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HEGEL'S TREATMENT OF MODALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY MODAL METAPHYSICS

By

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been written by me and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

SUMMARY

This thesis is a study on the nature of modality in Hegel's *Logic* and contemporary modal metaphysics. The thesis has two aims: Firstly, it examines Lewisian *modal realism*, as well as the post-Lewisian modal metaphysical accounts of *modal actualism* and *modal essentialism* in order to reveal that each position appeals to a non-modal foundation to make modal concepts explicit. Each position thus falls under what Hegel regards as pre-critical metaphysics by suggesting a modally unaccountable ground for modal concepts. The very idea of a foundation to modality is problematic because (a) as a foundation, it is necessarily assumed without further justification, and (b) it directs our attention away from the nature of modality itself to its supposed foundations. These non-modal foundational take the form of possible worlds for modal realism, the form of properties for modal actualism and the form of essence for modal essentialism. To eschew foundationalism in modal metaphysics and provide a less questionable basis for modality, the thesis suggests Hegel's treatment of modality as a viable alternative in virtue of its being free from the concerns stemming from the pre-critical way of doing metaphysics. The thesis situates Hegel in contemporary modal metaphysics by undertaking two types of exposition. By examining Hegel's treatment of essence and property, the thesis will show *negatively* that essence and property *cannot* be a foundation for modality, while by examining Hegel's treatment of modality, the thesis *positively* proves that modal concepts are analysable and explainable within the domain of actuality, a domain that can only be made explicit by modal determinations. These two expositions provide an idea of a self-sustaining and self-explanatory modal metaphysics without appealing to non-modal foundationalist metaphysical commitments. More precisely, I argue that Hegel's logical *derivation* of modal concepts constitutes a Hegelian modal metaphysics, which contains a comprehensive account of modal concepts that does not rely on any non-modal primitive.

ABBREVIATIONS

CPR   Kant, I., 2018. *The critique of pure reason*. Trans. and ed. Guyer, P. and Wood, W.A.. Cambridge University Press

        A   A Edition of *the Critique of Pure Reason*

        B   B Edition of *the Critique of Pure Reason*

E   *The Ethics* in Spinoza, B., 1994, *A Spinoza reader: The Ethics and the other works*, ed. and trans. Curley, E., West Sussex: Princeton University Press.

        D   Definition

        P   Part

        P   Proposition

        S   Scholium

EL   Hegel, G.W.F.,1991. *The encyclopaedia logic, with the zusatze*. Trans. Geraets, T., Suchting, W., and Harris, H.. Indianapolis: Hackett.

        A   Addition

        R   Remark

        §   Section

M   *Monadology* in Leibniz, W.G.,1989. *Philosophical papers and letters*. Trans, and ed. Loemker, L.E., Kluwer Academic Publishers.

        §   Section

PS   Hegel, G.W.F., 1977. *Phenomenology of spirit*. Trans. Miller, A.,V.. USA: Oxford University Press.

        §   Section

SL   Hegel, G.W.F., 2010. *The science of logic*. Trans. Di Giovanni, G.. New York: Cambridge University Press.

WL-I Hegel, G.W.F., 2020, *Wissenschaft der logik I,* Germany: Suhrkamp.

WL-II Hegel, G.W.F., 2017, *Wissenschaft der logik II,* Germany: Suhrkamp.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a study on the nature of modality. It presents Hegel's treatment of modality as an alternative modal metaphysical account to the reductive theories of modality in contemporary modal metaphysics. The reductive theories entail various explanatory non-modal foundations that are conceived as making explicit the nature of modal concepts. The reduction may seem to be a necessary means for us to understand modality insofar as what modality is reduced to, hence explained by, is a primitive and self-explanatory foundation. Regardless of how successfully self-explanatory and self-contained these foundations are, the foundations are thought to be non-modal; hence, they remain indifferent to the determinations of modal concepts. The explanation strategy of using non-modal foundations makes explicit the nature of modality only relative to a given foundation. With this, the account of modal metaphysics would limit itself to the given foundation and may have the risk of falling short of elucidating the true nature of modality in its own terms. The contemporary positions provide convincing accounts regarding the foundation for our modal talk and our use of modal concepts, but nonetheless, they fall short of questioning whether the very foundation is itself problem-free. This thesis takes a critical stance over the intended nature of modality by the contemporary positions and surveys three major foundationalist accounts through Hegel's promising outlook for non-foundationalist modal metaphysics.

The foundation for modality in the contemporary debate takes various forms such as possible worlds, property relations, and essence. The thesis categorizes these non-modal explanatory notions under three major positions: *modal realism*, *modal actualism*, and *modal essentialism* respectively. One in common in these positions is to take non-modal domains of metaphysics as prior explanatory accounts that make explicit modal concepts and modal relations. These primitive foundations as a set of assumed principles may grant us a sturdy ground for what modal concepts and modal relations of things amount to. Although, with

respect to their explanatory function, foundationalism may be satisfactory in providing various ways in which modal concept could be intelligible, their foundations—such foundation for Lewis is the possible worlds metaphysics with a radical first principle that there are possible worlds as real as our actual world—are always open for further questioning about to what extent they provide a true analysis of what modal concepts express in themselves. Although such non-modal foundation can explain modal facts, the foundations are themselves non-modal; hence, they remain unexplainable by the vocabulary of modality that they account for. This engenders a problem of an unexplainable domain for modal reasoning. This resembles a common problem in pre-critical metaphysics of asserting certain principles to account for its subject-matter without questioning the very principles that explain various metaphysical categories. There could be and there are various versions of metaphysics accounting for modal entities but what the foundationalist accounts lack is the crucial self-critical attitude towards the very foundation itself.

Hegel's logic, as outlined in his *Science of Logic*, is a post-critical metaphysics that in its very beginning avoids this problem of foundationalism by taking a sceptical stance towards any philosophical principle that grounds the categories of thinking and being. Accordingly, metaphysical categories (concepts) should take no further foundation for themselves to be made explicit in their own nature. For instance, according to Hegelian metaphysics, if the metaphysical analysis takes thing as its subject of inquiry, the thing should be made explicit with the determinations that it expresses itself. The thing for Hegel makes itself explicit through its properties. The metaphysical inquiry over the nature of things therefore explains the thing through its properties. A thing, when conceived in a critical metaphysical inquiry, detaches itself from questions over its qualitative, quantitative, modal, causal determinations or briefly all non-property determinations because the truth of the thing lies in its properties as its true determinations. The critical stance, therefore, does not seek a

rigid foundation for metaphysical concepts but aims to account for each concept by their own dynamism. However, the thesis recognizes the difficulty of proving various logical structures for every conceptual domain of Hegel's *Logic* as it requires us to go over every category of the *Logic* to evaluate the integrity of its sceptical non-foundationalist stance throughout the *Logic*. To overcome this difficulty, the thesis asserts a working principle expressing this Hegelian idea as a tenet for the critical metaphysical analysis over modal concepts. This stresses that an analysis of modal concepts should not assert a non-modal foundation. The principle is that any determination (definition) of concepts involves and expresses nothing behind or beyond the nature of the concept. When metaphysics is understood as a critical enterprise, the metaphysical analysis over the nature of modality has to shift from non-modal foundation-seeking activity to questioning any kind of non-modal foundations, thereby making explicit the true nature of modal concepts within a domain of metaphysics which is explainable by modal concepts.

With this principle at hand, the contemporary foundationalist theories face two charges: a) foundationalism does not allow us to regard the true nature of modality because it can only render explicit modal concepts relative to a certain foundation and b) foundations themselves constitute a questionable framework that is not immune to critical concerns.

Quine, in *Reference and Modality* (1963), challenges his contemporary quantified modal logic (QML) by providing a sceptical inquiry over the operation of modal necessity in *de re* statements. Quine understands modal necessity in terms of its extensional value, implying an identity relation between the terms in a statement. According to the extensionality, if P is identical to Q in a statement, P must be substitutable with Q in any other statement due to their identity relation, enabling us to consider that necessarily, P is Q. Quine argues that the rule of substitutability does not apply to *de re* modal statements where necessity operates over objects not over terms. Accordingly, in *de re* modality, necessarily

identical objects are not always substitutable in statements due to the objects requiring an opaque reference to something falling external to the preceding statements where the objects are taken as identical terms. That is, the number of planets is not always necessarily greater than 7, although the number of planets is 9 and 9 is greater than 7. Quine argues that QML grounds the soundness of *de re* statements in essence metaphysics with which modal qualities of objects are analysed with reference to essential and accidental properties of objects. Quine (1966, p. 174) maintains that this further metaphysical commitment takes QML to 'the metaphysical jungle of Aristotelian essentialism', which he finds already problematic on the basis of the complexity to identify essential and accidental properties.

The upshot of Quine's scepticism results in a) accepting a type of essentialist metaphysics, in which *de re* modalities are defined according to the essential and accidental properties. This option, for Quine, is no better to overcome the difficulty in QML, or b) eliminating de re modality on the grounds the modal analysis requires a further metaphysical investigation on the terms (essence and accidents) that explain conditions through which an object is modally determined. Quine's scepticism against de re modality has spurred a series of fruitful engagement with the questions about the nature of modality. Particularly, Lewis' theory of possible worlds and its reception in the literature aim to overcome the ambiguity in *de re* modality by providing a metaphysical basis for modal concepts. Lewisian possible worlds and its reception constitute a shift towards metaphysical investigations in modality.

For Lewis (1970, p. 175), the ambiguity in QML can be overcome if modal concepts are analysed with reference to possible worlds metaphysics. A Lewisian modal realist accounts for possibility by appealing to a non-modal primitive notion of possible worlds: for anything to be possible, the thing is to be wholly in a possible world, to have a part that is wholly in a possible world, or to exist from a standpoint of a possible world (Lewis, 1983b, p. 40). The underlying promise in Lewis' metaphysics is that accepting the existence of possible

worlds enables us to constitute a robust basis for modal concepts. However, Lewisian modal metaphysics comes with a strong commitment to the idea of really existing possible worlds, which, for Lewis, is an indispensable element in his system. Lewis (1979b) argues that anyone, who would like to utilize modal realism, should accept the entire principles of possible worlds metaphysics. According to Lewis (1979b), taking them as as-if worlds or *ersatz* worlds would render the whole system incoherent and inconsistent. Although this inherent difficulty may suffice why the whole package of possible worlds metaphysics should not be embraced, the substantial issue lies in how Lewis envisions a metaphysical system. For Lewis (1979b), a metaphysical system is a consistent and coherent set of principles that is established to solve certain problems in philosophy. Accordingly, Lewis' possible worlds metaphysics is constituted with the motivation of solving the ambiguity in the use of de re modality. However, this way of conceiving metaphysics comes along with an issue of foundationalism. Although it achieves its purpose, it remains vulnerable to any critical charges against the principles on which the metaphysical framework is constituted. This puts Lewis' project alongside the pre-critical metaphysical tradition. A critical stance against Lewis' theory does not have to target whether Lewis' possible worlds metaphysics is successful to accomplish its problem-solving function because there lies a more important issue, foundationalism, i.e., taking principles for granted.

The elements of foundationalism also resonate in the reception of Lewis' possible worlds theory. Modal actualism stands as an alternative theory to modal realism claiming that everything that exists is actual; hence, there exist no possible worlds. Modal actualism suggests replacing ontologically contentious possible worlds with property-relations. Property-relation, understood as part of the actual world, reveals the modal qualities of things according to the compatibility relation of things with their properties. Stalnaker (2012, p. 11) claims that when property relations are conceived as primitive determining relations for

things, they reveal modal commitments. For instance, the compatibility of a material with the property of being malleable reveals its possibility to be metal and its impossibility of being liquid. Although modal actualism expresses the function of properties as revealing modal characteristics in things, hence taking property relations as modal relations, what properties are distinctly diverse from modalities in terms of their determinative quality. Once modality and property conceived as distinct metaphysical domains of inquiry, in which each expresses a distinct layer of the world, modal actualism becomes another reductive theory that designates property relations as the foundation for modality. Although properties may operate appropriately in revealing the modal status of things, this does not justify the fact why property relations are chosen as a prior explanatory domain for modalities. Given that modal actualism suggests that all property relations are modal relations, then what modality adds to our understanding of things remains questionable. In a similar reductive fashion, modal essentialism suggests that all modal aspects of things originate from essences of things. Accordingly, modal essentialism prioritizes an essence metaphysics through which modal determinations are explained. For instance, Lowe (2013) follows Locke's conception of essence: an essence of a thing is its very being of the way that it is. If Y is an essential quality of X, then X is necessarily Y. Regardless of the capacity to explain the modalities of things, modal essentialism falls into foundationalism by its non-modal explanatory essence for modal concepts. Regardless of various designated foundations for modality, modal actualism and modal essentialism cannot avoid the anti-foundationalist charge of post-critical Hegelian metaphysics.

Considering the foundationalist reductive modal accounts, Hegel's treatment of modality comes to be an alternative modal metaphysics without appealing to a foundation. The thesis provides negative and positive accounts answering the question of why non-modal concepts cannot be thought of a foundation for modality under the rubric of Hegelian critical

metaphysics. The negative account examines Hegel's treatment of essence and property in order to argue that these concepts, when conceived within their own domain, do not express and reveal modal commitments. The positive account will examine Hegel's treatment of modality in order to present the possibility of constituting a foundation-free modal metaphysics.

The absence of an asserted primary principle governing Hegel's *Logic* renders the *Logic* non-foundational as the explicated logical determinations for concepts cannot be derived from or reduced to a single principle. Rather, the sceptical stance against any philosophical principles in the opening of the *Logic* is contained in every following category. That is, each category of the *Logic* cannot be reducible to a prior category as each category begins with a minimal determination (immediacy) that unfolds itself by constituting itself a distinct logical structure. This aspect of the *Logic* grants us two important arguments about the nature of concepts, which will be illuminating in the inquire over the nature of modality. First, albeit the historical connotation of metaphysical concepts lets us conceive them as distinct from one another, Hegel builds their distinction onto their logical structure. In other words, Hegel does not make an argument based on common philosophical ideas but explicates their determinations within their own domain, thereby concepts reveal their distinction from one another in their own logical development. This exclusivity in determinations enables the categories of the *Logic* to be irreducible to one another and to have a distinct logical determination from one another. Hegel's description of his system as the circle of circles points out the fact that each category has its restricted distinct logical structure, which discourages any attempt to take one category as prior over. Only in this way of restricted content and determination in the categories, the nature of concepts could become explicit according to themselves. This aspect of Hegel's *Logic* provides a subtle but strong argument that justifies why one should take a critical stance against any foundationalist

modal metaphysics. Interpreting Hegel's *Logic* as involving distinct logics provides an outlook as to why non-modal concepts cannot be thought of as constitutive in modal concepts.

The thesis explicates commonly regarded non-modal foundational concepts—essence and property relations—, in Hegel's examination, which constitutes the grounds on which the particular claims about non-modal foundations of reductive modal theories are rejected solely on the basis of the affirmative nature of the concepts—i.e., what they are when they are thought within their domain. I suggest that if Hegel is right, then these concepts *cannot* express modal determinations, neither do they constitute a foundation for modality. This negative account serves as a critical introduction to Hegel's foundation-free modal metaphysics.

The positive account focuses on the restricted nature of modal concepts by examining Hegelian modalities without any reference to non-modal concepts and presents Hegel's concepts of actuality as a basis for the derivation of modal concepts, a basis which remains determinable by its modal constituents. Hegel's opening argument for this treatment of modality involves a concept of actuality, which is expressed as modally indeterminate and determinate. This twofold sense is the case because for Hegel, actuality, without modal determinations, is no other than being or existence, whereas the clear and distinct conception of actuality comes with the consideration of its modal determinations. That is, modal determinations are particular qualities of being that makes it actual. This opening argument suggests that Hegel regards modalities as the determinations of actuality. For Hegel, actuality is a type of being in virtue of its logical givenness(immediacy), just in the same manner as being as such, existence and objectivity, but a being that is distinct from other types in manifesting itself through its modal determinations. Therefore, modality has to be about an entity that has modal manifestations. For Hegel, being, existence (*Existenz*), objectivity and

essence do not have such capacity of manifesting itself. Since actuality is made explicit in its manifestation (modality), its manifestation becomes its true nature. By this, the domain of modality comes to be bound up with that of actuality. Due to this restriction, modal determinations cannot make explicit what being, thing, or existence is, but it can account for what modally determinate being (actuality) is. For example, the inquiry over the possibility of being, for Hegel, is non-sensical, because being as such cannot determine itself or be determined as possible, only being that can be possible is actuality. Actuality, therefore, in Hegel's treatment, constitutes a domain in which actual objects manifest themselves in their distinct modal determinations. The restriction lays out the scope of modality within actuality, and this prevents modalities from falling into a non-modal foundational domain. When actuality is conceived as the only concept that expresses itself through modal determinations, it becomes the least questionable foundation for modality because actuality is only in its determinations or its modalities, without which it relapses into being, existence while modality becomes explicit determinate operators for actual beings only with reference to actuality. This circular thought makes explicit that actuality presents itself as a sturdy and less question-begging basis to reveal the nature of modal concepts.

Hegel derives modal concepts from this minimal conception of actuality. Owing to this conception of actuality, Hegel's modal metaphysics can be interpreted as another version of modal actualism which reveals the nature of modal concepts in their own conceptual development. The thesis frames Hegel's insights under two contributions to the contemporary debate: a) an analysis of the nature of modality without appealing to a non-modal foundational concept and b) a non-foundationalist view of modal actualism that suggests a complex structure for the world that modally presents itself, a world that involves manifold modalities in which modally determinable beings organize themselves through the modal qualities of actuality, possibility, contingency, and necessity.

The thesis thematically is not much different from Redding's (2017; 2018; 2020) and Brandom's (2014; 2015; 2019) recent projects reconciling Hegel with the figures in the contemporary modal metaphysics although it differs in how to engage with Hegel and constitute its relation to contemporary modal metaphysics. While Redding and Brandom aim to bridge Hegel and analytic modal metaphysics, this thesis presents Hegel's treatment of modality as a critique of the positions in contemporary modal metaphysics. On the one hand, Redding attributes a modal actualist position to Hegel's idealism. Accordingly, Hegel's idealism shares similar concerns to Stalnaker's version of modal actualism in respect to the inclusion of possibilities within actuality. On other hand, in a similar fashion, Brandom reads Hegel as a modalist who claims that the world is fundamentally constructed on a modal primitive. This modal primitive, as Brandom understands, is determinate negation in Hegel, on which Brandom bases his conceptions of material incompatibility and consequence. The thesis examines both Redding and Brandom and suggests that they fail to highlight the insights of Hegel's treatment of modality in the context of contemporary modal metaphysics.

Chapter 1 examines Lewisian modal realism to discuss how sufficient modal realism reduces modality to possible worlds discourse. The thesis identifies in modal realism a problem of presupposition, which renders the modal realist thesis unconvincing. In the light of this discussion on modal realism, Chapter 2 surveys the theories of modal actualism and modal essentialism as alternatives. The thesis identifies the similar reductive traits in modal actualism and essentialism, which turns their analysis of modality relative to their foundational notions of property and essence. Chapter 2 examines Hegel's treatment of essence and property in order to show that essence and property as foundations for modality do not yield or appeal to modality when they are considered in a Hegelian fashion. Chapter 3 discusses the derivation of actuality from non-modal categories of the *Logic* in order to show that instead of reduction, derivation is a viable strategy to understand the nature of modality.

Chapter 3 suggests Hegel's understanding of modality as the determinations of actuality. Chapter 4, 5 and 6 examines formal, real and absolute modalities of the *Logic* in order to prove that modality is derived from actuality and actuality is no different from its modal determinations. In these chapters, the thesis shows that the nature of modality is made explicit without appealing to a non-modal foundational notion. Instead, actuality, as modally determinate being, develops itself through modal determinations, which are derived from actuality itself. Chapter 7 presents a discussion on Redding's and Brandom's recent interpretations relating Hegel to the figures in contemporary modal metaphysics. By identifying the problem in these interpretations as modalism, the thesis suggests a humbler approach to Hegel's understanding of modality and attributes a critical role to Hegel's treatment of modality in its relation to the figures in contemporary modal metaphysics. In the light of this critical position, the thesis suggests Hegel's treatment of modality as a non-reductive and non-foundationalist actualism that does not appeal to non-modal notions in understanding the nature of modality.

1. THE FOUNDATIONS OF MODAL REALISM

Modal theories deal with questions of the manifestation of entities involving what they are necessarily, contingently, possibly and actually. For Lewis, *the ways* in which things could have been otherwise imply modal qualities of things through counterfactual relations between the actual and its alternative possibilities. This relation is constituted by the idea of similarity among individuals across possible worlds. That is, *ways* are *possible worlds* in which the counterparts of an actual thing constitute various possibilities for the actual thing. Lewis' account of modality is radical as he takes possible worlds as *real* existents that ground the countless ways of being modally determinate.

Modality comes with two strands as *de re* and *de dicto*. *De re* modality refers to determining modal qualities attached to things. 'All mathematicians are *necessarily* rational' shows that the modal operator determines the thing referred to in the statement as having a necessary quality of being rational. On the other hand, *de dicto* modality is concerned with the modal operators attached to the statements. 'Necessarily, all mathematicians are rational' demonstrates that the modal operator determines the statement as necessary, not concerned with the modal qualities of individuals. For Lewis (2001, p. 16-17), a true analysis of modality involves *de re* reading of modal concepts, because modalities, when taken as only the sentential operators or as *de dicto*, fall short of analysing the truth conditions of statements involving an individual which a statement refers to. Lewis (2001, p. 8) suggests that modal theories are supposed to be concerned with things and their modal qualities. For this reason, Lewis' main interest is *de re* commitments in modality where modal determiners are considered as the qualities expressing the modal nature of things.

Although Lewis' interest in modal reasoning exceeds the limits of *de dicto* modality, his interest stems from the metaphysical problems of *de dicto* modal logic. Lewis identifies

the limits of *de dicto* modality in the metaphysical questions about the nature of modal concepts. For Lewis, metalogical frameworks can explicate how modal concepts function as sentential operators, but this provides very little about what modality is. For him, the issue is the lack of a substantive account fulfilling the metaphysical aspects of modalities rather than how they operate in an axiological metalogical framework.

