievement, the self-construal of a historical community, but as a “mittence,” a gift “from” Being, or as a directly apprehensible event” (Pippin 1991, 140).

[43] Pippin remarks that this barely touches on the basic issue between Hegel and Heidegger: namely “Heidegger’s charge that Hegel is the supreme philosopher of ‘identity,’ and that Heidegger alone has formulated the true ‘matter of thinking,’ “difference *as* difference.’ The Hegelian response would involve an interpretation of Hegel’s central principle: ‘being a self’ *in* another.” (1991, 197 fn.112). This central issue is not explicitly thematised in Pippin’s study; both the Heideggerian critique of Hegel and Hegelian defence of modernity within the context of the identity/difference problem “are matters for future discussion” (1991, 197 fn.112).

[44] Kolb’s study has the tendency to compare and contrast Hegel and Heidegger as offering equally useful ‘resources’ for understanding modernity: “If I had to choose, I would pick Heidegger’s deconstructive living over Hegel’s justified life, but for looking at situations in detail it is more helpful to mine the fragments of Hegel’s system” (1986, xii).

[45] See Haar (1999, 45-56) for a discussion of the question of the convergences and divergences between Hegel’s history of spirit and Heidegger’s history of Being. See also Lammi (1997, 43-58) for an account of the dispute between Hegel and Heidegger over the meaning of (hermeneutical) experience, and Redding’s hermeneutic approach to Hegel (1996).

[46] Cf. Hegel’s famous remark on the refutation of Spinozism: “The genuine refutation must penetrate the opponent’s stronghold and meet him on his own ground; no advantage is gained by attacking him somewhere else and defeating him where he is not”. (WL II 15/581).

[47] Janicaud (1999, 26-44), Taminiaux, (1985, 79-90), Bernasconi (1985, 1-13). Cf. Taminiaux’s remark: “by what right can the confrontation of Heidegger with Hegel be fixed in the form of a judgment that the former makes at a distance about the latter, so that the judge is neatly separable from the judged, when the longest of the works where this confrontation plays itself out [Heidegger’s “Hegel’s Concept of Experience” — R.S.], far from establishing this distance and this separation, expressedly endeavours “to seek help from the support Hegel offers”?” (1985, 80).

[48] Hegel’s Jena logic provides important background for understanding the unfolding of the PhG. See Horstmann (1977) (1980).

[49] Heidegger’s response to modern nihilism—the *Gelassenheit* towards the event of appropriation—raises the question whether it escapes the very nihilism that it would passively dissolve. See Rosen (1993).