According to Lewis (1983a, p. 10), '[t]he standards of validity for modal reasoning have long been unclear; they become clear only when we provide a semantic analysis of modal logic by reference to possible worlds and to possible things'. As much as Lewis might seem on board with Kripkean possible worlds in terms of their use in the semantic analysis of modal statements to provide a wider scope in which modal operators range over, Lewis' possible worlds theory is widely distinct from Kripkean metalogical framework of possible worlds in terms of having a serious commitment to possible worlds metaphysics.

For Kripke, possible worlds are sets of conditions for the truth value of modal statements. For a statement to be possible, there must be a possible world in which the statement is true. For the Kripkean modal analysis, there is no need to be concerned with the metaphysical questions about possible worlds. The question of what a possible world is finds an answer only in the semantic analysis to the extent that it makes explicit the truth conditions for statements. However, for Lewis, regardless of the capacity of possible worlds semantics explaining the truth conditions in the analysis of statements, possible worlds themselves are presumably *worlds*, not just theoretical entities. Without considering them as real worlds, the metalogical questions about the nature of modality remain limited to the function of modal operators. Hence, sentential modal operators fall short of providing what modal concepts are. For this, metaphysical questioning is required. Lewis (2001, p. 17) writes: 'When I say that possible worlds help with analysis of modality, I do not mean that they help with metalogical "semantic analysis of modal logic". […] Metalogical results, by

themselves, answer no questions about the logic of modality'.[1] However, this does not mean that Lewis ignores the achievements of possible worlds semantics. While recognizing the benefits of the latter, Lewis seeks a more substantial theory that is comprehensive enough to ground modality, not only operating as another metalogical framework.

In this chapter, I will examine Lewis's modal realism and particularly his commitment to possible worlds metaphysics. Lewis' project can be read as a paradigm shift in modal discourse as modal realism draws attention to the metaphysical concerns in our understanding of modality. The chapter will begin with the critical attitude of modal realism towards the widely accepted notion of actuality in modal discourse. This will set up a reason for Lewis' motivation behind possible worlds metaphysics. In Section Two, I will examine Lewisian possible worlds by suggesting six principles. Section Three will focus on the counterpart theory with which possible worlds metaphysics can be seen at work in the analysis of modal facts. After explicating the possible worlds and counterpart theory as the two complementary components of modal realism, Section Four will investigate various forms of reduction focusing to identify what type of reduction modal realism follows. In Section Five, I will examine Shalkowski's objection, which emphasises a problematic modal condition rendering the Lewisian reduction of the modal to non-modal circular. While providing two ways in favour of modal realism to overcome circularity, I argue that modal realism will either be a theory with a presupposition of possibility prior to non-modal worlds or jettison one of its major claims about the primitiveness of possibility. I conclude that these difficulties the modal realist faces undermine the plausibility of the possible worlds theory, thereby rendering unsuccessful the Lewisian reduction of modality to non-modal foundational worlds.

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[1] Nonetheless, Lewis (2001, p. 20) still believes that metalogical investigations over the axioms of modal systems may provide a sufficient result for the satisfactory interpretation of modal operators.

1.1. The Problem of Restrictive Domain in *De re* Modality

Lewis' starting point for the metaphysics of possible worlds lies in his critical attitude to the notion of actuality. In modal discourse, actuality is widely conceived as the only domain for modalities to operate in. Lewis targets this understanding of actuality as he thinks that actuality, when thought to be the only domain for modality stands as a restrictive domain. The restrictive domain causes ambiguity in explaining modal facts that exceed the limits of what there *actually* is. To explain this ambiguity, we shall consider non-existent contingent facts.

In pre-Lewisian modality, modal operators (possibility and necessity) quantify the content with reference to actuality as a domain which modal operators range over. Modal qualities of things are restricted to the status of things *in actuality*. In our everyday use of language, this sort of restriction is quite common in the form of location and time. When we say, 'all cabs are black in London', we restrict the truth conditions of the statement to London.

In modal theories, statements subtly assume the phrase *in actuality*. This restriction occurs in a problematic form in our modal statements where statements take for granted that the individuals, which are referred to in a statement, exist *in actuality*. Even so much that in modal predications, the phrase *in actuality* is omitted since it is thought of being the only domain where the content is present and modal operators range over. According to this, when we state that 'friction necessarily generates heat', what we mean is that 'friction necessarily generates heat *in actuality*'.

Lewis (2001, p. 5-6) is not completely against any sort of restriction. Rather he believes that our talk about things in general inevitably involves various restrictions, such as time, place, context and so on, and modal talk is not exempt from a restriction either.

Precisely, Lewis' objection is to the understanding of actuality as the *only* domain for the modal operators to range over. Accordingly, a single actual world as a domain of modalities problematically restricts the scope of the possibility of things, which causes ambiguity in the explanation of non-existent modal qualities. If we take it to be true that our world is the only actual world, the scope of modal operators becomes limited to the domain of actuality. The modal operators ranging over in actuality fall short of providing a metaphysical explanation for possible non-existent things because the metalogical framework could only fix the metaphysical explanatory gap by assuming that non-existent things are present in an abstract form in the actual world. Under this framework, non-existent things imply the possibility of existing things without ontologically being on par with the actual things. The facts about the contingency of things cannot be grounded in the restrictive domain of actuality as the facts have to express some non-existent quality referring to things unless one argues that actuality involves every existent and non-existent.[2]

For Lewis, the problem with actuality is that modal statements, which are couched in a tightly restricted domain, do not provide a satisfactory metaphysical account to express the modal facts about non-existent contingent qualities of things. This is because non-existent contingent qualities cannot be present in actuality but nonetheless if the only domain for modal analysis is actuality, they are supposed to be conceived in this domain in some forms e.g., a) they are present without existing, b) they exist without being actual, c) they do not exist and can be known in the domain of actuality as negative representational forms of what is actual.

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[2] There are various ways to understand actuality and what it may or may not include. However, it is not so common to conceive of actuality as involving non-existents given that actuality is where all things *exist*. The variety in accounts stems from the diverse answers to the question of in what form things exist *in actuality*. For modal realism, to exist in a world implies spatiotemporal relation to the rest of the world. So, things *in actuality* cannot be non-existent abstractions. On the other hand, modal actualism suggests that actuality accommodates *possibilia* as abstractions of what there actually is. What I call non-existent contingent facts about things would be existent possibilities in the form of abstractions for a modal actualist.

If actuality is taken as an umbrella term for all existents, then modally determinate

things, restricted to the domain of actuality, cannot express the truths about the contingency

of some existents, where the contingent states of things are non-existent *in actuality* but they

remain to express the possible ways in which the things that actually are could have been

otherwise. Accordingly, even if forms of modal logic operate with possibility (◊) and

necessity (□) as quantifiers *over possible worlds*, existents satisfy the conditions for their

contingent aspects *in absentia*, where the existent needs not be a part of the world where its

contingent aspects are grounded, yet we simply make up a world that could be a

mathematical set or a world of representation which the existent would be part of. The

underlying problem with these *as-if worlds* is that we have to ground contingent facts about

non-existing things *in absentia*. Although a wider scope of quantification over *as-if worlds* is

introduced this way, the non-existent contingencies are supposed to be considered as existing

representations of possible states of things since these worlds are not taken as real, neither

are their parts.

Lewis questions the privileged position of our world as the only actual world.

Accordingly, there are only two ways that we conceive the actuality of our world (Lewis,

1983a, p. 19): a) there should be a mysterious reason that enables us to think our world is

especially actual[3] and b) we should accept that actuality is an indexical term like any other

indexical terms, here, there, present and so on. Lewis argues that there is no good reason to

think that our world is the only actual world because any view privileging our world as the

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[3] For Lewis the mysterious reason that would make us think our world is actual in a privileged way, is Anselm's ontological argument that suggests that our actual world is greater than any other possible world in virtue of the fact that no greater thing can be conceivable without existing. Since possibilities are conceived as non-existent unactualized entities yet still conceivable, what makes our world privileged is the fact that it exists and conceivable. So, it is greater than any possible world. Although Lewis' main target is Anselm's ontological argument, this mysterious reason could also be thought of as Leibniz's conception of actuality. For Leibniz, our actual world is the best and the greatest among possible worlds because it is created as existing according to God's will, and nothing greater can be created than God's will. The possible worlds as being in God's mind are non-existent essences, hence our world by being the unity of essence and existence is greater than any possible world.

only actual world is governed by unprovable assumptions that our actual world is the only actual world and that our actual world is greater in kind than any other possible worlds.

Although the Lewisian sceptical stance against actuality provides sufficient reason to question the concept of actuality, we might understand Lewis' sceptical stance without even reasonable doubt. We could simply ask: why do we prioritize our world as the only actual world? What would happen, if we thought that there are other worlds no different than our world in terms of their *worldness*?

Briefly, according to Lewis, modal theories without reference to possible worlds are incapable of expressing possible truths of things due to their restricted domain of quantification (i.e., the world we live in). Although Lewis is critical about the restriction to actuality, he is not entirely in denial of any kind of restriction because he believes that '[…]*de re* modal predications only make "sense in context"' (Beebee and Macbride, 2015, p. 225) where we seek the truth conditions of modal qualities of things. This context should be the least restrictive one to reveal the truth of possibilities. Lewisian possible worlds are the definitive context for modality. Possible worlds expand the restrictive scope of actuality to a countless number of worlds whereby we can account for modal expressions of things by reducing them to relations of counterparts among worlds. The inclusion of every counterpart relation among possible worlds widens the scope of modality drastically. Lewis' modal realism involves two complementary components: a) possible worlds metaphysics b) counterpart theory.[4] Possible worlds constitute the metaphysical ground for the apparatus of counterpart theory which provides a semantical analysis of modal statements. Before we examine counterpart theory with possible worlds, we need to investigate the principles for

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[4] Sider (2005, p. 198) finds it useful to divide the components as modal ontology and modal semantics, which enable him to reject the ontological thesis of realism about possible worlds but preserve the function of possible worlds as *ersatz* primitives, although Lewis believes that modal realism has to be considered as a package that includes ontology and semantics because the main motivation behind modal realism is to account for the nature of modality, not only providing a working apparatus expressing modal commitments in statements.

possible worlds as it fulfils the need for a substantive theory that Lewis identifies as missing in his contemporary modal logics.

1.2. Possible Worlds as the Foundation of Modality

In modal logic, the need for a context stems from the understanding of modal operators as extensional quantifiers. Although modal operators work in the same way as the quantifiers of predicate logic (∀ all, ∃ some), modal expressions remain ambiguous without reference to a context. Given that for Lewis, the domain of quantification restricted to actuality causes the difficulty in explaining the truth conditions of possible things, the domain should exceed the limits of actuality in order to accommodate non-existing possibilities. With this, Lewis suggests that '[t]he domain of quantification is to contain every possible world and everything in every world' (Lewis, 1983b, p. 27). Possible worlds are the least restrictive domain because they involve anything that we call possible in our actual world. As we stated earlier, Lewis suggests not only a semantic analysis but more importantly a metaphysical account of modalities to explain what modal concepts are. For Lewis, the question is not only how modal concepts operate in revealing the truth conditions of modal facts about our actual world, but also what the foundation is for the truth conditions of modal qualities of things. The possible worlds theory fulfils the metaphysical concerns about the truth conditions by providing a ground in which modalities are made explicit. The modal status of things is explained with reference to possible worlds. For instance, the truth condition for the possibility that friction does not generate heat lies in whether there is a world in which friction does not generate heat, or the condition for the necessity that friction generates heat lies in whether friction generates heat in all possible worlds.

Possible worlds and their use in modal discourse vary. Modal realism is not the only theory that utilizes the discourse of possible worlds. Kripke's modal logical system utilizes possible worlds as sets according to which the validity of statements is evaluated. What is

striking in Lewis' account is his radical realism about possible worlds. As a matter of comparison, for Kripke, possible worlds could be any kind of sets regardless of the ontological statuses of things involved in sets: planets, numbers, dragons and so on. These sets are merely apparatuses to class things in the semantic analysis that constitute a context for the truth conditions of statements, whereas, for Lewis, possible worlds are ontologically as real as our world. This radical realism about possible worlds, despite its controversial claim, alongside the semantic explanation of modalities with reference to possible worlds turns modal realism into a metaphysical project. Lewis presents his modal realism as a systematic, consistent and coherent metaphysics to ground our talk of *ways* in which things could have been otherwise.

Lewis's possible worlds metaphysics can be presented with six complementary principles[5]:

a) There are possible worlds.

There are infinitely countless possible worlds. The possibility of worlds is justified by the fact that each world is conceivable (Lewis, 2001, p. 90). Although Lewis (1983a, p. 11) states that the governing notion for possibility is conceivability, there are some worlds that are conceivable yet impossible—'worlds in which there is a largest prime'. Lewis (1983a, p. 21) later on adds consistency and non-contradiction to his understanding of possibility and explains that there cannot be impossible worlds because they would be inconsistent and hence contradictory.[6] This aspect of the principle does not seem to be too controversial given

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[5] Lewis does not explain his modal realism under certain principles, although it is quite explicit that modal realism is founded on principles that have to be taken as true. I will here aim to explicate possible worlds metaphysics with six principles that I think are sufficient to reveal the foundations of possible worlds metaphysics. One may add an extra principle or include one in the other as each principle supports one another. These additions will not render my exegesis insufficient as the sole aim of the exegesis with these principles is to make explicit the idea of underlying foundationalism in modal realism.

[6] Lewis (1983a, p. 21) provides the following example to support his claim that there are no impossible worlds. 'We would have to distinguish very carefully between (1) the consistent truth about this extraordinary subject matter, and (2) false contradictions about it. For contradictions are not the truth about any subject matter whatsoever, no matter how exotic. For instance, we would have to distinguish (1) the uncanny truth about a certain

that the sets of possibilities are widely understood as non-contradictory and consistent from Leibniz to Kripke. Lewis' controversial claim is that possible worlds exist as real, neither like Leibnizian possible worlds present as essences in God's mind without existing, nor like Kripkean possible worlds that are only sets like mathematical entities that provide truth conditions for modal semantical analysis without involving any metaphysical commitment about the existence of such entities. Although possible worlds constitute the truth conditions of the modally determinate facts of our actual world, they are non-modal primitive entities.

b) Possible worlds are the same in kind as our actual world.

Given that according to Lewis, we do not have sufficient reason to think that our world is the only actual world alone, if we accept the first principle, possible worlds have to be the same as our actual world in terms of their ontological status. When we suspend the idea of the privileged actuality, we could not have any other idea preventing us from recognizing each existing world as the same in kind. Accordingly, this means that our actual world is a possible world too and that each world is an actual world in itself. At first, this may seem contradictory, but *worlds* have this transitive aspect from actuality to possibility and vice versa depending on which world the individual is in. *This* world is actual only to the parts of the world because the parts spatiotemporally interact with other parts, whereas in this world, a possible state of an actual thing is present as existing in another world and that cannot be a part of this world because the other parts of our world do not interact with it spatiotemporally (Lewis, 2001, p. 2, p. 70). In turn, the actuality of this world renders other worlds possible to parts of this world since they are not spatiotemporally in other possible worlds, nor are they spatiotemporal parts of those worlds. That is, our spatiotemporal relation to the things in this

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impossible world where pigs can fly and also they cannot from (2) the contradictory falsehood that, in that world, pigs can fly, although it is not so that, in that world, pigs can fly. — Nonsense!'

world makes them actual to us. 'This makes actuality a relative matter: every world is *actual at* itself, and thereby all worlds are on a par' (Lewis, 2001, p. 93).

c) Actuality is an indexical term.

For Lewis, actuality is a relative term whose denotation depends on the world in which it is used. Lewis understands actuality as a synonym of *this* world and actual as *this*-worldly. Actuality is not an umbrella term that encompasses everything there is, nor is it strictly indicating existence because possible worlds also exist without being rigidly actual. The indexicality of actuality lies in its contextual reference like other indexical terms. '"Actual" is analogous […] to "here", "I", "you", and "aforementioned" – indexical terms depending for their reference respectively on the place, the speaker, the intended audience, the speaker's acts of pointing, and the foregoing discourse' (Lewis, 1983a, p. 18). When I utter 'friction generates heat', the statement is true only in the world that I am in. Since actuality denotes the *this*-worldliness of things, actuality is indexed to the world in which the utterance takes place. The utterance of actuality is true only for the individuals of a world. Although the indexicality denotes that the world is actual by reference to a certain place, individual and so on, it remains insensitive to the context, like other indexical terms such as here, there, present. *Present* holds the same denotation in statements that are uttered at this moment as well as 2000 years ago. Accordingly, this supports the principle (b) by elaborating that possible worlds are indexically actual to their occupants. In a possible world, a possible individual recognizes their world as actual just in the same way we recognize our world as actual. However, the statement that all worlds are actual is implausible because there is no world in which the statement could be true given that every actual world renders other worlds possible (Lewis, 2001, p. 93).

d) Possible worlds are concrete, isolated and causal only in themselves.

A possible world is actual for the individuals that inhabit that world. Hence, each individual of a possible world spatiotemporally interacts with other individuals of the same world. Since every possible world is actual in itself, meaning that a world is actual without a condition or an external relation enabling them to be actual. Worlds are actual solely on the grounds that they concretely exist and that they have parts that make their individuals recognize the world as actual through causal relations. This also means that each possible world is concrete and causal within itself just like our actual world. However, there are no causal, identity or other sorts of rigid conceptual or non-conceptual relations that constitute one world in physical relation to another world. Hence, possible worlds are isolated and self-contained. Possible worlds by involving possibilities of actual things in our world are not parts of our world but alternatives to things of our actual world.

e) Possible worlds are connected with similarity relations.

Although possible worlds are isolated, we can still talk about them and their parts insofar as we recognize *possibilia* as alternatives to actual things of this world. According to Lewis, the similarity relation enables us to conceive other possible worlds as alternative counterparts of the actual things in our world. For anything actual, there is a countlessly infinite number of counterparts that exist in possible worlds.

Lewis grounds the counterpart theory in the similarity relation among the individuals of possible worlds. Accordingly, an individual of our world has a countless number of counterparts in a countless number of possible worlds, each of which is in a relation of similarity depending on the scope of comparison. The fact that Trump could have won the election, is indeed a possible fact grounded in a possible world, where Trump's counterpart won the election. The substantial question for the counterpart theory is to what extent we could talk about two or more diversely existing things in diverse worlds as similar. Lewis' answer to this is that we need just enough qualities to be considered similar. This may seem

to be a vague aspect of counterpart theory, but for Lewis, the trans-world identity among possible worlds is prone to contradiction as it claims that an individual exists in two or more distinct worlds. Similarity relation eschews this contradiction by considering counterparts as not identical but only similar. So, this vague relation seems to work better than its alternative.

f) Possible worlds do not overlap.

An individual in a world cannot be in another world or be part of another world. Following from the principles (d) and (e), None of the individuals or parts can be and be considered in two different worlds, whereas each individual has a countless number of counterparts in distinct worlds. For Lewis, counterparts are not imaginary entities but are real. So, to think of two counterparts of an actual thing in the same world contradicts the idea that possible worlds are isolated from each other. For this reason, each counterpart is in a world or a part of a world that is distinct from the world and parts that are counterparts of. This is a crucial point because without the principle of non-overlap, there would be a contradictory relation between individuals.

Considering the six principles together, Lewis provides a comprehensive and coherent metaphysical system that explains the nature of modality in a reductive sense. Possible worlds for Lewis are non-modal entities because they are not *themselves* modally determined—despite the name *possible* worlds. This is because according to the indexical actuality, each world in itself is actual. Neither are they the kinds of things that Kripke or Plantinga takes them to be, such as abstract mathematical entities and models. Rather they are real, concrete worlds in which the modal expressions of their parts and their whole lie in the network of other possible worlds. Possible worlds make explicit what modal status of a thing holds or might have held. For a modal realist, the truth conditions of the possibility that the result of the 2020 US presidential election might have been otherwise lie in the infinite number of possible worlds in which the alternative results take place. Accordingly, it is true

that Trump might have won the election iff there is a world in which postal votes were recognized as a fraud. Possible worlds ontologically ground *de re* modalities since each modal status of things in our actual world finds its modal foundation in a possible world. Once Lewis' radical realism about possible worlds is accepted, we have not only a comprehensive modal metaphysics but also a working modal theory that overcomes the contextual ambiguity stemming from the quantificational restriction to actuality. In the next chapter, I will explicate how modal realism utilizes possible worlds metaphysics in the analysis of modally determinate things. This will include a comparison of modal realism to the other use of possible worlds as abstract or representational entities.

1.3. Possible Worlds at Work: Counterpart Theory

As stated in the previous section, Lewis requires a theory for the counterpart relation of individuals among possible worlds. The relation of counterparts expresses modal qualities of things in '[…] a domain of quantification suited to the topic of modality', namely possible worlds (Lewis, 1983b, p. 26). The counterparts and possible worlds constitute two complementary components of Lewisian modal realism. Possible worlds theory sets up a non-modal ground to accommodate various modal expressions of things by reducing modal qualities to the relations among possible worlds. The network among possible worlds is constituted by the counterpart relation which explicates the modal qualities of things with reference to possible worlds. A counterpart of a thing is not identical to the thing but only holds similar qualities just enough for it to be considered as a counterpart. For instance, the truth conditions of a modal fact that Trump might have won the election involves a counterpart of Trump sufficiently satisfying the fact that Trump wins in a possible world.

The counterpart theory does not operate with identity relations. Given the principles outlined above, identical counterparts would imply a contradiction that two identical individuals would be in two worlds, which is absurd according to the principles of (d), (e),

(f). This has three consequences: (1) there is overlap between two worlds over an individual, which contradicts (d); (2) the worlds are not entirely isolated from each other because to be identical implies that an individual's relation to the parts of W_1 has also to be identical to its counterpart's relation the parts of W_2. That is, W_1 and W_2 are not isolated but connected through the identical individuals, which causes overlap and hence contradicts (e); lastly (3) the relation is not similarity but identity, which contradicts (f) and causes all the contradictions above.

The governing idea for the counterpart theory is similarity among individuals of diverse worlds. The minimal similarity for us to think of a thing in W_1 having a counterpart in W_2 is the context in which we make sense of the modal qualities of facts. For instance, if we want to see the truth conditions for the fact that Trump might have won the election, we need to include a relevant counterpart of Trump that could minimally involve similar qualities to Trump in this world. This is certainly a vague relation, but Lewis insists that the counterpart theory utilizes the vagueness as this brings about a certain degree of flexibility shedding light on the diverse modal characteristics of things being otherwise (Lewis, 1979a, p.125-8)[7].

Lewisian counterparts fulfil a theoretical gap in quantified modal logic (QML). For Lewis (1983a, p.10), the ambiguity stemming from the restriction to actuality can be overcome if modal concepts are semantically analysed with reference to possible worlds. Lewis' criticism of restrictive quantification can be understood if we look at the incapability

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[7] Lewis (1979a, p. 128) provides the following example where counterpart relation utilizes the vagueness in terms of revealing many modal qualities of things. 'For instance, consider two inhabitants of a certain world that is exactly like ours in every detail until 1888, and thereafter diverges. One has exactly the ancestral origins of our Hitler: that is so in virtue of events within the region of perfect match that ended just before his birth. In that region, it is quite unequivocal what is the counterpart of what. The other quite different ancestral origins, but as he grows up he gradually duplicates more and more of the infamous deed of our Hitler until after 1930 his career matches our Hitler's career in every detail. Meanwhile the first lives an obscure and blameless life. Does this world prove that Hitler might have lived a blameless life? Or does it prove that he might have had different ancestral origins? I want to be able to say either—though perhaps not both in the same breath—depending on which respects of comparison are foremost in my mind; and the method of counterparts, with due allowance for vagueness, allows me to do so'.

of the quantified modal logic (QML) to explain some contingent facts about non-existing things. Since QML takes actuality as the only domain for modality, QML cannot account for non-existing contingencies, because it has to presuppose an actual fact for it to render that the fact could be otherwise. However, with the ontology of possible worlds, we achieve the largest possible quantificational domain in which everything exists. There would be no non-existing entities, hence no non-existing possibilities rendering actual facts contingent. With the least restricted domain of possible worlds, non-existing contingent facts are rendered modally intelligible.

Lewis (2001, p. 9-10) suggests that the modal operators of QML, possibility (◊) and necessity (□), can also be taken as quantifiers over possible worlds, but these possible worlds cannot provide a context that is as flexible as counterpart relations would do due to the fact that possible worlds in QML are mere abstract practical apparatuses allowing us to contextualize the modal discourse. While doing so, we encounter a problem to ground the existence of possibilities. What Lewis' counterpart theory brings forth distinctly is the fact that non-existent possible individuals are indeed existing as counterparts in possible worlds.

Let's unpack the benefit of realism about possible worlds in comparison to QML with an example — an updated version of Lewis' case of Hubert Humphrey—to show that modal analysis does not satisfactorily ground non-existent contingencies of facts when the quantification is restricted to actuality even though we utilize possible worlds discourse without the realism about possible worlds. Let's consider Trump to see where possible worlds fail without the Lewisian realism and counterpart theory. Trump might have won the presidency in the 2020 election, but he actually didn't. This can be translated into possible worlds language as the following: 'there is some world W such that, at W, he satisfies "x wins"' (Lewis, 2001, p. 9). For Trump to satisfy 'x wins', he has to be in or to be part of a world, but he cannot unless we insist that Trump is part of W and part of this world, which

results in an overlap[8] between parts of different worlds. The best possible option for quantifying over possible worlds without a counterpart relation is to think that Trump satisfies 'x wins' *in absentia*, namely, without being part of W. This works to associate 'x wins' with Trump even though there is no counterpart of Trump that is in W in which the counterpart could satisfy 'x wins'.

However, this only renders explicit the contingency that Trump might have won on the level of modal logic. That is, we have the right tool to express the contingent fact about Trump given the quantification over possible worlds. However, what Lewis seeks is not only a metalogical framework where we can accommodate contingencies without questioning their existential status but also a modal metaphysics in which we ground contingencies by satisfying metaphysical concerns about such existent contingencies. The discourse of possible worlds without realism cannot ground contingent facts apart from *in absentia*, namely taking possibilities of actual things only as mere representations or abstract thoughts. Lewis (2001, p. 14) argues that satisfaction *in absentia* is vicarious satisfaction. It gets the job done but does not satisfy metaphysical concerns. Modal realism answers metaphysical concerns by providing various possibilities of an actual thing as diverse realities (counterparts) in worlds. Only with this radical realism about *possibilia*, we could ground contingent facts that are non-existent in our world but nonetheless exist in other worlds, thereby the truth conditions for various modal expressions of things become explicit and metaphysically satisfactory.

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[8] As we discussed earlier, overlap among possible worlds is problematic because it implies an enduring identity between two individuals of different worlds. For Lewis, things have intrinsic identities, but their identity is relative to the world in which an individual spatiotemporally interacts with other individuals of that world. Modal realism recognizes individuals as not identical but as counterparts. Given that for Lewis to be in a world is to involve spatiotemporal relation with other individuals of that world, any overlap between the individuals of different worlds opens the door wide to the spatiotemporal relations between parts of different worlds (Lewis, 2001, p. 208), which is against the principle (d) that a world is isolated as well as engendering a contradiction among possible worlds.

The upshot of this example is that modal realism works better than modal analysis restricted to the actual at least in one case. Moreover, modal realism saves the modal analysis from being free-floating logical discourse by committing to a metaphysical thesis about the reality of *possibilia*. It would be right to claim that the strength of modal realism lies in its metaphysical core as there are various uses of possible worlds discourse in modal theories but the metaphysical commitment to the realism about possible worlds makes modal realism distinctly satisfactory in comparison to theories limited to the logical or semantic analysis of modality.

1.4. Reduction in Modal Realism

It is a commonly accepted view that modal realism is a reductive theory of modality (Sider, 2005, Plantinga, 1987). Reduction is usually expressed in the form of a slogan that Xs are indeed Ys. A reductive analysis sets up a type of explanatory account where the primary reducing item (ontological or conceptual) explains the secondary reduced item in its own terms. Modal realism re-constitutes modal discourse with reference to possible worlds. Anything that could be explained within the framework of the possible worlds discourse could be taken as expressing modal relations, since modal realism accounts for modal concepts by asserting that (counterpart) relations of individuals among possible worlds are modal relations. That is, every modal determination is explainable by possible worlds but not *vice versa*. One may find that reductive analysis is a natural approach in investigations on the nature of modality since modality is conceived in various philosophical traditions as a subordinate feature of a primary being.[9] Although the reception of primary being varies

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[9] For instance, Spinoza places modes as the infinite number of finite expressions of the substance. That is, modes are only secondary to substance. Kant, on the other hand, conceives modality as an a priori category of the understanding which ties formal and material conditions with the experience of things. That is, modalities are not determinations of things but of how the understanding grasps things in experience. This makes modalities secondary as they are not things as such, nor only qualities of things. Lastly, Hegel conceives modalities as the determinations of actual beings, determinations through which being proves itself to be actual. So in Hegel's understanding too, modality is a subordinate feature of actuality but the Hegelian twist here is that to be actual is to involve modal determinations.

across diverse philosophical traditions, it is certain that modality is a determination of a primal entity. This renders plausible why, in the contemporary accounts, the reductive strategy is taken as a widely accepted way of accounting for modality.

In this section, I will consider Sider's and Plantinga's reading of modal realism as they both agree—albeit with different motivations—that modal realism is a reductive theory. The section aims to clarify the notion of reduction alongside various links between the reducing and the reduced items and with this, aims to make explicit how modal realism fills the theoretical gap between the reduced modality and the reducing possible worlds. This will reveal whether modal realism employs a strong connection between modality and non-modal possible worlds in order to show the reduction from the modal to non-modal is successful.

A philosophical theory qualifies to be reductive if it seeks an explanation for its subject-matter by means of other terms. In this, reduction appeals to an explanans that is not particularly set for a specific explanandum. For example, a physicalist would argue that the mental is explainable by the laws of the physical. The laws of the physical are not particularly deduced from the set of the mental occurrences, but these are used for a good reason to explain the mental. The reductionist physicalist is not concerned with the nature of the mental but with only to the extent which the mental is explainable by the physical. Just as in the same fashion, modal realism claims that modal determinations of things are explainable by possible worlds. Reduction in modal metaphysics is then an analysis of modal qualities (of things and/or propositions) by appealing to other (non-modal) concepts.

Reduction requires a link—whether rigid or loose—that bridges two distinct types of items such as the modal with the non-modal and the mental with the physical. In the literature, Nagel's and Gulick's accounts particularly focus on the linkage. Their

categorisations of the linkage suggest various types of reduction depending on how the reduced and the reducing are connected.

Nagel (1961, pp. 339-42) posits two major categories of reduction, homogeneous and heterogeneous, which are segregated by the notions of qualitative similarity and dissimilarity. Homogeneous reduction is a non-problematic type since two theories are connected by qualitative similarity, whereas heterogeneous reduction requires a further link between the reducing and the reduced since the theories are qualitatively dissimilar.

Homogeneous reduction is when a theory is designed to account for a particular phenomenon, which the phenomenon is accounted for in another theory without a descriptive effort to make sense of the vocabulary, laws or formulations of the former. This is the case due to the *qualitative similarity* between the two theories regarding their subject-matter, vocabularies, or formulations. The accumulative progression of empirical sciences shows examples of homogeneous reduction such as the inclusion of Galileo's laws for terrestrial bodies in Newtonian mechanics (Nagel, 1961, p. 339). Homogeneous reduction is a non-problematic type as the linkage between the theories is established on the qualitative similarity between the elements of reduced and reducing theories.

Heterogeneous reduction is when a theory is designed to account for a particular phenomenon, which the phenomenon is accounted for in another theory that involves the account of the former without sufficient and necessary reasons to explain its subject-matter with the vocabulary, laws or formulations of the former. That is, heterogeneous reduction takes place when 'the distinctive traits that are the subject matter of the secondary science fall into the province of a theory that may have been initially designed for handling qualitatively different materials [...]' (Nagel, 1961, p. 340). This type of reduction may be prone to some issues. Qualitatively dissimilar elements between primary and secondary theories may be

falsely taken as identical by the primary theory or the gap between reducing and reduced theories may not be well justified. This is the type of reduction Nagel focuses on more and proposes formal and non-formal conditions for a successful heterogeneous reduction. Heterogeneous reduction is less problematic insofar as dissimilar elements in reduced and reducing theories are bridged with distinct types of connections (logical connection, conventions, factual/material connection) that provide sufficient conditions for the reduction.

Similar to Nagel, Gulick also focuses on the connection between the reducing and reduced items in a theory or among theories. The types of reduction in Gulick's account (2001) are diversified according to what kinds of things are in the relation of reduction and what kinds of links connect the items in the relation of reduction. For the former, Gulick (2001, pp. 2-3) suggests two types of major categories: ontological and representational.[10] Each category involves its members depending on what kind of things are in the relation of reduction as well as the link that takes place between the reducing and the reduced. Accordingly, ontological reduction involves objects, properties, events and processes connected through elimination, identity, composition, supervenience and realization, whereas representational reduction takes place between concepts, theories, models and frameworks, connected by replacement, derivation, a priori conceptual necessity and equivalence (expressive and teleo-pragmatic).

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[10] This division between the ontological and the representational favours a materialist position by asserting that things have their own nature without being thought of (or being idealized) and that the thought of things is only the representations of the ontological beings. Although this is a very broad discussion, Gulick's division may not be sustainable when it comes to whether reduction takes place in theories that interpret the ontological beings in a certain way or between the ontological beings. For example, we will see that in the *ontological* reduction through identity, Gulick (2001, p. 5) suggests that '[i]t [identity linkage] involves cases in which we continue to accept the existence of Xs but come to see that they are identical with Ys (or with special sorts of Ys). Xs reduce to Ys in the strictest sense of being identical with Ys. This most often happens when a later Y-theory reveals the true nature of Xs to us'. Here, the category is allegedly ontological but the reduction takes place by the representational means, namely the interpretation of Ys by a certain theory reveals that Xs identical to Ys.

Elimination in ontological reduction corresponds to replacing a thing with qualities of another thing. For example, the physicalist positions fall under the category of eliminativist reduction by claiming that the mental qualities are nothing but the physical. However, this does not mean that the mental is identical to the physical. Rather, elimination disregards the separate nature of the mental apart from the physical. As opposed to elimination, *identity* connection means that the reducing is identical with the reduced such as the sensation of pain being identical to the particular neural connection in the brain. The relation of *composition* recognizes the reduced A as being the totality of composite parts of the reducing B. *Composition* is distinct from identity with respect to the fact that not all parts of the reduced A are identical to the reducing B. That is, B is more than its parts, or any change that might happen in A does not affect B. As opposed to the element of persistence in the relation of composition, the relation of *supervenience* 'involves the dependence of one set of properties on another' (Gulick, 2001 p. 7). Supervenience asserts a dependence between the reducing and the reduced such that if A supervenes B, any change that takes place in B invokes change in A too. Supervenience also involves a similarity relation if two things (Q and P) share a property (A) that supervenes other properties (B and C), the supervenience relation among A, B and C, posits that even though Q does not hold the properties of B and C but only A where P has all three properties, Q is similar to P.[11] As the last ontological link, Gulick suggests *realization* invoking a reduction by asserting that two non-identical things could be realized in a functional property thereby reducing one thing to another through the realization of a common function. This is not a strict type of reduction but still satisfies the simple slogan for reduction that 'X's are indeed Y's'.

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[11] Gulick is aware that the idea of supervenience is not strictly received as a type of reduction in the literature given that the relata of supervenience relation are not reductively linked. However, Gulick (2001, p. 8) rightly suggests that the idea of dependence points out an aspect of reduction satisfying the reductionist slogan that 'Xs are just Ys'.

Moving onto representational reduction, Gulick suggests *replacement* as a similar

form of elimination in the ontological reduction. If a reduction between theories involves

replacement, this means that the reducing theory is more prominent in expressing the subject-

matter than the reduced one. Gulick's notion of replacement resembles Nagel's homogeneous

reduction where a scientific theory involves and improves another theory's way of explaining

the same subject-matter. On the other hand, Gulick's notion of *derivation* is broadly similar

to Nagel's heterogeneous reduction where the reduced theory derives its primitives and

formulations from the reducing theory through a certain linkage, which constitutes a common

vocabulary for both theories. For example, 'If a gas has a given temperature when and only

when its molecules have a given average kinetic energy, then we may go on to infer that

temperature just *is* average kinetic energy […]' (Gulick, 2001, p. 10). Derivation does not

imply a necessary relation between the reducing and the reduced theories because firstly,

derivation depends on biconditional linkage, and secondly biconditional linkage is not a

necessary element in derivation as looser forms, such as close approximations, between the

use of concepts by diverse theories might suffice to derive certain principles from another

theory (Gulick, 2001, p. 11). For a stricter connection, Gulick suggests *a priori conceptual

necessity*. This type of reduction is based on a sufficient *logical* connection that necessitates

the bridge between the reducing and the reduced theories. Like in Nagel's logical connection,

the representational reduction, in Gulick's scheme, establishes the logical connection with the

rule of entailment.[12] Lastly, Gulick suggests *equivalence* as a reduction link in two distinct

forms. Expressive equivalence is that which the reducing theory A involves and expresses the

representational items (concepts, ideas, models) of the reduced theory B such that whatever is

expressed by B is also expressed by A. On the other hand, teleo-pragmatic equivalence

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[12] The rule of entailment operates in this type of reduction as the following: if the reducing theory A and the
reduced theory B are logically connected, the definition of a subject-matter X in A should also be logically true
in B.

constitutes the link between the reducing and the reduced by the applicability of 'contextually embedded resources of the reducing theory' into the resources of reduced theory. For example, if social injustice caused by economical means is explained by theory A is also explainable by theory B, which purposefully utilizes some of the contextual resources from theory A, the reducing A is linked with the reduced B through teleo-pragmatic equivalence.

Possible worlds metaphysics carves reality at the joints through individuals. An individual in the framework of possible world metaphysics is an irreducible being whose collection constitutes the worlds. Each world contains spatiotemporal individuals as their basic primitive elements. The rest, such as ways in which an individual relates itself, corresponds to secondary elements of the worlds, namely how the world is constituted, rather than what a world consists of. Following the division between primary and secondary, possible world metaphysics treats modality as a secondary property that attaches to the irreducible primary beings, individuals. Modality, in this sense, is not a primitive notion since, for Lewis, modality expresses ways in which things might be, not what things are. In modal realism, modality is a secondary trait in individuals expressing ways in which primitive individuals relate to one another just like causality or supervenience. Individuals are the irreducible items in modal realism, yet this does not mean that worlds are reducible to individuals because for an individual to be, it must be in a world. So, the defining feature of an individual lies in the notion of being in a world. That is, anything (facts, individuals, propositions) expressing a modal quality finds its explanatory root to be in a world.

Sider's elaboration on primary and secondary being helps us to expand on this. According to Sider (2005, p. 184), an ontology organizes its inquiry of things around notions of primitive and secondary, or categorical and hypothetical respectively as Sider puts it. By categorical, Sider understands how things actually are. The categorical being corresponds to how things actually are. Sider ascribes anything remaining from how things are actual to the

hypothetical, which does not address how things are but points out non-actual states of things. That is, anything hypothetical may express anything other than how things are i.e. '[…] how they might, or were, or would be'. (Sider, 2008, p. 3). Needless to say, Sider attributes modality to the hypothetical, as modal qualities of things express various ways in which things could have been other than what they actually are (Sider, 2001, p. 41). This division between the categorical and the hypothetical is not Lewis' own but elaborates on how Lewis construes modality as reducible, while supporting his conception of world as irreducible.

Given Nagel's and Gulick's schemes, we find two traits of reduction in modal realism: ontological reduction of modality to possible worlds and representational reduction through the replacement of the vocabulary of modality with that of possible worlds.

In modal realism, ontological reduction corresponds to the elimination of modality. This, however, does not mean that the reduction in modal realism is similar to the slogan of the crude eliminativist reductionism that all X's indeed are Y's. Lewis does not claim that all modal qualities and facts are indeed worlds, nor does he think that modality is *qualitatively* similar to worlds. In this sense, Lewisian reduction is a type of heterogeneous reduction that requires a link through which qualitatively dissimilar ontological items, namely modalities and worlds, are bridged. However, the ontological reduction in modal realism eventually resembles more the elimination of modality since the explanandum for modal qualities, especially for possibilia, involves non-modal constitutive terms, namely, the spatiotemporal notion of world and its individuals.

In the ontology of modal realism, modal relations amount to the counterpart relations of individuals across possible worlds. Every way in which a thing is is in a world. The reductive trait becomes apparent with the non-modal definition of a world. A world is a spatiotemporal network of individuals. To be in a world means to be spatiotemporally related

to parts of that world. In the same vein, things spatiotemporally related to each other imply that they are parts of the same world. What grants its modal feature to a world and its individuals is how we grasp it alongside other worlds and individuals through the counterpart relation. That is, modal realism defines possible worlds without modal conditions and notions and in turn, non-modal possible worlds account for modal qualities of things. By this, Lewis reduces modal features of things to the counterpart relations of worlds. For example, '*x* is possibly *y*' reads within the ontology of possible worlds as the following: for *x* to possibly be *y*, there must be at least one world (but not all worlds) where the counterpart of *x* satisfies that *x* is *y*. The counterpart relation operates as the condition for the actual things and their multiple modal qualities in such a way that enables us to attribute modal qualities to things.

However, it would not be fair to categorize modal realism under a strict type of eliminativism. The eliminativist trait in modal realism is a more intricate one. As Sider (2005, p. 197) notes, the ontology of modal realism, when taken as an entirely true theory about modality, still leaves room for modality, especially for possibilia, not only as non-modal worlds but also as possible ontological entities. That is, Lewisian worlds involve possible beings and propositions. Nonetheless, the eliminativist trait in modal realism persists if we consider the fact that for a modal realist, the nature of modality is bound up with possible worlds. Lewis positions possible worlds as ontologically primary beings against modal qualities where possible worlds play a determining (and explicatory) role in making explicit modal qualities of things and statements since every being holds its modal expression in some possible worlds. That is, for anything to be modally determinate it has to involve non-modal conditions for its modal determination. With this, modal realism commits itself to the ontological reduction of modality to possible worlds, namely, the modal status of things and facts comes to be the articulation of their counterpart relations among possible worlds. Regardless of the similarity between modal realism and Gulick's conception of eliminativist

reductionism, I do not think that modal realism aims at eliminating modality. Lewis identifies the alethic modalities as restrictive in the explanation for some modal facts. This points out that what Lewis is willing to achieve seems to expand the notion of modality. Modal realism offers this expansion with its somewhat awkward modality-producing non-modal worlds.[13]

On the other hand, following Gulick's scheme, we also identify that modal realism shows the elements of representational reduction through replacement. Possible worlds theory aims to be a comprehensive modal theory by translating the expressions of other modal theoretical approaches into counterpart relations among possible worlds. Modal realism translates the widely accepted formulation of modal expressions. For instance, according to Lewis (2001, pp. 9-12), Quantified Modal Logic (QML) falls short of being sufficiently expressive regarding modal states of things that are non-existent but contingent, or essentially existing but contingent, hence it should be replaced with a more comprehensive model that allows us to express such modal states. This does not mean that Lewis does reject QML or what he offers is something contrary to QML. Rather, Lewisian quantification over possible worlds is suggested as a more advanced theory that is capable of translating the formulas of QML into counterpart relations among possible worlds. In QML, modal operators, ◊ (possibility) and □ (necessity), operate as sentential quantifiers expressing that ◊ for some, □ for all. Modal realism contains the function of ◊ and □ in a distinct form as quantifiers over possible worlds where statements of possibility express truth in a possible world while statements of necessity express truth in all possible worlds. With this, Lewis suggests replacing the function of modal operators in QML by asserting them into a theory where they operate within possible worlds framework. The reductive aspect of modal realism

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[13] In the same vein, quite later than Lewis, Brandom (2015) also follows the same strategy by introducing Hegelian non-modal determinate negation as a modal inducing concept. For Brandom, material incompatibility relations amount to modal relations, and material incompatibility between things is governed by determinate negation in the things that are *exclusively different* from each other.

lies in the fact that there is a one-way relation between QML and modal realism where modal realism can provide a translation of formulas of QML, whereas QML cannot translate expressions of modal realism. With this, modal realism comes to be the reducing theory that replaces the formulas of QML into counterpart relations among possible worlds.

Plantinga's interpretation of modal realism can be considered as employing the representational reduction through replacement. Plantinga (1987, p. 213) believes that Lewis is not a realist about possible worlds but only concrete individuals. This is because Plantinga reads Lewisian possible worlds as set-theoretical items built on the idea of a set consisting of concrete individuals. This renders possible worlds metaphysics into a mere representational model for modal discourse, a model that '[…] reduces possible worlds to maximal objects, propositions and states of affairs to sets of maximal objects, essences to sets of concrete objects, and essential and accidental property possession to similarity and set membership' (Plantinga, 1987, p. 213). Plantinga is right that common metaphysical terms like property, object, essence, possibility and alike find corresponding senses in the framework of Lewisian possible worlds. This underlines that Lewis reductively analyses these terms in a given theoretical framework, which reveals the traits of representational reduction. However, it may not be relevant here but still quite important to highlight that the traits of representational reduction I associate with modal realism do not have any bearings on Plantinga's reading of Lewisian possible worlds as set-theoretical items. The notion of set does not satisfactorily exhaust the meaning Lewis attributes to possible worlds, because Lewis (2001, p. 15-6) intentionally avoids mere semantic utilization of possible worlds as he finds one-sided models insufficient to reveal the nature of modality—albeit Lewis uses the term *set* and *set of* in various places in *On the Plurality of Worlds*, I take this usage to be colloquial when we compare the consequence of taking it to be literal to his elaborate discussion on the insufficiency of merely semantic or mathematical reception of possible worlds in *On the*

Plurality of Worlds, (Lewis, 2001, p. 17-20). For this reason, Lewis insists that anyone who is willing to enjoy the semantic achievements of possible worlds should also accept its costly ontology. If we disentangle possible worlds metaphysics from possible worlds semantics, like modal actualists, such as Plantinga (1987), Stalnaker (1979), Sider (2005), and Adams (1974) suggest, then the significance of modal realism, namely realism about possible worlds, vanishes. Then, we would have a mere semantic model of possible worlds and this is clearly Kripkean in spirit, not Lewisian at all. The reason Plantinga (1987, p. 215) thinks modal realism is a kind of semantic reductionism lies in his reading of possible worlds as models. Plantinga reveals a trait of reduction though not in the right place as his interpretation of Lewis cannot be fair given that possible worlds are not set-theoretical constructs but real entities. Perhaps, we should take a more hybrid approach when it comes to the aspects of semantic (representational) reduction in modal realism, an approach that recognizes the replacement of certain terms with the vocabulary of possible worlds without introducing any distorting interpretation of modal realism.

Now that we have identified the traits of reduction in modal realism, it is important to discuss whether the link of reduction Lewis benefits from is satisfactory for the purpose Lewis sets for modal realism considering the motivating conditions for reduction in metaphysics, such as comprehensiveness and simplicity. We can consider the purpose of modal realism under two headings: a comprehensive ontology that accommodates various modal beings and a modal theory that sufficiently unifies and articulates the various modal expressions in its own terms.

By ontological reduction, Lewisian ontology successfully entertains modal beings in the network of possible worlds. If one wonders whether there is room for possible, actual, contingent, and necessary beings in Lewisian worlds, the answer is clearly positive. However, modal realism achieves this at the cost of recognizing modal qualities as involving non-modal

constitutive conditions, such as the spatiotemporal notion of being in a world, which requires

the realism about the plurality of worlds. Of course, this is a natural result of two widely

compatible elements: the understanding of modality as hypothetical and the reductive

analysis of hypothetical modality. If we accept that modality is hypothetical and that

Lewisian reduction is the right analysis of modality, then there is no room for objection as to

whether Lewisian modal realism is a successful reductive theory.[14]

By representation reduction, modal realism achieves a strong plausibility by involving

the translation of modal formulation in modal logic. Given that certain modal expressions

cannot be expressed in modal logic without some sacrifices, the theoretical capacity of

replacing (translating) the formulations of modal logic with (into) the expressions of modal

realism is a benefit for modal realism. This makes modal realism more operative. Although

extending the scope of modal expressions, relative to the limited use of boxes and diamonds

as sentential operators, seems problem-free, this certainly requires some compromises on the

side of simplicity. Modal realism cannot be a simpler modal theoretical framework than a

standard modal logical one due to the commitments one must make in order to define modal

notions. For instance, in standard modal logic, modal operators are interdefinable such as $\Box P$

$= \neg\Diamond\neg P$ and $\Diamond P = \neg\Box\neg P$. This does not require reduction and hence no theoretical baggage,

except the explanation for the negation operator. However, modal realism operates with a

more demanding possible worlds theory. A modal realist has to explain the primitives that

condition modal notions. For instance, the definition of necessity is given with reference to

non-modal worlds, quantification ranging over worlds, and counterpart relation. But the

extended involvement of modal expressions in modal realism may compensate for the lack of

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[14] However, this does not assume that modal realism is free from any issues regarding its reductive traits. The next section will suggest that in order for modal realism to achieve a successful reduction, it has to presuppose a notion of possibility lying before the worlds. This possibility is a problematic one because it is not envisioned by Lewis but it is necessary for worlds to be possible.

simplicity considering the superior position of modal realism in articulating modal states that simple sentential operators fall short of.

To summarize, Lewis provides a reductive treatment of modality that recognizes modalities as secondary (hypothetical) determinations. Under the rubric of modal realism, modalities are regarded as counterpart relations among possible worlds. That is, while reducing modality to possible worlds discourse may extend the limits of modal expressions since every relation that can be considered under counterpart relations expresses modal qualities, the drawback of reduction lies in the extent to which modal realism achieves a convincing reduction of modality to possible worlds discourse. In the next section, I will investigate a substantial problem that forces a modal realist to presuppose a modal condition prior to the conception of a world. This implicit modal condition is the source of the reductive connection between worlds and modality.

1.5. The Presupposition of Modal Realism

Lewis' modal realism received great attention due to its radical claim about the existence of possible worlds. This led to many objections varying from alternative modal theories to the ones that are concerned with the internal coherency of possible worlds metaphysics. Alternative modal theories[15] identify the radical claim that there exist possible worlds as real as our actual world as a departure point for themselves. Although modal actualist views find the implications of Lewisian possible worlds useful, what they find problematic is the costly affirmation of the claim about the existence of possible worlds. However, there lies a more problematic aspect in modal realism than its radical claim. In this section, I will focus on the inner coherence of modal realism regarding Shalkowski's objection to the reduction of

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[15] In this thesis, I limit the scope of alternative theories to modal actualism(s) and modal essentialism. Although there are certainly more than two major positions opposing Lewisian modal realism, these two positions share with modal realism fundamentally the same outlook, namely reducing modality to a non-modal foundation. Even modal actualism varies when it comes to the conditioning foundation for modality. The next chapter will focus on these alternatives and their suggestion regarding the foundation of modality.

modality in modal realism. I argue that Shalkowski is right to suggest that there must be modal conditions for worlds to function as possibilities, hence modal realism does not and indeed cannot offer a sufficient and convincing reduction of modality. I will critically engage with Shalkowski's charge and provide two ways in which a modal realist may overcome given difficulties. I show that for any attempt to overcome Shalkowski's charge, the modal realist must face substantial problems stemming from the notion of possibility. By considering Hegel's idea of possibility, which states that possibility is dependent on what there actually is, I will show (a) that the foundational possibility for modal realism cannot be anything other than a presupposition, and following from (a), (b) that possibility cannot be a foundational modal notion for various modal determinations even in the form of possible worlds.

Shalkowski (1994) believes[16] that modality is primary, hence it is already irreducible. That is, modal facts do not bear on non-modal constituents because the modal has its own ontological ground i.e., actuality. According to Shalkowski (1994, p. 687), there are two claims that support why modality is reasonably irreducible: a) actuality contains modalities within itself, not due to counterpart relations among worlds or to other non-modal constitutive features. b) Modalities are already primitive features in other domains such as causality which is governed by the notion of necessity. However, the strength in Shalkowski's arguments lies in his objection to reductive modal theories, particularly Lewisian modal realism.

Shalkowski (1994, p. 679-80) suggests that a modal realist should accept the following two modal conditions if possible worlds are a true foundation of modality: (a) 'each individual meets the modal condition of being possible' and (b) 'the set of them meets

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[16] I intentionally express Shalkowski's view as a belief because the conclusion of the paper does not suggest anything more than insights as to why modality has to be primary and be contained in actuality.

the modal condition of being exhaustive'.[17] Shalkowski (1994, p. 680) presents two outcomes

for modal realism: 'If the modal realist's ontology fails to meet these two conditions, the

resulting reduction of modality is just as arbitrary as the reduction in terms of *impossibilia*

[…]. If the modal realist's ontology meets these conditions, a reduction of modality in terms

of possible worlds and their constituents is circular'. Shalkowski (1994, p. 680) maintains

that modal realism satisfies the two conditions at the expense of being circular: 'Since there

are two prior conditions on any set of things that might ground modality and these conditions

are themselves modal, there can be no successful reductive theory of modality'. That is, a

modal realist has to presuppose some certain understanding of being *possible*, not grounded

by possible worlds, and retrospectively this certain notion of possibility enables us to express

worlds as possible that it takes as a condition for the very understanding of being possible. In

other words, modal realism presupposes a notion of possibility before non-modal worlds in

order for the worlds to function as possibility.

It is a fair objection that modal realism involves, to a certain extent, arbitrariness as

Lewis (1979a, p. 128) admits that the choice of possible worlds in modal discourse is vague

and arbitrary and that only context makes them less vague and arbitrary. As opposed to

Shalkowski's charge of arbitrariness stemming from the rejection of his conditions, the modal

realist can sustain their position by rejecting Shalkowski's conditions without falling into

arbitrariness or *impossibilia*. Lewis is quite certain that an impossible world cannot be

comprehensible at all. It is important to note that this arbitrariness does not necessarily lead a

modal realist to impossible worlds. As we discussed in 1.2., for Lewis, the reason why

possibilia are apt for worlds is that it is consistent and free from contradiction where

impossibilia suffer from inconsistency and hence contradictory. For modal realism, therefore,

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[17] In terms of underlying modal presuppositions behind possible worlds, Shalkowski and Gabriel share the same view. Both think that for the ontology of possible worlds, a modal realist must presuppose some certain understanding of modalities.

possibilia are not a matter of arbitrary choice, which can be replaced with another modal notion. Rather, the reason why *possibilia* work best for Lewisian worlds is that it is the least restrictive domain that modality could be reduced to. However, they remain arbitrary in terms of their exclusive non-modal structure. That is, since possible worlds are not necessarily derived from modality, but rather are presented as an external set of conditions for modal facts, a modal realist cannot claim that possible worlds metaphysics is the definitive explanatory account for the nature of modality. This leads to the claim that the connection between the reducing and the reduced is a weak one.[18]

Although Shalkowski (1994, p. 687) argues that there would be no successful reductive theory of modality because reductive theories are also prone to circularity, a better strategy to confront modal realism would be to focus on the underlying problem, namely, the foundational presupposition that Shalkowski himself pointed out. Rather than focusing on the possible ways of rendering a reduction unsuccessful, we could shift our attention to this subtle modal presupposition. Since Lewis is not particularly concerned with the link between the reducing and the reduced but only with how effectively the reducing possible worlds metaphysics is able to account for modal facts, the link for modal realism remains a weak one. However, since the possible worlds discourse can account for modal facts, it is unfair to reject it only on this basis. I believe that a modal realist may overcome the charge of circularity in two ways, each of which, however, ends up with more troubling consequences. Firstly, a modal realist may assert that there are two notions of possibility: a) possibility as a warranty for what there actually is and b) possibility as a ground for actual things to be otherwise. The second strategy would be the utilization of the indexical actuality as the source of possibility.

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[18] As we discussed in the previous section, a reductive theory has to set a sufficient link (whether by qualitative similarity or by other terms bridging qualitative dissimilarity between) the reducing and the reduced.

As for the first option, what a modal realist has to make is an assertion that the first possibility is defining for what there actually is. The assertion enables worlds to set out conditions for modal determinations. This is a presupposition since the defining notion of possibility has to be prior to the notion of worlds, which Lewis conceives as primitive. This presupposition is a notion of possibility that renders worlds possible but not in the sense of possibility that we get from the possible worlds discourse. This possibility is an enabling condition for worlds to be possible, which is different from the notion of possibility indicating that things could be otherwise. This possibility is a warranty for the worlds to be actual because it merely functions as the indicator that it is possible that there is an infinite number of worlds. A possible world for Lewis is not something that can be otherwise on its own because it is itself already indexically *actual*—it could be possible only in relation to another world, which is also already *indexically* actual. How a possible world operates in our modal discourse, however, provides us with possibility as infinitely many ways in which an actual thing could be otherwise. If this reading of Lewis is right, then we have two notions of possibility: a) possibility *as enabling presupposition* and b) possibility *as being otherwise*. With these two notions of possibility, what a modal realist presupposes as a foundation (possibility(a)) is conceptually distinct from the possibility(b) that operates as the ground of why things could be otherwise. Since we have two distinct notions of possibility, circularity cannot be the case. However, the bigger problem persists that the first notion of possibility is not derived, nor reduced from anywhere, and without the presence of it, the possible worlds metaphysics would be circular. Avoiding circularity with this way does not set modal realism free from problems because now modal realism has to presuppose the first notion of possibility. Indeed, when Lewis suggests the first premise that there are possible worlds, he refers to a notion of possibility resembling the suggested first notion of possibility, a notion of possibility that grants us the existence of the plurality of worlds. This is already a well-

known assumption in modal realism, which since it is not proven to be derived or reduced as necessary, it is already question begging.[19] Briefly, although modal realism may overcome the charge of circularity, it remains vulnerable to scrutiny over the first premise.

Secondly, as for the consequence of accepting Shalkowski's pre-conditions, I believe that a modal realist may also overcome the charge of circularity with indexical actuality. For a modal realist, the condition (a) is not acceptable because an individual in a world is not possible itself but indexically actual; therefore, it is not modal. An individual in a world takes the role of being possible insofar as it is conceived as a counterpart of an actual individual in another world. What we conceptualize as actual in this world is possible in another world, likewise what we conceptualize as possible is actual in another world. According to modal realism, the minimal determination for anything to be possible is to be in a world. This means that a modal realist accounts for possibility by appealing to a non-modal primitive notion of possible worlds, i.e., for anything to be possible, the thing is to be wholly in a possible world, to have a part that is wholly in a possible world or to exist from a standpoint of a possible world (Lewis, 1983b, p. 40). Being in a world then contains a determining role in the notion of possibility, which in turn renders modal possibility grounded in non-modal worlds because the very definitive determination for possibility lies in being *in a world*, for instance not in the capacity to be otherwise. Possibility comes to indicate being otherwise insofar as it is thought to be in relation to an actuality.

This option centralizes the notion of indexical actuality and derives the possibility of worlds from actuality, although this opposes one of the major ideas in modal realism. Modal realism, also widely known as modal possibilism, argues that the notion of possible world is primitive. What gives a world its primitive modal trait is the fact that the world is possible,

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[19] In the literature of the reception of modal realism, the criticisms mainly focus on this very first premise by arguing that the premise is way too costly to embrace modal realism.

not that it is indexically actual. Possible worlds solely remain as the ground of modal determinations. An actual could be possible insofar as a possibility of it exists in a world apart from the world of the actual in question. Since every modal determination bears on a possible world, each modal determination succeeds from a notion of possibility. This renders modal realism a type of modal possibilism in virtue of prioritizing possibility over other modal notions such as necessity and actuality. There are two outcomes for modal realism if a modal realist suggests overcoming the charge of circularity with indexical actuality. Firstly, centralizing indexical actuality inevitably positions actuality prior to possibility since the notion of a possible world is derived in relation to an actual world. Without an actual world, there would be no possible world. However, this impinges on the modal realist's claim that possible worlds are primitives. The second outcome, which seems less problematic for modal realism, is to consider that indexical actuality provides a case for a successful reduction of modality to a non-modal foundation since every modal determination is derived from a non-modal actual world, but this option still favours the priority of actuality over possibility; however, this does not turn modal realism into modal actualism[20] since actuality does not imply that it contains possibility. As opposed to actualism, Lewis (2001, p. 99) argues that possibilities are alternatives to what there actually is. Moreover, the second option would be less problematic for modal realism since Lewis thinks that actuality is not a modality. For Lewis, actuality simply resembles existence and to be actual implies no more than to exist (2001, p. 98)[21]. That is, non-modal possible worlds still remain as primitives with a caveat that worlds are not merely possible but depend on an actual world for them to be the case.

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[20] Modal actualism here is taken as the view that possibilities are contained in actuality as parts of actuality.
[21] This is already a problematic understanding of actuality. It is very common in philosophy that being, existence, actuality, objectivity imply diverse meanings, and each holds diverse determinations. Among them, existence and actuality might be the closest relating concepts, though any careful philosopher considers them with their distinctions, such as Spinoza, Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel.

This is the point that a modal realist would not want to end up with since modal realism suggests possible worlds are primitives in virtue of their possibility.

To recapitulate, modal realism faces a twofold difficulty: firstly, in order for it to arrive at a modal notion of possibility, it has to have a notion of actuality. But what Lewis is in favour of is the primitiveness of possibility since possibility is the only concept that unrestrictedly grants a countless number of ways in which things could have been otherwise. However, positing possibility as the primitive notion requires modal realism to also assert a notion of actuality, and this actuality, which Lewis calls indexical, cannot be the reducing ground for modal determinations since Lewis thinks that actuality is already restrictive as opposed to possibility. Briefly, modal realism suggests a transition between actuality and possibility depending on the context. Although the indexical actuality already implies this constant transition from possibility to actuality depending on the context—e.g. the possibility of Trump to win the election is actual in a world, which is possible to us—, it cannot help modal realism to provide a convincing reduction of the modal to non-modal because the very non-modal world requires a conditioning possibility, which a modal realist has to presuppose. Secondly and more importantly, as shown, the notion of possibility relies on actuality. This is not only in the reception of possibility within the framework of Lewisian modal realism but also the very notion of possibility carries a reference to actuality.[22] The assertion that possible worlds are primitive is only sound, insofar as possible worlds are also thought to be individually actual.

These two results—the transition between actuality and possibility and the priority of actuality—are not what modal realism would be in favour of because modal realism would

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[22] For example, Leibniz is usually thought to be a modal possibilist regarding the idea that possibilities are essences in God's mind before their actuality as God's deed. For these possibilities to be present, there has to be a being of which essences operate as possibilities. This being is God, which necessarily actual, but God's actuality is diverse from the actuality of his deeds. Even in Leibnizian possibilism, a notion of actuality has to be there for possibilities.

like to preserve the priority of possibility as well as arguing that the worlds are non-modal foundations for modal determinations. Considering the non-modal foundation for modal determinations, possible worlds cannot accommodate the claim that possible worlds are primitives in virtue of being possible because possibility always refers to an actuality and the purest possibility is always a possibility *of*. Although with indexical actuality, modal realism can establish a non-modal foundation for modal determinations, this cannot grant modal realism its possibilist trait because considering every individual world as actual centralizes the notion of actuality instead of that of possibility. The only option remaining for the modal realist to successfully reduce modality to a non-modal foundation of possible worlds is to presuppose a notion of possibility, as Shalkowski suggests, or put forward the presupposition as necessary that there are possible worlds.

Indeed, Lewis already suggests accepting the primary claim that there are possible worlds even if it is clearly an assumption. The reason he suggests is simply that this assumption grants *philosophers' paradise* where modal discourse achieves the least restrictive domain in which the truth conditions for modal facts and statements are situated. This is certainly the least desirable result for modal realism that possible worlds discourse could only work alongside the presupposition of a notion of possibility for the plurality of non-modal worlds. Gabriel (2011, p. 121) attacks this very foundational assumption of the modal realist metaphysics because regardless of the theoretical benefits, the presupposed principles for possible worlds metaphysics already raise suspicion in virtue of involving a presupposition. Even worse, Lewis seems not interested in this problem because the way he considers metaphysics is already structured with various presuppositions and assumptions. Simply, what Lewis seeks is the effectiveness of assumed claims. If they are good at what they suggest, then they are not problematic insofar as another theory comes up with a better cost-benefit balance. However, '[a]fter all, philosophy is the critical investigation of

presuppositions and not the happy acceptance of a determinate set of axioms in order to draw consequences on the basis of jejune claims to knowledge' (Gabriel, 2011, p. 121).

In this engagement with the criticism of the integrity of modal realism, I have come to two major ideas—the priority of actuality and the transition between actuality and possibility—that remain as mere results of the analysis over Lewisian modal realism. The reason why these results are inevitable for modal realism cannot be found in the analysis of modal realism. Rather, the problem Lewis faces is related to the notion of possibility, including the one that Lewis construes with possible worlds. The concept of possibility refers to an actuality. The nature of possibility entails this trait since possibility in its own conceptual sphere cannot provide being, existence or actuality to what it is the modality of. However, these remain as mere claims without a sufficient explanation as to why possibility is itself a problematic concept to be a foundation of a modal theory. Chapter Three, Four and Five will show why possibility cannot be a reduced primitive notion by analysing Hegel's treatment of modality.

A brief explanation of these Hegelian ideas will establish why Hegel's treatment is relevant to prove that the inner difficulties of modal realism stem from designating possibility as a foundation for modal determinations. For Hegel, modality is another objective determination of being that is not qualitative, quantitative, nor existential, but being that is actual. To be actual involves specific determinations, called modalities. *Pace* Lewis, Hegel's notion of actuality is not reducible to existence since existence for Hegel does not prove itself through modal determinations.[23] For this reason, actuality for Hegel is the minimal domain for any modal facts to take place. According to Hegel's treatment, actuality involves non-

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[23] For Hegel, existence proves itself to be a *thing* that determines itself through properties. Chapter Two will provide a detailed account of Hegel's concept of existence in order to argue that property relations do not express modal determinations as opposed to the modal theories, such as Stalnaker's modal actualism, recognizing thing-property relations as modal relations.

modal and modal conceptual traits. The non-modal actuality expresses itself in the form of a unity that involves inner and outer constituents, whereas the modal actuality constitutes and manifests itself through its modal determinations, possibility, contingency and necessity. Following this, actuality determines itself to be what it is through modal determinations. That is, actuality is not only a domain for modalities, but it is also distinct from being, existence and objectivity in virtue of these modal determinations. Hegel's treatment sets actuality as the primary concept from which any other modal concepts are derived as various determinations of actuality. The *derivation* of modalities from actuality already involves the claim that actuality is the primitive concept for the derivation of modalities. In this derivation, actuality proves itself to be possible due to the involvement of possibility within itself. Possibility, as one of the determinations of actuality, is derived from actuality and contained within actuality. With this, we have the idea of transition from actuality to possibility because for Hegel what is actual already contains possibility within itself. This does not mean that possibility comes prior to actuality. On the contrary, possibility is a determination of actuality. It is a condition for anything to be modally actual because what it takes to be actual is to involve possibility within itself.[24] The involvement of possibility enables the actual to be possible. By this Hegel's account can provide possibility without an assumption while for a modal realist, there is only a problematic way to attain the first notion of possibility, which is to presuppose it.

1.6. Conclusion

The reduction of the modal to non-modal in modal realism has two problematic aspects. Firstly, modal realism does not provide a strong link between the modal and non-

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[24] However, possibility is not the only condition for actuality. If it was, then possibility would be a pre-condition, which opposes Hegel's claim about the priority of actuality over possibility. To be actual primitively expresses an idea of the unity of inner and outer elements. This is also a constitutive condition for anything to be actual. With this idea proven in the course of the *Logic*, Hegel argues that possibility is contained in actuality as an inner. These claims cannot be proven here, and Chapter Three is devoted to providing a thorough account of these claims.

modal. This leaves the door wide open to any scrutiny over the success of the reduction, particularly regarding why possible worlds would be the best foundation for modal discourse. Secondly and more importantly, as Shalkowski points out, modal realism needs modal conditions for worlds to operate as the foundation of modalities, which makes the reduction in modal realism circular. As discussed previously, a modal realist could overcome the charge of circularity, but the consequence of it would be even more problematic. I suggested that a modal realist has two notions of possibility, an enabling possibility as the condition for worlds to *possibly be* and another possibility as the ability to be otherwise. However, a modal realist has to presuppose the first notion of possibility in order to establish worlds as possible existents and subsequently account for possibility as the ability to be otherwise with the notion of possible worlds. With this, possibility, as the condition for worlds, would be totally different from the notion of possibility as the ability to be otherwise that results from the notion of worlds. Involving a presupposition already makes this option less tenable. Secondly, I suggested that a modal realist may centralize indexical actuality with which the reduction to the non-modal worlds would be secured albeit with the expense of jettisoning the primitive *possibilia*. This option would not satisfy a modal realist as the idea of the plurality of worlds can only be plausible insofar as the worlds are merely possible.

To reduce modality to the non-modal possible worlds fails to provide a problem-free foundation from which the consequent tenets such as the explanation of modalities and conditions for modal facts, are convincingly established. This also points to a failure in Lewis' attempt to explain the modal with the non-modal foundation, as modal realism requires a presupposition of possibility as the enabling condition for worlds to be possible, which undermines the function of the non-modal foundation. The chapter has shown that possible worlds metaphysics cannot be a sustainable reductive modal theory without the given presupposition.

2. HEGEL'S IDEA OF ESSENCE AND PROPERTY IN RELATION TO MODAL ACTUALISM AND MODAL ESSENTIALISM

This chapter provides a cross reading between post-Lewisian modal theories of actualism and essentialism and Hegel in order to exhibit that the designated foundations (essence and property) by modal essentialism and modal actualism, explains the nature of modality relative to the notions of essence and property. Interpreting Hegel's treatment of essence and property will pave the way for Hegel's non-foundationalist modal metaphysics. In Hegel's *Logic*, essence and property are regarded as non-modal, namely, neither modally determining its subject-matter nor modally determined. By non-modal, I refer to the categories, which do not contain modal determinations in their constitution and do not amount to the expression of modal qualities in things. For instance, according to Hegel, the essence of a being does not imply that being is necessary or possible while the actuality of being does involve certain conceptual qualities that imply the modal expressions in being. This is firstly because modalities in Hegel's *Logic* come after these concepts as more complex conceptual structures, and essence and property thus fall short of grasping the nature of modalities. Secondly, each concept in the *Logic* holds its determination in its conceptual sphere without being reducible to another. However, less complex concepts also play a role in more complex ones, without rendering more complex concepts reducible to less complex concepts. Hegel proceeds in the *Logic* with the derivation of concepts *from* previous concepts, not reducing every single concept *to* a prior one.

These two particular aspects of Hegel's *Logic* eliminate any foundationalist element to the concepts because each concept has its own peculiar logical structure that is not reducible to one another. The chapter will examine Hegel's treatment of each concept in question in order to reveal why these concepts fall short of being a foundation for modal determinations by revealing how Hegel takes them to be in their own determinations. There is

no doubt that the Spinozist principle[25] echoes in Hegel's *Logic* (EP1P8S2). That is, 'the true definition of each thing neither involves nor expresses anything except the nature of the thing defined'. When we put this principle in the context of Hegel's *Logic*, we can read it as that the true *determination* of each concept involves nothing beyond its nature. In the light of this principle, the chapter argues that if Hegel is right, essence and property relations do not express or involve modal determinations.

The chapter will show that the reducing foundations suggested by the modal actualist and essentialist accounts are prone to relativizing the nature of modality to the respective reducing foundations, whereas Hegel's immanent analysis of essence and property demonstrates that neither of these concepts is able to accommodate modalities. The chapter will proceed with a brief explanation of modal actualist and modal essentialist accounts as the criticism of Lewisian modal realism. I argue that while modal actualism and modal essentialism stand out as viable alternatives to the radical realism of Lewis' possible worlds theory, both accounts suffer from a similar problem that Lewis faces due to the reductive explanation strategy. The second section will introduce Hegel's *Logic* and suggest a strategy for considering Hegel's *Logic* in the context of contemporary modal metaphysics. The third section considers Hegel's derivation of essence from being and Hegel's account of essence as such in order to present an alternative account of essence to the account provided by modal essentialism. Section four presents Hegel's derivation of property from existence and thing to show an alternative account of property, which does not yield modal determinations. Finally, the last section suggests Hegel's *derivation* of the modal from the non-modal determinations of actuality as an alternative way of revealing the nature of modality as opposed to the reductive explanation embraced by modal realism, actualism and essentialism.

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[25] It is a principle that Spinoza thought as intuitive in thinking, hence not put in the Ethics in the form of a proposition but only as a remark in a Scholium.

2.1. Modal Metaphysics After Modal Realism: Modal Actualism and Modal Essentialism

The reception of modal realism is mainly concerned with the radical claim made by Lewis about the realism of possible worlds. Lewisian realism is often thought to be too worrisome given that the claim that possible worlds exist as real cannot go further than a mere belief, which one can accept or reject easily. This caused the reception of possible worlds to tackle with the possible worlds without committing to Lewisian realism, or to suggest a straightforward replacement of the possible worlds discourse by putting forward other primitive notions that function in the same way as possible worlds do in revealing the nature of modalities. The reception of modal realism can be categorized into two camps, both of which find Lewis' radical realism worrisome. The diversity arises when it comes to their consideration of the existential status of possible worlds.

The first strand, which I take to be modal actualism[26], favours the idea of possible worlds in other forms such as maximal sets of propositions representing the actual in sets of ways in which it could be otherwise and possible worlds as property relations of actuals. Although modal actualism opens room for possible worlds though only as abstract entities in the form of property or sets of propositions, the second strand, which I take to be modal essentialism, suggests a complete elimination of the possible worlds discourse by putting forward a notion of essence that operates as the ground of modalities. Both theories can be thought of as a criticism of the reducing foundation of possible worlds (in Lewis' sense) while suggesting alternative reducing foundations such as the property relation[27] and essence

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[26] There are various forms of modal actualism. In this chapter, I will consider modal actualist views according to how they position themselves against modal realism. For example. Bennet's hard actualism (2005) immediately detaches itself from the debate about possibility against modal realism by holding onto the claim that everything that there is is actual.

[27] Although this is more complex to deal with here, Stalnaker (2012, p. 11) states that property relations are themselves modal. So, if we understand this in Nagel's terms, he is not suggesting a reduction between dissimilar items, but he regards properties and modalities are similar. This enables him to replace the dissimilar reduction of modality to possible worlds with the similar reduction of modality to property relations. In this

according to which modalities are explained. In this section, I will analyse Stalnaker's modal actualism and Lowe's modal essentialism as alterative accounts overcoming Lewis' radical realism about possible worlds while preserving the reductive trait without commitments to the reality of possible worlds.

2.1.1. Modal Actualism

Modal actualism is a view arguing that there is only one actual world (the world we live in) and that various states, which are not actual in this world, are possible states corresponding to properties of actual things. Everything that is actual is modally determinable in its state of actuality. Modalities are thus the determinations of actual beings. Modal actualism is at odds with modal realism with respect to the understanding of possibility. Modal realism argues that possibility exists prior to actuality, whereas modal actualism broadly argues that possibility is part of what there actually is. This dispute extends to the utilization of possible worlds discourse in our understanding of possibility. As stated in Chapter 1, Lewis' addition to possible worlds discourse in modal metaphysics is to suggest that possible worlds are as real and existing as our actual world. While modal actualism still accommodates possible worlds, the modal actualist recognizes them as representing the ways, or abstract sets of possible states, in which actual things could be otherwise. Depending on the interpretation of possible worlds, modal actualism exhibits various perspectives. For this reason, it is crucial to limit and specify the type of actualism that is here taken into consideration.

The variations of modal actualism are often diversified into two camps as soft and hard actualism depending on the approach the theory takes against possible worlds discourse. According to Solomyak (2013, p. 23), modal actualism in general comes along with two

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section, I will explain the reasons for his view. However, a more elaborate discussion on this will come alongside Hegel's treatment of property, which will enable me to argue that determinations of properties do not involve modal commitments.

claims. First, there are no more things than there actually are. That is, there are no worlds or entities as *possibilia*. Second, modal notions are irreducible primitives. That is, modalities are not emergent from a non-modal reducing foundation, unlike Lewisian non-modal worlds expressing modalities. I call this position hard actualism, which does not leave room for possibilities to be present in actuality. Hard actualism argues that anything that exists is in actuality. So possible states of things are non-existents. They merely *represent* the ways in which actual things might be other than what they are. On the other hand, as a less hostile position to *possibilia*, soft actualism argues that there are *possibilia* but not as real as actuality but in a sub-categorical form of actuality. Possibilities are present in actuality in a form that is different from that of actuality itself. Soft actualism broadly agrees with the function and use of possible worlds in terms of revealing the nature of modality but disagrees with the claim that they are real on par with actuality. Instead, soft actualism suggests regarding possible worlds as *abstracta* such as, logical furniture of the actual world (Adams, 1974, p. 224) or maximal propositions (Stalnaker, 2012, p. 19), which is to say that possibilities are genuine features of the actual world.

I will take Stalnaker's modal actualism into account due to the following two reasons. First, Stalnaker's modal actualism is an elaborate theory with his arguments about the property relations and propositions that present themselves as modalities—albeit Stalnaker's version of modal actualism initially takes its departure from Lewisian modal realism as a critique of it, Stalnaker does not only treat modal actualism as a mere critique. This means that Stalnaker not only reactively answers some of the problems coming along with modal realism, but he also offers a well-structured theory of modal metaphysics. Secondly, Stalnaker's account is the most relevant to the thesis given that Chapter 5 will examine Paul Redding's interpretation of Hegel's idealism as modal actualism, whose main claim is that

the commitment to actualism in Hegel's treatment of modality echoes in Stalnaker's modal actualism.

Stalnaker's modal actualism does not seem entirely at odds with Lewisian modal realism. Rather, Stalnaker welcomes some parts of the modal realist interpretation of possible worlds. Although Lewis states that modal realism is a package whose constituents—i.e., the ontology of possible worlds, involving 'extreme realism about possible worlds' (Stalnaker, 1979, p. 227) and possible worlds semantics—should not be thought of separately, Stalnaker's first departure from modal realism is to disintegrate the components of modal realism.

More importantly, Stalnaker's theoretical departure is based on his rejection of the idea that possible worlds are also actual. Modal realism argues that possible worlds exist as the ways in which things could be otherwise, while also suggesting that possible worlds are the same kind as our actual world, i.e. actual, concrete, and spatio-temporal in themselves only according to their own individuals, but they are possible for us. Stalnaker (1979, p. 228) reads Lewisian indexical actuality alongside two implications: a) actuality as *the ways that things could be otherwise* and b) relativity that bounds actuality with *I and my surroundings*. Stalnaker maintains that ways that things could be otherwise can only be a state or a property of actual things, not the whole world. Stalnaker (1979, p. 229) makes space for Lewisian indexical actuality in his modal actualism insofar as indexical actuality is taken as a semantic notion that does not commit one to the reality[28] of possible worlds. Stalnaker accepts the claim that there are possible worlds, albeit not in the same form as our actual world but as sets of propositions representing ways in which the actual could be otherwise.

[28] Here Stalnaker, unlike Lewis, equates reality with actuality. 'I am inclined to think not only that what is *actual* coincides with what exists but that this is because "actual" just means (more or less) real, or existent. The modal realist disagrees, and he might complain that by understanding "actual" in this way […] (Stalnaker, 2012, pp. 4-5).

To sum up, Stalnaker agrees with the idea that there are possible worlds but disagrees with Lewis that those possible worlds are the same kind as our actual world. The reason why Stalnaker admits the existence of possible worlds lies in his conception of possible worlds as merely implying possible states or properties of actual things. This turns Lewisian extreme realism into a benign realism, or precisely a form of modal actualism, which recognizes possible worlds as possible properties of a single actual world.

As stated in the previous chapter, possible worlds discourse has many forms that comprise a wide variety of entities, such as sets, propositions, and abstract logical entities. Given that Lewis' modal realism attacks these interpretations in virtue of their lack of a metaphysical thesis about the existential status of worlds, Stalnaker's suggestion might seem to be a return to pre-Lewisian possible worlds discourse. However, Stalnaker recognizes possible worlds as properties of the actual things, which are uninstantiated but nonetheless present. The reason Stalnaker suggests the notion of property is that he recognizes that property takes place in propositions as a more primitive concept, which is embedded in every proposition.[29] So, possible worlds cannot be the reducing ground for *possibilia* in the framework of Stalnaker's actuality because the fact that possible worlds are *ways that things could be otherwise* simply implies that they are properties. In Stalnaker's modal actualism, the plurality of worlds is preserved as uninstantiated yet existing properties which merely imply the ways things could be otherwise. However, this is exactly the idea Lewis wants to avoid, namely, taking possible worlds into mere alternative representations of the actual things of our world.[30] Regardless of Lewis' objection to *ersatz* possible worlds, Stalnaker (2012, p. 37) states: 'In characterizing possible worlds-states as a kind of property, I

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[29] The idea behind the relationship between property and propositions is that every proposition involves predicates, which express certain properties of the subject. The proposition that the rose is red involves red as the property of the rose. Red remains a possibility of the rose until instantiated.

[30] Lewis (2001, pp. 136-174) spares a chapter for this issue under the name of *ersatzism* where he criticizes views considering possible worlds as *abstract* alternative entities to the actual things such as possible worlds as linguistic entities, abstract representational entities.

emphasized that they are therefore not (or at least not essentially) representations. But of course we can theorize about properties, propositions, and possible states of the world only by representing them'.

Stalnaker's modal actualism regards properties as non-representational in the sense that they are objectively present as possibilities of actual things. Stalnaker attributes a type of being to possible worlds, by affirming the Lewisian claim that there are possible worlds but differently from Lewis that in the modal actualist framework, possible worlds are present insofar as they are *exemplified*. By considering possible worlds as properties, Stalnaker claims that he neither reduces possible worlds to properties, because for him possible worlds are equivalent to properties, nor believes in reducing modality to a more basic concept of property. Stalnaker (2012, p. 11) explicitly states that:

> If one tries to say just a little about what properties, in general, are, it
> becomes clear the extent to which, in classifying possible worlds as
> properties, we are not explaining modal notions in terms of something
> more basic. I take the notions of property and relation to be themselves
> modal notions. Properties are to be understood in terms of what it would
> be for them to be exemplified, which means we understand what a
> particular property is in terms of a range of possible situations in which it
> would be exemplified. But possible situations, we are saying, are
> themselves properties—ways a situation, or a world, might be. It is not
> reduction but regimentation that the possible-worlds framework
> provides—a procedure for representing modal discourse, using primitive
> modal notions, in a way that helps reveal its structure.

Stalnaker's account does not seem to reduce possible worlds to properties, nor modality to properties. However, the account suffers from a circularity between *possible* situations as properties and properties (as exemplified). The circularity stems from the fact that a property is explained by a range of possible situations (possible worlds), which are

themselves also properties. Stalnaker suggests that properties are in a complex relation to each other, a relation where the instantiation of a property renders others possible. With this, we have a wide variety of possible states as the properties of an actual thing, which itself also involves an instantiated property.[31]

The line of thought Stalnaker suggests is the following. Possible worlds exist as ways in which things could be otherwise. *The ways* imply possible properties that things may hold. The ways imply modalities of actual things. Hence, according to Stalnaker, modal determinations imply property determinations in things, which find their ground in the discourse of possible worlds. The main objection against Stalnaker's actualism is the aspect of reconciling modality with property. Although Stalnaker believes that he is not reducing modality to anything more primitive and suggests modal relations are a type of property relations, his arguments rest on the idea of possible worlds as properties of actual things. Hence, in revealing the nature of modality, Stalnaker's account remains limited to the conception of property strictly tied to possible worlds discourse. Regarding actuality as existence enables Stalnaker to conceive properties as determinations of actuality. However, this is certainly a categorical problem if we have a comprehensive metaphysics capable of diversifying types of being according to their specific determinations.[32] I will argue in 2.4 that Hegel's idea of existence requires a distinction to be drawn between existence and actuality in virtue of the specific determinations an existent involves. That is, Hegel's treatment suggests that we must understand existence with its own determinations without

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[31] This view of property relation echoes later in Brandom's idea of material incompatibility (2015). For him, material incompatibility relations amount to modal relations since for him a thing holding certain properties in virtue of the compatibility reveals the possible and necessary states in things.

[32] By the categorical problem, I understand the misplacement of the nature of modality in a categorical structure that is alien to modal determinations on its own. This point is inspired by Lowe's criticism (2013, pp. 159-60) regarding the function of the maximal set of propositions in revealing the nature of modal truths. Lowe criticises possible worlds discourse in modal metaphysics, all together modal realism and actualisms for mislocating the ground of modal truths in '[…] a special class of entities of an esoteric kind[…] such as possible worlds, maximal sets of propositions, and property relations.

appealing to other notions falling external to the sphere of existence. If we follow Hegel's treatment where existence determines itself on its own terms, we see that existence is concerned with things, which determine themselves through properties. Properties are thus not modal determinations, nor are they determinations of actuality. This distinction between determinations of actuality and existence is as important as the distinction between existence and actuality. Stalnaker (2012, pp. 4-5) does not clearly distinguish between actuality and existence given his statement that 'I am inclined to think not only that what is actual coincides with what exists but that this is because "actual" just means (more or less) real, or existent'. Hence, regarding properties as modal determinations, or as the determinations of actuality seems non-problematic for his account if we are insensitive to the categorical difference between existence and actuality.

2.1.2. Modal Essentialism

Modal essentialism is a view arguing that the essence of things expresses modal qualities. That is, the nature of modality is made explicit by the essential determination that a thing consists of. Although modal essentialism is a broader position, I will focus on Lowe's version of essentialism.[33] Lowe suggests modal essentialism, as he calls *serious essentialism*, as an alternative modal theory to modal realism and modal actualism. Lowe (2013, p. 160) criticizes modal realism and actualism for mislocating 'the grounds of modal truths'. Just like modal actualism, modal essentialism also aims to criticise the extreme realism in Lewis' possible worlds theory. Instead of domesticating the realism of Lewisian possible worlds as modal actualism does, modal essentialism suggests essence as expressing modalities. In this section, I will take Lowe's modal essentialism into consideration and analyse the arguments

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[33] The reason why Lowe's account is prominent for this thesis is its opposition to modal realism and the way Lowe designates Lewisian possible worlds as a departure point. For this reason, I think that Lowe's modal essentialism opts in the context of the thesis better.

that stand against Lewisian modal realism by suggesting a different non-modal concept to reveal the nature of modality.

Lowe names his account *serious essentialism* in order to distinguish his account from a version of essentialism compatible with possible worlds. The latter of essentialism may introduce essence as the common quality or property of beings in diverse possible worlds. For instance, the property of *x* is an essential property of *y* if *x* is the property of y in every possible world. Lowe calls this position *ersatz* essentialism since the occurrence of a property in every possible world represents the essence of the thing, which holds that property. Lowe suggests a completely different reading of essence from possible worlds discourse, and his reading starts off with the Lockean definition. Accordingly, essence is 'the very being of anything, whereby it is, what it is' (Lowe, 2013, p. 144). Essence is what it is to be *x* for things. Lowe maintains that essences are not things nor entities that relate to other things. Rather, essences are a type of being (rather a presence) that reveals the characteristic of a particular form of being, existence. Lowe, in this respect, sets his notion of essence apart from Locke's by arguing that the Lockean real essence of a material substance is the combination of its internal constitutive sub-entities. Lowe suggests that the concept of essence should not introduce anything other than the thing itself since doing so requires us to assert another layer of essence for these sub-entities, which eventually leads to the problem of infinite regress. Instead, he suggests that essence is graspable by understanding. 'To know something's essence is not to be acquainted with some further thing of a special kind, but simply to understand what exactly that thing is.' (Lowe, 2013, p. 147).

Lowe (2013, p. 152) suggests two ideas to explicate how modal essentialism situates the notion of essence in relation to modality. With these two ideas, Lowe's suggestion sheds light on the nature of modality by considering essence as the foundation of modality. First, Lowe conceives essence as a type of being that is not a thing nor an entity. That is to say, the

essence of a thing is ontologically distinct from the thing itself. Essence is not a thing, nor a property or a proposition, nor a combination of further things held by an entity. The essence of things corresponds to their nature, which is an independent trait from their being or existence. Secondly and more importantly, Lowe (2013, p. 152) suggests that 'essence precedes existence'. That is, there are types of being that do not exist but have essence and their essence does not guarantee that they exist. This idea removes the dependence of essence on existence, thereby allowing Lowe to reveal that modalities are also independent from the existing things as modal qualities can be held by non-existent things too. Accordingly, non-existent things have essence, and their essence grounds the idea that they also involve modal determinations. For instance, the possibility of copper being conductive is not in virtue of its existence granting copper the quality of conductivity. Rather, the possibility of being conductive is already grounded in the very nature, or essence, of copper, regardless of the existential status of copper.

The premise that *essence precedes existence* gains importance when it is regarded in comparison to the possible worlds discourse, including both modal realism and actualism. Remember that modal realism suggests that non-modal existing worlds are the foundation of modalities meaning that worlds hold modal truths about facts. Lowe argues that facts in worlds already presuppose modal truths for them too. So, worlds and their individuals, which make up worlds, cannot be non-modal since they are existent and their existence makes sure that they have essences, with which they also hold modal truths for themselves. For Lowe (2013, p. 159-160), this problem also persists in modal actualist accounts in a different form that replace existing worlds with existing proposition or properties, which Lowe conceives to be problematic because they are just further entities that still exist, and hence hold modal truths for themselves.

The upshot of Lowe's criticism of possible worlds discourse in modal metaphysics is that possible worlds require existing entities to ground modality which causes either the problem of circularity or the problem of unique types of entities that yield modality but are exempt from modal determinations. While modal realism is prone to this problem[34], modal actualism, particularly Stalnaker's version, might avoid the problem with the help of the categorical difference between instantiated and uninstantiated properties since for Stalnaker, properties do not exist in the same way that actual things do. They are rather instantiated or uninstantiated in an actual thing. In this sense, properties are not further existing entities as Lowe would regard.[35]

Considering Lowe's two ideas about essence, we find a constitutive principle that governs his criticism of possible worlds discourse while reconstructing modality alongside this notion of essence. That is, '*essences are the ground of all metaphysical necessity and possibility*' (Lowe, 2013, p. 152). Although Lowe does not explicitly argue for a reduction of modality to essence, from a certain standpoint, his account fits into a type of reduction that regards modality within the limits of essence metaphysics. Since Lowe preserves the distinction between essence and modality, it is clear that his account of essence operates as a reducing ground for modality.

2.1.3. Conclusion

As shown, post-Lewisian accounts in modal metaphysics preserve the traits of reduction, regardless of the diversity in the reducing grounds. The problem, I suggest, lies in the way the nature of modality is revealed, namely only relative to the reducing foundational notions. I suggest that the persisting trait of reduction is prone to offer a limited and relative account of

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[34] Since we already discussed this problem in the previous section, I will not go into details again.

[35] However, it is crucial to note that Lowe does not strictly target Stalnaker's account. Rather his criticism points towards rather a general version of modal actualism that conceives possible worlds as maximal sets of consistent propositions. Though Stalnaker would also think that this is true but the caveat in Stalnaker's account is that every proposition holds properties as primitives, which operates as the source of modalities of actual things.

the nature of modality, e.g., modality in the vocabulary of property relations, and that of essence. In order to show the possibility of a non-reductive metaphysical, namely immanent, analysis of modal concepts provided as in Hegel's treatment of modality in his *Science of Logic*, this chapter will proceed to negate the claims of modal actualism and essentialism regarding their foundational reducing notions by presenting Hegel's analysis of essence and the property relation. The following sections of this chapter will provide an exegesis of Hegel's account of essence and property, which will pave the way for analysing modality immanently by revealing the nature of the suggested reducing concepts as categorically different from those of modality.

2.2. Preamble to Hegel's *Logic*

It is a well-acknowledged fact that Hegel's *Logic* is a notoriously difficult text. One of the reasons is that Hegel's *Logic* does not take any prior prominent philosophical ideas as given. This leads to a certain difficulty for the readers since the *Logic* suggests a re-construction of common metaphysical concepts. The method, if there is any, also adds another layer of complexity since the method of the science of thinking for Hegel is immanent to the categories of thinking. The philosophical thinking at its core involves nothing other than *letting go* of the categories of thought to develop themselves through the determinations they have.[36] The method of logic involves making explicit the categories of thinking through thinking alone. In this respect, Hegel's *Logic* is a self-determining, normative activity in which thinking sets itself rules to make explicit thoroughly what belongs to itself.[37] This section will start with a brief explanation of how Hegel proceeds in the *Logic* and then introduce a strategy to situate Hegel's logic of essence in the context of

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[36] This is one of the remarkable notes in Houlgate's interpretation of Hegel (2006, p. 157-9), which unearths the importance of *letting go* in the *Logic* given that the discussions over the method of the *Logic* are overwhelmed by the term dialectic.

[37] I think that this aspect of the *Logic* resembles Kant's Critique in which the analysis of the possible conditions for cognition reveals how cognition works whereby the analysis turns into actively setting the norms under which the cognition operates.

contemporary modal metaphysics. Hegel's logic of essence does not centralize the arguments regarding modality as its fundamental aim nor does it maintain that modality is in every determination of essence. For this reason, suggesting a strategy to identify the place of modality in Hegel's *Logic* is crucial to situate Hegel's treatment of modality in a context.

2.2.1. What is Hegel's *Logic* about?

Hegel's *Logic* contains three doctrines, being, essence and the concept, in two books entitled the "objective logic", in which the doctrines of being and essence are located, and the "subjective logic", which contains the doctrine of concept. The *Logic* presents the progressive derivation of thought determinations starting from indeterminate thought, which is the same as indeterminate being. Hegel's *Logic* can be thought of as the philosophical activity of thinking making its own norms of thinking from itself, i.e., the method of thinking as well as discovering the norms or categories that are immanent within thought. Although the praise of thinking might seem like a typical rationalist idea, Hegel's claim also involves the participation of being in this activity of thinking. Thinking without any specific content and form does not tell us much about itself, apart from the fact that it is being, which has no specific content and form. This correspondence between being and thinking is due to their capacity to be present without any determinations.[38]

However, for Hegel, this is not only reconciliation between thinking and being. Hegel claims that *determinations* of thinking are *determinations* of being. Logic is an activity of objective thinking, not an activity of the I reactively thinking over given things. Hegel claims

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[38] One may object to this argument by suggesting that we consider various other concepts without their specifications. For instance, existence without any specific determination might function in the same way as being does in the *Logic*, or intuition without a specific determination might be considered as an alternative to thinking. Thereby, one might criticize Hegel for making an arbitrary opening. However, Hegel's choice is not arbitrary but rather necessary. Firstly, logic is a thinking activity, which is transparent and open to its own scrutiny, whereas intuition, unless it is intellectual intuition, is unquestionable by thinking. Secondly, any other concept that functions in the same way as being does such as existence or actuality cannot satisfy the condition of being utterly indeterminate and immediate because their state of immediacy or indeterminateness cannot be anything more minimal and primitive than being.

that the objectivity of thought can only be attained in the activity of thinking over things, which grants us the nature of things. 'Thus, logic coincides with metaphysics, with the science of things grasped in thoughts […]' (EL §24).

Only with this reconciliation can logic be thought of as about determinations of being and thought of as revealing the nature of being in reconstituting thought-determinations. Determination is a key term here to bridge logic and metaphysics as it is the joint where each manifests itself as one and the same. Pippin (2018, p. 257) rightly states that, for Hegel '[t]o be is to be determinate […]'. The very beginning of the *Logic*, namely pure *indeterminate* being, already shows that without any determination, being is nothing. The only thing that the *Logic* holds on to in being is its determinacy.[39] The reconciliation of logic and metaphysics through the term determination grants the *Logic* two roles at once. While constituting the categories of thinking, namely method and the attitude in which the subject-matter is taken into consideration, the *Logic* also reveals the nature of being, and while revealing the nature of being, it also recognizes its own nature.

Since logic is the science of thinking, it should not engage with any question-begging thought determinations that undermine the very activity of accounting for its own laws of thinking. 'Logic […] cannot presuppose any of these forms of reflection, these rules and laws

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[39] Although the *Logic* takes indeterminate being as its beginning and immediately arrives at the thought of nothing due to the indeterminacy of being, it reveals that thinking swings between the purest indeterminacy, or being without any determinations, and nothing, which is again the same indeterminacy as pure being. In this loop between being and nothing, the *Logic* recognizes the vanishing of being into nothing and the coming-to-be of nothing as distinct moments, which are held under the category of becoming. While the difference between being and nothing only persists in their unity, or in becoming, becoming is also where both being and nothing show the same determinacy that each vanishes into the other. Since becoming is the unity of vanishing moments, it cannot be anything more definitive than the very vanishing itself because vanishing is the only determinacy in becoming. Becoming as vanishing cannot vanish into nothing or into being because they are pure indeterminacies. 'This result is a vanishedness. […] It is the unity of being and nothing that has become quiescent simplicity. But this quiescent simplicity is *being*, yet no longer for itself but as determination of the whole'. Hence becoming as simple being is determinate being (Dasein). This brief exposition shows that when thinking is left alone free from any determinations, it sets itself a determination of itself from the state of indeterminacy. The *Logic* for this reason is about the determinacies of thought, which is the same as those of being.

of thinking, for they are part of its content and they first have to be established within it' (SL 23/WL-I 35). For this reason, logic is supposed to begin with an unquestionably certain point[40], which does not presuppose a method or content prior to itself, or project its goal. Hegel can be seen to be in agreement with the Cartesian idea that philosophy is supposed to be constituted on a certain principle from which any other principle can be derived[41]. The Cartesian meditations accomplish this certainty with the thinking I that is absolutely certain about its being after doubting everything that there is, including God, which, nonetheless, comes after the proof of the I as the ground of thinking I.[42] However, Hegel is not a Cartesian thinker and not content with the Cartesian conclusion that thinking I as being is the non-question-begging foundation. For Hegel, the I is already something determinate and rendering it indeterminate already requires a mediation involving negating the determinacies of the I, which drifts the project away from its immediate presuppositionless beginning (SL

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[40] Prof Houlgate asked a challenging question whether I conceive of utterly indeterminate being as an unquestionably certain point. Though, at first sight, indeterminacy and certainty might seem to be oxymoron qualities for being to involve them together, what I think of indeterminate being alongside unquestionable certainty is that being cannot be anything other than utterly indeterminate. For this reason, I think that being in its utter indeterminacy is an unquestionably certain point from which the *Logic* can take its beginning.

[41] For Hegel, this certainty is pure knowledge, which is the outcome of his treatment of consciousness in the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Hegel's phenomenology can be considered as a science of consciousness in which the stages of consciousness in its course of developing varieties of knowledge are made explicit. In this course, consciousness arrives at a point where it can make itself as a subject-matter of its knowing activity. This is, as Hegel calls it, absolute knowing. In absolute knowing, the subject becomes the object of knowledge where the disparity between knowing subject and known object diminishes. Hegel (SL, p. 47/WL, p. 68) suggests that the outcome of absolute knowing, i.e. pure knowledge, can be a beginning for the *Logic* only if the determinations that lead to pure knowledge are set aside. Hegel (SL, p. 47/WL, p. 68) maintains that whereby setting aside the determinations ceases pure knowledge to be knowledge, thereby pure knowledge falls into simple immediacy. William Maker (1994, pp. 86-93) suggests the *Phenomenology* as an entry to the *Logic* by conceptualising the activity of eliminating determinations under the notion of self-sublating mediation, which results in immediacy. However, this is not the only entry for the *Logic*, as Houlgate (2006, p. 144) suggests that '[t]hose who are prepared to suspend their ordinary certainties can bypass the *Phenomenology* and proceed directly to the *Logic'*. For Houlgate (2006, p. 60), presuppositionless philosophy needs a self-critical attitude against certain knowledge, assumptions, and prejudices. If that counts as a presupposition, then self-criticism could be the only presupposition the *Logic* requires. However, this is certainly cannot count as a presupposition because self-criticism does not dictate any thought prior to the *Logic* nor predetermines the course of the *Logic*. This is rather a propaedeutic remark to set the activity of thinking free from its prejudices towards well known conceptions of philosophy. From both ways into the *Logic*, we can derive that to begin the *Logic* requires a preparation for one to free themselves from settled ideas, concepts, and thoughts.

[42] This is a worrisome aspect of Cartesian meditations. The first meditation suggests the thinking I as the minimal point in which the certainty about being is achieved. However, the third meditation undermines this minimal point by suggesting the idea of God as prior to the thinking I as an enabling condition for the activity of thinking. This proves Hegel's concerns regarding the determinacy of I to make an immediate beginning for a systematic philosophy.

pp. 53-4/WL pp. 76-77). While Descartes' conclusion is thinking therefore I am, Hegel's

conclusion is '[…] rather "thinking, therefore *is*"' (Houlgate, 2006, p. 32). Hegel's

suggestion would drop out the scrutiny over the legitimacy of the I in Descartes. Hegel

invites us to the *Logic* not as conscious being but as only thinking being. What remains

outside or additional to this activity of pure thinking has to be left out at the beginning of the

Logic.

Although it may seem that the scope of the idea of presuppositionless philosophy is

limited to how the *Logic* should begin[43], its implication extends beyond the opening of the

Logic. The idea of presuppositionlessness is pertinent in the later categories of the *Logic*,

which begins with *immediacy*[44]. As I understand it, presuppositionlessness amounts to a

scientific-metaphysical attitude in the activity of revealing the nature of things. Any category

in the systematic science beginning with a hidden or purposeful presupposition would

undermine its own derivation from the previous category, which would consequently make

the *Logic* inconsistent. For this reason, the philosopher should persist, throughout the *Logic*,

in avoiding unjustified presuppositions and should consider in a category solely what has

been derived from the previous category. 'Thus the beginning of philosophy is the ever

present and self-preserving foundation of all subsequent developments, remaining

everywhere immanent in its further determinations' (SL p. 49/WL p. 71). Presuppositionless

beginning with pure immediate being remains greatly important for preserving the attitude (of

avoiding presuppositions) that secures the integrity of presuppositionless philosophy.

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[43] It is important to note that Hegel even argues against the term beginning regardless of what it is the beginning of when he discusses the opening of the *Logic* since he thinks the term beginning immediately presupposes an end, which is against the idea of presuppositionlessness. Houlgate (2006) elegantly uses the term opening to explain the beginning of the *Logic*, which does not hold any questionable implications coming along with the term regarding its possible contrariety to the idea of presuppositionless.
[44] Immediacy is a technical term indicating a moment of a category, which does not yet exhibit any determination of itself. Although the moment of immediacy might imply that the given category is empty of any determinations, and hence indistinctive from any other categories of the *Logic*, the use of the term alongside categories, such as immediate actuality or actuality as immediacy already implies a distinctive feature in the categories remaining yet to be revealed.

Presuppositionless logic also brings to the surface the idea of foundation-free metaphysics, which distinguishes Hegel's project from those which regard metaphysics as the science of foundations or first principles.[45] For Hegel, the beginning of the *Logic* is merely the beginning which develops into more concrete categories. That is, the beginning is not fixed foundation for what follows in the *Logic*. As seen previously, contemporary metaphysical accounts tend to find themselves in a foundation-seeking activity that may lead to disregarding the nature of modality or understanding it as based on non-modal foundations. However, conceiving metaphysics as a foundation-seeking activity is not something unique in the contemporary accounts. Classic or dogmatic metaphysics also takes its subject matter in the similar manner to this foundation seeking activity. For instance, Spinoza's geometrically proven system of metaphysics (in *the Ethics*) is built on a set of definitions and axioms from which propositions are derived. In particular, Spinoza's substance as *causa sui* functions as the foundation for his system. Hegel's *Logic* follows a different path than dogmatic metaphysics by beginning with a critique of any known principles of philosophy. However, the Hegelian critique does not suggest another foundation for philosophy, nor does it show the ways in which a proper foundation is established. Rather it targets foundations all together and aims to eliminate foundations at once. Although Hegel's suggestion is Cartesian in spirit, it is certainly more radical than Cartesian doubt. Cartesian doubt is methodological one that momentarily defers assumed concepts, ideas, and thoughts about being. However, for Hegel, deferring assumptions itself is the way in which thought reveals itself as free. In other words, setting assumptions aside is the product of free thinking, which can be the only

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[45] The non-foundationalist aspect of Hegel's *Logic* is elegantly expressed by Houlgate (1999, p. 26): 'What is set out in the Science of Logic, therefore, is not an account of a rational principle or Idea that precedes being and grounds all natural and historical development; rather, the *Logic* sketches an initial, abstract picture of being itself as self-determining rationality. […] The understanding of being reached in the *Logic* thus turns out (once we get to the Philosophy of Nature) to be an underdetermination of what being is in truth: it tells us merely what being must first be understood to be. But, for Hegel, what we first understand being to be should not be mistaken for some underlying ground or foundation of being.'

foundation for metaphysics in its course of exposing the true nature of things. Hence the foundation of logic for Hegel is pure thinking or immediate being if anymore could call it a foundation in the known sense of the term.

This amounts to the constitution of a metaphysics that is not governed by unproven principles within the activity of thinking but that constitutes principles throughout investigating itself. When considered in the context of modal metaphysics, Hegel's foundationless logic suggests that modal concepts can be immanently derived from one another in a way that does not require a further non-modal foundation.[46]

2.2.2. A Strategy for Interpreting the Logic of Essence in the Context of Modal Metaphysics

A presuppositionless beginning for philosophy is not only an entry to Hegel's *Logic* but also to each category that the *Logic* takes as its subject-matter. The examination of each category in Hegel's *Logic* starts from various immediacies.[47] Although each category beginning with immediacy indicates that there is not anything left over from the determinations of previous categories as a presupposition for the upcoming category, the nature of being derived from the previous determinations implies that immediacies in the *Logic* are not pure and utterly indeterminate as the immediacy in the opening of the *Logic*. At first, these two aspects of immediacy might seem to be incompatible to each other.[48] However, they become

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[46] It is important to note that modal categories are derived ultimately from non-modal ones such as the relation of the inner and outer and the absolute. However, this does not mean that being derived from amounts to being founded on or being reducible to.

[47] However, in some categories of the *Logic* concepts presupposes other concepts in their development. The claim that every category of the *Logic* is presuppositionless is certainly not true given that some concepts require other concepts in their conceptual development such as an object, in Hegel's treatment of purpose, presupposing its purpose as something external to itself (SL 668/WL-II 460). This is a benign form of presupposition simply because it is identified as one within the determinations of the object. The presupposition becomes problematic if they are left unrecognized and if they are a governing principle for a given category.

[48] To be precise, the two types of immediacies in the *Logic* can be conceptualized as mediated immediacy and unmediated immediacy. Mediated immediacy refers to the immediacies we see after the beginning of the *Logic* since these immediacies such as determinate being, existence and so on are the result of a mediation, whereas unmediated immediacy refers to being at the beginning of the *Logic*.

complementary regarding the progression of thought determinations in their complexity throughout the *Logic*. The categories prove their own nature within their own logical space, which eventually prove themselves to be other than what they are in the beginning as an immediacy.

Beginning with the immediacy (unmediated, indeterminate form) of each category makes it possible to begin an analysis of individual categories without recognizing the conceptual determinations prior to categories as a presupposition for the following categories. The *Logic* consists of restricted domains, each of which constitutes its own sub-logical structure. Determinate immediacy is key to begin the analysis of each concept. Categories of the *Logic* are distinct thought determinations from one another. This not only gives each category its unique logical structure, but also sets themselves in a sphere of their own. This enables us to think that the categories of the *Logic* can be analysed in isolation from one another. What I mean by isolation is no different than suspending assumptions in the opening of the *Logic*. For instance, Hegel distinguishes between existence (*Existenz*) and actuality due to the difference in their determinations. Although the *Logic* expresses them as one and the same at their moment of immediacy (SL 478/WL-II 202), the determinations, which develop their concept proper, exhibit that their respective determinations do not play a role in revealing the nature of one another.

The stage of immediacy in categories allows us to suspend what is known prior to a given category at the beginning and reveal their true nature without a reference to anything external to its own domain. However, it is also crucial to recognize that isolating categories from each other might seem to be contrary to the development of the *Logic* by means of deriving concepts from each other because the *Logic* connects each concept in a manner that offers a global argument about being/thought and its various determinations. I simply suggest that without risking the connection of the local arguments to the global ones, the *Logic* can be

interpreted in a way that one can conceive each category in itself. This is possible because the stage of immediacy is a moment of difference from a prior category. The moments of immediacy in the *Logic* enable us to consider separate categories of the *Logic* as concise treatments for particular subject matters. However, we must be wary of a set of possible problems in interpreting the individual categories in a given context. I will list three possible problems and argue that these can be overcome insofar as we hold on to the idea of immanence in the derivation of categories.

In the development of the *Logic*, some of the determinations reoccur in later categories. For instance, the determination of being identical to itself in its negativity can be seen in absolute necessity (identical to itself in its negativity) as well as in substance (identical to itself in its negativity). One of the problems is to disregard the difference in the seemingly similar determinations between distinct categories.[49] One might think that the (re-)occurrence of a determination among categories enables us to reveal determinations of a given category in reference to the other category involving the similar determination. Equating determinations among distinct categories engenders the relapse in the progressive movement of the *Logic*, which is problematic because the proof of each category is supposed to be contained in itself,—unless the earlier categories are not proven as moments of the later ones, meaning that they cannot stand on their own. This should not lead us to think that by virtue of their common determination, distinct concepts are of a similar nature. Their difference lies in how each concept proves themselves to involve a similar determination. Going back to the determination of self-identity in negativity, substance comes to be identical to itself in its negativity (accidents), whereas necessity proves itself to be identical to itself in contingency. The difference in the determinations leading to self-identity in negativity

[49] During the course of my exegesis on Hegel's treatment of real modalities (Chapter 3, Section 3), I will engage with interpretations that utilize previous determinations of distinct concepts in understanding Hegel's treatment of actuality and possibility.

constitutes the conceptual difference between necessity and substance. If we hold on to the idea of immanent derivation, we see that despite similarities in determinations, the difference between concepts lies in their minute details of how they develop themselves.

The second problem to avoid is to use the logic of an individual category for the explanation of another one. Overly emphasising one category over the other, by means of framing the determinations of diverse categories in a single major category, affects the ways in which the nature of categories is supposed to be understood. McTaggart's interpretation of Hegel's treatment of modality is an example for this problematic framing (1910, p. 163).[50] McTaggart suggests understanding possibility and actuality alongside two terms seen in his interpretation of Hegel's essence, substratum and surface, respectively. Accordingly, substratum as inner and surface as outer causes the logic of actuality to relapse into the difference between inner and outer, which is an illegitimate way to conceive of both possibility and actuality. The problem with McTaggart's interpretation is that he takes for granted the structure of essence in the determination of actuality as if substratum and surface are methodological terms through which the categories in the logic of essence are made explicit. The method for Hegel is not something that has to be asserted at the beginning of a conceptual analysis. Rather the analysis, when taken in a presuppositionless way, results in developing its own method of understanding the subject-matter. The analysis of actuality has not to involve the way in which the inner and outer are made explicit but its own way of a new logical structure to make explicit the determinations of actuality.

The third problem to avoid is to regard local arguments as the global principles for the *Logic*. For instance, Redding (2017) suggests that Hegelian possibility as contained in actuality is certainly compatible with modal actualism. For Redding, modal actualism appeals

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[50] I will engage with McTaggart's interpretation in detail in 3.2.2.

to a type of idealism for grasping possibilities by the operation of the mind, and the mind must be embodied within actuality for possibilities to be reflectively grasped. He argues that Hegel's idealism accommodates these two commitments, and it can, hence, be considered as a type of modal actualism.[51] Redding's arguments beginning from the local argument about possibility suggests reflection as an operation of mind. However, in the *Logic*, Hegel does not appeal to a notion of mind to suggest that possibility is the reflection of actuality. Considering this local argument as a global argument requires one to assert a notion of mind in the local argument, which Hegel omits since the mind is a more complex concept and the minimal determinations of actuality do not require the notion of the mind. Since the local argument is limited to the domain of modality, any global arguments derived from the local arguments have to assume a thought or a notion external to the domain of modality, which renders the local arguments problematic.

The strategy I will follow in the exegesis of Hegel's logic of essence, property and modality aims to avoid the problems mentioned above. Although this strategy will not answer overarching questions regarding the connection of the given concepts to the global arguments of Hegel's *Logic*, it will enable us to satisfactorily see the nature of these concepts and their determinations alone. The exegesis will include negative and positive expositions, which enable us to situate Hegel's treatment of modality in the context of modal metaphysics. While the negative exposition will provide an answer to why essence and property relations are *non-modal* by only revealing their immanent determinations in 2.3 and 2.4., the positive exposition will only be concerned about the modal determinations to show how Hegel reveals the nature of modality without appealing to non-modal notions in Chapter 4, 5, and 6.

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[51] I will have a detailed discussion on Redding's interpretation of Hegel and his arguments for the Hegelian modal actualism in 7.1.1..

2.3. Hegel's Idea of Essence

The nature of essence is often thought along with things showing definitive and non-definitive characteristics. Modal essentialism regards these characteristics as necessary and possible for things to be what they are. Accordingly, what is necessary and possible in things can take us to the essence of things. Modal essentialism, as shown in 2.1.2., asserts the idea that essence grounds the necessity and possibility of things in order to argue that modalities are not located outside the actual things, as in modal realism, but in their essences. The understanding of essence in this way requires the modal essentialist to have a notion of essence, which is a type of being without existence. The modal essentialist considers essence as an appropriate foundation for modalities only because essences of things are diverse from their existences. Hence essence can accommodate non-existent but present possibilities of things. At first sight, essence seems to be a plausible foundation for modalities in the modal essentialist account. However, this account does not give an answer to the very metaphysical question of what essence *qua* essence is. Essence, in the modal essentialist account, remains only relative to modalities. Although being relative to modalities could well be the very nature of essence, this should only be revealed through the question of what essence *qua* essence is.

The significance of Hegel's treatment of essence lies in the fact that Hegel rigidly follows this very metaphysical question throughout the determinations of essence. The difficulty Hegel faces stems from the fact that the derivation of essence follows the determinations of being and to reveal essence *qua* essence requires a complex set of arguments that overcome the determinations of being in the treatment of essence. The *Logic* is initially not concerned with the essence of things, of concrete or abstract entities. Neither does the *Logic* take it for granted that things have essence. For Hegel, the main concern

follows the question of what essence is with the minimal determinations that sufficiently reveal the nature of essence.

Hegel's logic of essence represents a departure from the traditional way of thinking over essence. Hegel does not consider essence from the start as lying behind or beyond being as a foundation. As a matter of comparison, Lowe's account of essence is similar to the traditional view seen in pre-critical metaphysics that recognizes essence as a type of being, which precedes the existence of a thing while constituting the nature of thing. Leibnizian essence shares the same trait since essences in God's mind have a reality of their own without actually existing but being a ground for actual existents. Everything is already possible and real as well as necessary and contingent in God's mind before actually existing. For Hegel, essence cannot be a being or constitute a foundation for being because essence is the negativity of being, namely, it is what being is not. The first book of the *Logic*, the doctrine of being, proves that the determinations of being are quality, quantity and measure without anything pertaining to essence. For Hegel, essence is neither a type of being nor a type of entity. Thinking cannot hold on to anything when it thinks of essence because for Hegel, essence has to be what being is not. Essence is not being nor a determination for being as such.

2.3.1. From Essence as the Negation of Being to Essence as the Absolute Negativity

The transition of being into essence takes place in the sphere of being once being is in its state of the absolute. Being as absolute involves the determinations of quality, quantity and measure. Quality and quantity are contained as the negations of each other, whereas measure is the unity of them constituted by the fact that quality and quantity through mediating each other results in an immediacy (EL §111). This immediacy proves itself to be self-sublating since its constituents, leading to the immediacy, are sublating one another. That is to say, being proving itself as an immediacy through the involvement of its complete determinations

(quality, quantity and measure) constitutes itself as a self-relational or self-negating unity. This unity due to its self-negation is non-being or as Hegel names *essence* (EL §111).

The transition from the sphere of being to essence in the *Logic* is constituted over the self-negating movement of being. The non-being of being is not pure nothing simply because the negation of the determinations of being is already a mediation. For being to vanish into nothing, it has to be immediate and indeterminate. Due to the mediation of being as its self-sublation, it proves itself to be non-being or essence rather than nothing. The transition has been expressed within the perspective of the sphere of being, which could only establish the first proof from the side of being that essence is the negation of being.

The second proof for the idea of essence as the negativity of being can be found in the opening of the sphere of essence. Essence is the void of all determinations of being, which means that essence has nothing to be thought of as apart from being thought of as an immediacy due to its indeterminacy and unmediatedness. At the same time, essence is the result of being's self-sublation, which is a mediation for being. So, essence has to be something already mediated or non-immediacy. In the sphere of being, this dichotomy between being and essence can be read as the dichotomy of immediacy and non-immediacy, whereas in the sphere of essence, these moments take the forms of the non-essential(immediacy) and the essential(non-immediacy).

Although when considered as two distinct spheres, being and essence are equally present as immediacies, this does not give us much about essence because the determinations of essence and being when considered within the spheres of each other can only reveal essence as non-being and being as non-essence. In the sphere of essence, being becomes an other to essence as it is non-essence or the unessential due to the fact that essence is initially the direct *negation* of being (SL 341/WL-II 18). In the same vein, due to this otherness,

essence becomes the essential since it is what remains in the sublation of the sphere of being. In the sphere of essence, '[b]eing or [Dasein], therefore, has not preserved itself as other than what essence is' (SL 342/WL-II 19).[52] This means that being is preserved in essence as an immediate unessential being that has no determination left for itself to be being proper. The emptiness of this being is equal to nothingness, but a sense of nothingness that makes it present in essence as an other to essence. '[A]part from its nothingness, apart from essence, it does not exist' (SL 342/WL-II 19).

In the sphere of essence, being is reduced to being a shine of essence. The reason Hegel names this conceptual structure *shine* is that it is a particular type of being that is indeed the non-being of being. Although Hegel admits that the being of shine persists as an immediacy in essence, it persists only as the nothingness of being. So the *Logic* reveals two moments in shine: a) being *persists* in essence as lacking being, or merely illusory and b) the persisting being is the negativity of essence. While the two moments of immediacy and negativity constitute a distinction between being, as non-being or shine, and essence, the distinction also belongs to essence because essence turns being into a shine of itself. With the concept of shine, Hegel shows that essence can only be expressed insofar as the determinateness is thought of as the shine of essence.

The determinateness in essence is distinct from the one in being. The determinateness in being implies the becoming of one into an other, whereas the determinateness in essence is the movement of relating oneself back to itself. The self-relating movement stems from the nature of shine since the being of shine can only be proven in its non-being, and being is only a non-being(shine) in its non-being(essence). Hence, being as shine is a self-negating negativity (the shining of essence) in a negativity(essence). Hence, the determinateness of

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[52] The translation has been slightly changed.

essence as shine is not that of being because the determining here is not becoming an other but a self-transitioning of essence while remaining within itself. '[E]ssence is an infinite self-contained movement which determines its immediacy as negativity and its negativity as immediacy and is thus the shining of itself within itself' (SL 345/WL-II 24). Essence remains within itself and so proves to be immediacy – by *not*-just-being-its-own-shine, but also *not*-just-being-the-*negation*-of-its-shine. So it proves to be itself, to be immediacy, by *not*-just-being-*negative* – a *not-not* that Hegel names *reflection*.

Essence is a *movement* because it constantly *negates itself*: it is at first different from mere *Schein*; then it is itself what produces that *Schein*, but in so doing it remains different from the latter; then this very difference proves to be a mere *Schein*, so essence proves simply to be the movement of seeming. In this way, essence negates itself and turns out to *be* no more than such negativity. This all stems from the idea that essence is no longer *just being*, so any immediacy or determinacy displayed by essence must be mere *Schein*.

In the sphere of being, essence is the negation of being, and in the sphere of essence, being proves to be the negativity of essence. With this idea, Hegel proves that essence is not a type of being or substance that lies behind determinate beings as their ground. Essence cannot be a determination of being hence it cannot be a determination of existing things, leaving aside altogether being that is modally determined. Moreover, the closing passages of the doctrine of being show the emergence of essence as the negativity of being or as a non-being. Now, the determinateness that essence carries over from being also proves essence as a negativity but this time it is proven within the sphere of essence, which renders essence as absolute negativity not only relative to being but also in itself. Essence, for Hegel, is the self-reflective *movement* of the unity of negativity and immediacy. This exegesis of essence in relation to being shows that the modal essentialist understanding of essence as a unique type of being is not the only way to conceive the nature of essence. Hegel's suggestion is a highly

plausible one in comparison to the modal essentialist account that suffers from the difficulty in explaining the type of being that essence is. In Hegel's account, we see that essence contains the moment of being as an immediacy, but being as immediacy is only a sublated being, being without its determinations. The sublation in being is already a mediation. Hence the result of sublation is that being is in essence only a mediated immediacy. Now that we have shown what essence is not, namely it is not being and in doing so we revealed that essence contains the negativity and immediacy as determining moments within itself, we can move onto Hegel's constitution of essence out of its own determining moments.

2.3.2. Essence as such: Reflection

Essence contains negativity and immediacy as its determining moments. Essence is neither a simple immediacy as against a pure negativity, nor a pure negativity as against a simple immediacy. Rather, essence accommodates these two determinations concurrently. While as a unity, essence shows itself to be something more than its moments and hence is immediate, a closer look reveals that the immediate unity of negativity and immediacy is the single reflective movement between its moments. Since the moments are the determinateness that essence can be thought of, essence cannot be anything different from this reflective determining movement. In the previous sub-section, I have argued that Hegel's notion of essence emerging from being is a negation of being. To comprehend what essence is, we need to consider being as negated, which will let essence be what it is, namely essence as a negation of being. The negation of being is not a negation between two ontologically same kinds. Rather, Hegel suggests that it is a self-negation of being. Essence has showed that it has issued from the self-mediating negation and that the result of the negation is an immediacy that is distinct from being. This section will consider essence as such, namely as the movement from self-negativity to immediacy and vice versa. This will show what essence is without any reference to being. The exegesis of the determining self-movement of essence

will reveal that the nature of essence as such does not leave room for modalities within itself, and that essence as such does not directly relate to the notion of modality.

Essence determines itself by reflecting itself through its own negativity, which constitutes a movement of going back to itself in a different determinate form than itself in the first place. For Hegel (SL 345/WL-II 24), reflection is a movement in which a transition of self takes place while holding its otherness as a determinateness within itself. Hegel distinguishes between the mediation in the sphere of being and in the sphere of essence. While in being, the transition of a determinate being (Dasein) into another recognizes the latter as an other external to the former, in essence this otherness is always already within the self. Hence, '[r]eflective movement is […] the other as negation in itself, a negation which has being only as self-referring' (SL 345/WL-II 24). That is, the determinateness as the negation of the self can only operate as a negation as such insofar as it is thought to be a determination within the self. The negation has to prove that it belongs to the self but as a negation it remains an other to it. Hegel's idea of reflection suggests that the negation in essence negates itself. The negation can only be a true negation insofar as it negates itself. The negated negation is simply a movement of turning back to oneself not as a negation but to where the negation belongs. Essence, which determines itself in this movement of self-negating negation, is nothing other than this movement, hence it is reflection.

Hegelian reflection in essence is a determining operation rather than a descriptive expression of what essence is. Rather than defining essence as necessity or possibility (Houlgate, 2011, p. 141), Hegel takes a very distinctive approach by his derivation of essence from being as the negation of being. Beginning from essence as the negation of being and proceeding to essence as absolute self-negativity indicates that essence, for Hegel, is not a self-subsisting stable entity that holds qualities in things. According to Hegel, essence as such is just the movement of self-relation, or reflection.

In Hegel scholarship, there is no unified interpretation of Hegelian reflection. When we strip off the complexities of each individual interpretation, we come to a brief demarcation around the question of whether reflection is an activity of subjects involved in the progression of the *Logic* or is a non-subjective activity of essence. For some (Redding, 2016; Quante, 2017; Longuenesse, 2007; Yeomans, 2012), reflection is a faculty of the intellect or mind at operation in grasping the nature of essence. For others (Houlgate 2011; Winfield, 2012) reflection belongs to the nature of essence, which amounts to the determining movement of essence within itself. To contrast the interpretations broadly, the former states that essence is reflection only in the thinking activity of a rational being, which renders essence thought-dependent, and eventually evokes the question of what essence is without being thought. The latter suggests that essence is reflection not because it is conceived in such a way that it is grasped as reflection, but because it proves itself to be reflection. That is, our thinking activity does not grant essence the determination of reflection but essence itself is just this and we can grasp the nature of essence no other way than it is.

The latter presents a more convincing interpretation regarding the *Logic* as the science of thinking and of being that does not require complex concepts (mind, cognition) to make sense of every category it deals with. This is not to deny the fact that the *Logic* instantiates itself in thinking beings that have a body, social relations, history and so on. All these aspects of thinking beings are, however, irrelevant for the *Logic* since its subject-matter is the thought purely thinking itself or being *qua* being.[53] More importantly, Hegel (SL 350/WL-II 30-31) clearly expresses in the remark of *external reflection* that reflection, as he understands it, is not to be taken in the subjective sense, namely, '[…] neither the reflection of consciousness,

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[53] Although it seems to be an obvious claim, it is crucial to highlight it if one is worried about the non-relevant aspects of thinking beings in the *Logic*. Also, Pippin's (2018) emphasis on Hegel's idea of the logic as the realm of shadows captures this aspect very well. The *Logic* is not about the ultimate truth about everything but only about the truth of thinking.

nor the more specific reflection of the understanding […]', but reflection as such.[54] for Hegel, essence does not imply or require a concept of mind or thinking agent to accommodate reflection. Reflection for Hegel is the immanent determining movement in essence.

In the light of the non-subjective interpretation of Hegelian reflection, we come to see that reflection is the inner movement of essence, which determines essence. Hegel explains this determining process under three stages: positing reflection, external reflection, and determining reflection.

As discussed in the previous sub-section, the shine (non-being) of essence proves itself to be a determinateness for essence. Shine shows itself negatively relating to itself. In this self-relation, it negates its being and turns into a void. While its self-negating relation to itself implies that it negates its own negativity, thereby appearing as an immediacy, it also proves itself to be a non-immediacy in this very negating since the activity of negating is a determinateness that renders shine mediated. However, as absolute negativity—namely, it is what it is not—, it still holds its moment of immediacy since it proves to be self-relating.

The first stage of reflection, positing reflection, makes sense of this immediacy as a positedness.[55] Hegel concedes the movement of returning to itself as a moment of positedness, which is made explicit under the category of positing reflection. However, rendering explicit the movement of turning back as immediacy leaves out the other moment of reflection, which is negativity. Or precisely, since it is absolute negativity, its return to

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[54]One might think that Hegel's position regarding the two diverse interpretations is not as clear as I presented, if the following hints in the text are taken into consideration. In SL 349/WL-II 29, Hegel writes:[…] the immediate is not only *in itself*, that is, for us or in external reflection […] and in SL 352/WL-II 33 :'In either meaning, existence is taken for something superior to positedness, which is attributed to external reflection, to the subjective'. In these passages, Hegel seems to use as synonymous external reflection and reflection in the subjective sense. However, considering together the remark to external reflection and the logical analysis of the determinations fortifies the idea that reflection is not the cognitive faculty of subjects but immanent in essence as its self-determining movement.

[55] Hegel's use of *Setzen*, to posit, has a distinct sense than seen in German idealists. Positedness has a sense that indicates the thing in question as determined or as made explicit. Reflection rendering posited the immediacy of its sublated negativity implies that positing reflection makes explicit the immediacy as immediacy.

itself again negates the point which it takes as a beginning. Hence, its turning back to itself constitutes the negative of itself or immediacy, which reflection as negativity is not. As seen, here the idea of negativity persists even in the emergence of immediacy. As Hegel puts it, '[...] it is the negation of the negative as negative' (SL 347/WL-II 26). Therefore, in the activity of positing, reflection also proves itself sublating what it posits. The immediacy, which reflection posits, can be no more than a shine. That is, immediacy is proven to be the being of reflection as its non-being. Hence, this immediacy is a presupposition that the positing reflection recognizes as its beginning, a beginning, which is proven to be sublated by the very movement of turning back, resulting in the immediacy. As Houlgate (2011, p. 143) suggests, here we come to see two distinct senses of immediacy: simple immediacy as positedness, which is there as shine, and reflected immediacy as presupposed, which is yielded by the reflective movement in essence.[56]

External reflection accounts for the reflected immediacy as something other to reflection's self-relating negativity since the immediacy in reflection is presupposed by the negativity of reflection in the very movement in which it is posited. 'The negative character of what is presupposed and its negative relation to reflexion must, therefore, themselves be negated. Accordingly, what is presupposed by reflexion as non-reflexive must be presupposed as wholly affirmative, immediate, and independent of reflexion' (Houlgate, 2011, p. 146). In external reflection, we come to see a true sense of immediacy, which is not a mere semblance of an immediacy or an immediacy as positedness. External reflection derives a true immediacy as its negative, non-reflective immediacy. External reflection, then, accommodates two moments: the immediacy and the negative return to itself. While external

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[56] Hegel consistently preserves the idea of immediacy throughout the *Logic*. However, as proven here it takes various forms, particularly in the sphere of essence, there cannot be a simple immediacy as seen in the sphere of being because essence itself is the sphere of mediateness, and there can be no immediacy remaining as pure as it can be in the sphere of being.

reflection recognizes these moments as distinct, it unifies these moments as a single movement of reflection. The positing of the immediacy turns out to be presupposing an immediacy due to the negativity in the activity of positing that sublates positing. The negativity of reflection is the negation of its own negating (positedness of immediacy). '[T]he immediate is determined by reflection as the negative of the latter or as the other of it, but it is reflection itself which negates this determining' (SL 349/WL-II 29-30). Hegel maintains that in this movement of self-negating, the immediacy standing external to reflection is recognized as an inner element not that reflection stands external to it.

The last stage of reflection is determining reflection, which is the concluding stage proving that reflection is a determining activity positing an other to itself within its own sphere and mediating itself through its own other while remaining within itself. Determining reflection includes the moments of reflected immediacy and self-coinciding negativity as a single movement of essence determining itself. Determining reflection renders essence self-subsisting while determining itself without an external other or being in the form of the unessential or shine. With determining reflection, Hegel constitutes a notion of essence, whose determinations are not like the determinations of being. This fortifies the idea of essence as distinct from being as suggested at the beginning of Hegel's treatment of essence and at the end of the doctrine of being. Determining reflection underlies that essence does not determine itself in the way that being does, namely passing over into an other. The determinations of essence imply an otherness taking place only within essence itself without essence passing over into it. The becoming in essence, unlike in being whose becoming implies a transition into an other, is the return to itself from its innate other.

These three stages of reflection prove themselves to be the determinations of essence since these are derived from the negativity, which essence at first is recognized as. Essence for Hegel involves reflective determinations that do not transition essence into something

other than essence because what is essential endures. This does not mean that Hegel's understanding of essence is similar to essence in pre-critical metaphysics. Hegel already distinguishes his concept of essence by deriving it from being as absolute negativity. This absolute negativity strengthens the idea that the persistence of essence does not come from its equality to itself or from the notion of identity but from its determination as reflection, which accommodates its self-equality alongside its negativity.

2.3.3. Conclusion

This section has shown the minimal determinations of essence. The question of what essence is for Hegel finds its answer in essence's relation to being, a relation in which essence emerges from being as the negativity of being. Essence first determines itself as absolute negativity, which means that it is what it is only insofar as it negates being. Being in essence cannot be the being of essence but it is something that stands against essence as that which is negated by the latter into mere shine. By analysing the relationship between essence and being, we come to the idea that essence re-issues being as a determinateness within itself. This takes us from the moment of essence as the negativity of being, to the moment of essence as the absolute negativity that contains the negated being by reducing it to a shine. In negating the immediacy (being), essence proves itself to be reflection. Since the negating of essence is the negation of its negativity, it destroys itself as negativity and re-constructs itself as an immediacy, which is different from the immediacy of being in virtue of being a reflected immediacy. That is, an immediacy that is not simply immediate, but that is *mediated* by negativity. Briefly, essence as such or essence as minimally determined implies that it is nothing other than its own reflection. Although essence at first is thought of as the negation of being and then as the absolute negativity, these determinations are relative to the essence's relation to being. Essence as reflection is the minimal and non-relative determination that presents what essence as such is.

Hegel's concept of essence does not imply that it is the possibility or necessity of things, nor that it is that which remains in things as the substantive persisting quality that defines things. Although in the course of the *Doctrine of Essence*, Hegel explicates essence further as involving more complex determinations such as identity, difference and contradiction, for the scope of the thesis, showing what essence minimally is suffices to make explicit the claim that Hegel's concept of essence is not modally determined, nor is it a modal-inducing foundation, which accommodates and entertains modal determinations for being. If we think that Hegel is right in his derivation of essence from being, then it is clear that Hegel's notion of essence is not determined by modalities nor modalities require a notion of essence to be held on to. For Hegel, modalities are more complex determinations, whose complexity does not rely on what essence as such is, nor essence alone is sufficient to make explicit modalities because to reveal the nature of modality, we need to consider a more complex logical structure, actuality, of which modalities are thought as its determinations.

2.4. Hegel's Idea of Property

In this section, the exegesis of Hegel's treatment of thing and its properties will provide a theory of properties as the non-modal determinations for things. The modal actualist position regards property relations as modal relations meaning that it explains modalities as relative to the notion of property. The section will present Hegel's treatment of thing and its properties as an alternative view to the modal actualist account. The exegesis of Hegel's derivation of properties as determinations of things will suggest that properties are determinations of things and that properties do not imply or appeal to modal qualities in determining things. These two ideas suggest a claim about the non-modal nature of properties while only looking at the nature of properties. So this section has a limited scope, which does not answer the question of what modalities are the determinations of. By looking at Hegel's treatment of properties,

the section examines what properties are and infers the idea that they are not modal determinations.

The section will investigate Hegel's ideas of thing-in-itself and the thing. Following from Hegel's arguments for the thing and thing-in-itself distinction and the condition in which they are considered to be in unity, the second part will consider the developed determinateness out of indeterminacy as the property of the thing. By examining Hegel's treatment of thing and its determining property relations, the section will conclude that property relations do not bring about modal determinations or amount to modalities.

2.4.1. Thing and Thing-in-itself

Hegel (SL 423/WL-II 129) distinguishes the notions of existence, existent and thing. Their relation is a complicated one which is not only governed by distinction but also by identity. He suggests that existence, only as negative unity, is an existent. The existent is a thing insofar as the existent is thought of as the result of reflection, of which existence also comprises. This idea leads to that while the existent cannot be thought of as separate from existence, the thing can be distinguished from its existence but not as an existent, which the thing is identical. In other words, for Hegel, every thing is immediately an existent whose existence is diverse from its thinghood. The thing as such stands distinct from its existence because the thing is a reflectedness as opposed to the immediacy of existence. However, the thing, without its existence, can only be an implicit thing subsisting without existing, or as Hegel calls it the thing-in-itself.

For anything to be a determinate thing, it must involve certain properties through which a thing mediates itself and which in turn constitute that thing. So, the thing without its properties is an indeterminate thing or as Hegel calls it thing-in-itself. Unlike Kant, Hegel thinks that thing-in-itself—i.e., thing without appearance (or in Hegelian terms without

existence)—is within the accessible domain of knowledge. While the Kantian idea suggests that the thing-in-itself is incomprehensible to knowing cognition since it does not involve sensibility, Hegel argues that the thing-in-itself is accessible and that what it is can be made explicit, not only for us or cognition, but ontologically. Hegel remarks on the connection between the Kantian idea of thing-in-itself and that of possibility. This remark does not only render explicit the difference between the Hegelian thing-in-itself distinct from the Kantian thing-in-itself, but it also provides a hint as to why Hegel thinks possibilities are not determinations of things.

Hegel (SL 423-4/WL-II 130) writes that '[w]hen the thing is differentiated from its […] existence, it is then the *possible*, the thing of representation, or the thing of thought, which as such is at the same time not supposed to exist. However, the determination of possibility and of the opposition of the thing and its […] existence comes later'. Although this remark might be read as suggesting the idea of possibility as a thought-determination, given that in his treatment of modality, Hegel provides the determinations of possibility not as thought determinations but as ontological structures, Hegel here seems to read the Kantian idea of thing-in-itself as the possibility of things. For Kant, possibility together with other modal notions is defined in alignment with experience. Possibility is defined as that which is in agreement with the formal conditions of experience as opposed to the actual, which agrees with the material conditions of experience (CPR B266). Hegel's claim that when the thing is distinct from its existence, then it is the possible, refers to the unification of two distinct ideas, thing-in-itself and possibility, in Kant. The unification suggests that the thing-in-itself as the lack of sensibility is the possible, which does not exist. The reason Hegel relates the thing-in-itself to possibility in Kant is to pave the way for his claim that the thing-in-itself and existence are one and the same as opposed to Kant whose conception of the thing-in-itself involves no existence (appearance). Hegel shows that Kant's conception makes the thing in

itself a mere thought determination without any correspondent existence(materiality), which

is similar to Kant's possibility. However, Hegel's remark serves two functions: a) separately

conceding the thing-in-itself and existence renders the thing-in-itself a non-existing

possibility for Kant, and b) showing that things do not involve possibility as their

determination but only properties. Hegel's treatment of property and of possibility later in the

course of the *Logic* proves that Hegel conceives property as the determination of things and

possibility as that of actuality. This indicates that, for Hegel, property and possibility are

distinct determinations of different types of being. However, in order to prove this claim, we

need to look closely at Hegel's treatment of thing and property.

Without the immediately indeterminate moment in the thing as thing-in-itself, we

cannot develop the determinations that make explicit the nature of the thing. According to

Hegel (SL 423/WL-II 129-130), the thing-in-itself divides into two sides. On the one hand, it

is an *immediacy* in virtue of being the result of the sublation of mediation. On the other hand,

the sublation of mediation is also another mediation that renders the-thing-in-itself *mediated*

as an immediacy. For this duality, Hegel conceptualises the thing-in-itself as the essential

immediacy, meaning that given the reflective mediation (e.g., the sublation of mediation), it

is an essentiality, whereas regarding its immediacy, it is a determinate being, which is an

unessential immediacy. The relation between the essential and unessential in the thing-in-

itself recalls the first division in essence between the essential and the unessential, which are

indistinguishably self-subsisting but distinguishable from an external standpoint that is itself

neither the essential nor the unessential. An externality as reflection comes on the scene with

a different conceptual connotation in the logic of the thing. The analysis of the determinations

of existence immediately takes reflection as external to the thing-in-itself because reflection

as a mediation has to be absent in the thing-in-itself according to its moment of

indeterminacy and immediacy. The unessential immediacy of the thing-in-itself is an

externality to the thing-in-itself because its mediation is not an essential mediation, or self-mediating but is through an other because it is an unessentiality. Hegel (SL 424/WL-II 130) suggests that reflection falls outside the thing-in-itself because the thing-in-itself as an indeterminate immediacy cannot be reflectively determined.

> 'The essenceless […] existence [the unessential immediacy] has in the thing-in-itself its reflection into itself; it [the unessential] refers to it [the essential] in the first place as to its *other*; but as the other over against that which is in itself, it is only the sublation of its self, and its coming to be in the in-itself. The thing-in-itself is thus identical with external […] existence' (SL 424-5/WL-II 131).

The unessential immediacy, which at first stands external to the essential immediacy of the thing-in-itself, determines itself in its reflection as another essential immediacy. The unessential immediacy in reflection negates itself through the mediation of self-relation. 'This unessential […] existence is thing-in-itself which is *other* than the first, for that first is immediate essentiality, whereas the present proceeds from the unessential existence' (SL 425/WL-II 131-2). With the determination of the unessential immediacy as another thing-in-itself (or another essential immediacy), Hegel proves that although the thing-in-itself has to be grasped as immediately separate from existence, its existence seemingly standing distinct from itself proves itself to be the thing-in-itself insofar as the reflection that transforms existence into thing-in-itself is conceded to be an immanent reflection of the thing-in-itself. The reflection takes its beginning from this external existence. By reflecting existence into itself, it constitutes existence as a thing-in-itself while making itself the reflection of the constituted thing-in-itself.

Hegel's analysis begins from the indeterminate immediacy of the thing-in-itself as something distinct from existence and ends in the determinateness of the thing-in-itself. Hegel's treatment of the thing, therefore, suggests a determinateness for the indeterminate

thing derived from its indeterminate moment. This determinateness is, for Hegel, property, through which the existent is constituted as a determinate thing. The reflection which at first standing external to the thing-in-itself also proves itself to be an immanent reflection of the thing-in-self, a movement of relating itself to itself as if it relates itself to an other. With this analysis, Hegel suggests two ideas: first, as opposed to Kant, the thing-in-itself exists and second, the thing-in-itself makes itself explicit through its own determining reflection without an appeal to cognition being involved in it as a determiner.

2.4.2. Property as the Determination of Things

Hegel regards the determinateness of thing-in-itself as a qualitative determination (SL 426/WL-II 134). The reason for this lies in the self-othering reflectivity. The determinateness has been shown as a reflective movement of thing-in-itself repelling itself from itself and returning to itself through relating itself to its repelled self as an other. Qualitative determination for Hegel entails an otherness to which the subject-matter, being or existence, relates itself. Although every qualitative determination entails an otherness, the distinct nature of the otherness leads to two different forms of qualitative determination. An example of mere qualitative determination is determinate being in the form of *something*, which determines itself by passing over into its other in its most definite moment, whereas the thing-in-itself is an example of reflective qualitative determination, which determines itself by relating itself to its inner other and turning back to itself as determined. The distinction between the two types of determination lies in the capacity of altering what it is being determined. Unlike *something*, which changes itself by passing over into an other, the determinateness of the thing-in-itself does not cause any change in the thing-in-itself. The lack of change, supposed to be issued by its determinateness, in the thing-in-itself indicates that the determined thing, or thing as such, could change to the extent that its properties, which are initially external qualities, are contained in it.

For Hegel, properties have two complementary determining operations in things. While a property expresses what the thing is because the absence of properties in things renders the things indeterminate, properties also constitute a network of relations through which things relate to each other. In other words, these complementary functions of properties constitute things and a network in which things relate to one another through their properties.

The first aspect of property is that a thing having properties proves itself to be a determinate thing that has certain qualities defining itself as distinct from others. As we argued in the previous sub-section, a thing without a determination is an indetermined thing-in-itself. Accordingly, properties a thing has determine the thing according to which properties the thing holds. For this reason, Hegel (SL 426/WL-II 134) thinks that the thing is identical to its properties, or properties are rather the self-identity of things. This indicates two thoughts. First, properties imply a specific character of things, namely they belong to a specific thing, and secondly, properties are the identity of things in virtue of being the only determinations for otherwise indeterminate things. Hence, properties constitute things not only in appearance but also in existence.

The second aspect of property is that a thing has a specific property insofar as 'another thing has a corresponding constitution' (SL 426/WL-II 134), meaning that although the first aspect claims that properties constitute the specific nature of things, with the second aspect, we recognize that their specificity does not belong to this or that property they hold.[57] The common properties among things establish a network in which things relate to one another through the access given by their corresponding properties. This relation among

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[57] Rather, the collection of properties defines a thing specifically. However, in terms of their thinghood, which is the only part that matters here, each thing in virtue of having a property comes to be a determinate thing regardless of their phenomenological specificity. Hegel explicitly states the difference in things as lying in their properties: 'the determinateness, in virtue of which a thing is this thing only, lies solely in its properties' (SL 429/WL-II 137).

things, Hegel (SL 427/WL-II 134) claims, is where things alter or become another thing. However, the change in things does not necessarily lead to a change in their properties. For example, a silver cube can change into a silver cone. The property of silver remains as what it is while the thing (the cube) is subject to change in virtue of its relation to other things. Things might stop having certain properties due to their altered nature depending on the new thing and its respective constitution. For instance, when a thing, having a property of redness, changes, the presence of redness in the thing depends on whether the change causes the thing to alter in a way that is compatible with the property of redness.[58] Briefly, the aspect of properties constituting the relation among things proves that the relations of things are indeed governed and regulated by their corresponded properties. Hence the relations among things are property relations.

It is important to note that although properties are qualitative determinations, they do not imply the modal status of a thing. I can suggest two reasons why Hegel does not think property implies or appeals to modality. Firstly, from the side of the property, properties are of a different nature than the thing and they cannot interfere with and alter the thing. The change can only happen when the thing is in relation to another thing. A thing having or not having a certain property does not render other properties possible for the thing or other things because the thing for Hegel does not have a governing nature capable of shifting properties within its own potency. Things have specific properties not because the nature of things is compatible with certain properties but because things are constituted by the properties they hold. This means that properties are not the possibility for a thing to exist or to be other than what it is. Secondly, regarding what properties are the determinations of, we

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[58] I here used compatibility in the sense of correspondence between the properties of redness in the unchanged and the changed thing. I do not think that Brandom's idea of material incompatibility relation has a reference to Hegel's understanding of things and their properties. For this reason, I do not think that Brandom is right to claim that the incompatibility relation, governed by the Hegelian determinate negation is a type of modal relation, which can reveal what possible and necessary properties a thing has. A more detailed discussion on this issue will be in 7.1.2..

see that they are determinations of existents or things. Although in Stalnaker's modal actualism, the lack of distinction between existence and actuality amounts to a productive result that enables him to claim that properties are modalities, it is quite problematic to think existence as actuality given that these two notions are different types of being in virtue of their determinations. Asking the questions about properties will direct us to the determinations regarding existence or the thinghood of the subject-matter, whereas the questions about modalities will be concerned with the actuality of the subject-matter.

2.4.3. Conclusion

This section has demonstrated Hegel's treatment of existence, thing, and property respectively. As opposed to the argument of modal actualism that property relations are modal relations, I regarded Hegel's treatment of property as an alternative account that does not appeal to, nor yield modalities. Although Stalnaker does not suggest an explicit reduction of modality to property relations, his claim holds its strength in the idea of conceptual equality between property and modality through an altered version of the Lewisian possible worlds theory. For Stalnaker, modalities are the ways in which things could be and/or could be otherwise. The ways for him implies properties that things may or may not hold. So properties are the ways in which things express themselves modally. This holds a certain truth for Hegel too given that properties are the determinations of things, which is to say that properties are the form in which things exist distinct from one another. The main difference between Hegel and Stalnaker here lies in the fact that for Hegel modalities are not determinations of mere things, and the questions about the modal status of things are just categorically different questions. As we will see in the next chapter, for Hegel modalities are determinations of actual beings, which are not mere *things* and do not only exist due to some external determinations as properties. The actual proves itself to be what it is insofar as it posits its own determinations within itself.

In addition to the categorical problem Stalnaker faces, his account relativizes the nature of modality to property determinations. Stalnaker's account could well be recognized as a richer way to understand modality rather than restricting it to a certain domain of inquiry or to a certain categorical form. However, its richness cannot undermine the fact that any explanatory model, taking its subject-matter in relation to another model (the model of possible worlds as properties) will face the question of to what extent the explanatory model can account for the nature of the explanans. Hegel's treatment of property naturally stands away from this type of questioning given that the concept of property is immanently derived from that which is the determination of.

3. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON HEGEL'S TREATMENT OF MODALITY

This chapter aims to provide a reading on Hegel's understanding of modality and actuality by presenting Hegel's distinct view on these concepts from their common reception. I argue that for Hegel, modality is always about determinations of actuality, determinations that are objective and immanent to actuality. Actuality as the third major category of being, after being as such and existence, has its own structure. That is radically to mean that being and existence does not hold modal determination—i.e., possible *being*, contingent *existent* and so on are not right characterisations for being and existence. This distinct structure of actuality will be called modality. This chapter firstly examines Hegel's derivation of actuality from the non-modal categories of the inner and outer and the absolute. The *derivation* of modality provides a way in which we understand the nature of modality without them being reducible to non-modal terms. Secondly, I will discuss why modality in Hegel should be understood as the determinations of actuality.

3.1. From the Non-Modal to the Modal by Means of Derivation

The accounts in contemporary modal metaphysics investigate the nature of modality through non-modal reducing or primitive concepts. Modal realism's idea of possible worlds as the non-modal foundation for modalities and the reductive trait that Lewis suggests for the investigation into the nature of modalities echo in the post-Lewisian theories. It would not be crude to cluster the diverse modal theories together in virtue of their common reductive trait grounding modality in possible worlds, property relations and essence. Possible worlds, property relations, or essence metaphysics cannot be explained within the domain of modality, nor are these derived necessarily from the inquiry into the nature of modality. The broader implication of these concepts has an effect in preventing us from understanding modality *qua* modality. If the goal of inquiry is to understand the nature of modality, modal categories deserve consideration in their own terms like every other concept of metaphysics.

Following from the exposition of Lewisian modal realism, I have demonstrated that post-Lewisian modal metaphysics follows Lewis' reductive explanation strategy closely in both negative (modal essentialism) and positive receptions (modal actualism). While modal essentialism represents a proper detachment from any version of possible world discourse, modal actualism can be seen as a revised form of possible worlds discourse. As I explained in 1.4., a reductive explanation is based on either qualitative similarity or dissimilarity between the reducing and the reduced. While Lewis and Lowe can be considered as following the qualitatively dissimilar reduction, Stalnaker's claim about the conceptual equality between property and modality implies that Stalnaker follows a qualitative similar reduction. A reductive explanation has to account for the link between the reduced and the reducing and depending on how the link is construed the reduction becomes compelling. On the one hand, in modal realism and essentialism, the gap between the reducing and reduced is wide due to their dissimilarity and the link they suggest is a working assumption that has to be accepted in order for the reduction to be successful. On the other hand, in modal actualism, the gap is narrow due to the similarity between the reducing and reduced but again the link is a mere assumption based on the interpretation of possible worlds as properties. None of the reductive explanations in metaphysics removes the worry about the necessity of the link between the reducing and the reduced. Due to the lack of necessity, these accounts can offer a theory of modality only relative to the respective reducing concepts, possible worlds, essence, and property.

I showed that *pace* the modal essentialist and actualist, neither essence nor property engenders modality through the engagement with Hegel's treatment of essence and property. Hegel's treatment suggests two major claims in the context of reductive modal theories. First, essence and property do not ground modalities. Second, the essential determinations and

property determinations are categorically different from modal determinations in terms of that which they are the determinations of.

However, situating Hegel's treatment of essence and property as against the contemporary modal metaphysical accounts can only constitute a side, perhaps, a negative side of considering Hegel in this debate concerning modal metaphysics. As for the positive side, we need to look at Hegel's derivation of modal determinations. Derivation is a key term to understand how Hegel's *Logic* proceeds from the non-modal categories to the categories of modality. Although in the contemporary accounts, we see a similar line of transition from the non-modal to modal, for Hegel this transition does not take the form of reduction but derivation. Hegel does not regard modality as a given like any other concepts of the *Logic*. For this reason, there has to be a necessary derivation of the modal from the non-modal without the non-modal being foundationally constitutive in the modal because derivation does not imply that the derived is conceptually dependent on that which is derived from.

For Hegel actuality is the domain of modalities, which implies two complementary ideas: a) that modalities are accommodated in actuality as its determinations, and b) that actuality cannot be categorically different from its determining modalities in terms of its domain. Although I claim that Hegel is quite precise in locating modal determinations in the domain of actuality, actuality, for Hegel, also implies a non-modal sense in its immediacy. For this reason, to make explicit actuality as a domain of modality, we need to reveal non-modal determinations that lead to the derivation of actuality. Hegel's treatment of modality begins with the concept of actuality as immediacy. Immediacy here is not an indeterminate immediacy but a determined one because this immediacy is derived from the moment of unity between the inner and outer and from the absolute expressing itself as the mode of itself. The immediate actuality cannot be determined by its modalities as immediacy because otherwise it would already be mediated. For the determinations of actuality proper, we need

first to see the determinations leading to actuality as an immediacy. The immediacy of actuality here carries two meanings: (a) it implies the state of not-yet-modally determined actuality i.e., the immediate actuality, and (b) the determinations proceeding to the immediate actuality cannot make the nature (or determinations) of actuality explicit any more than generating actuality as an immediacy.

The *Logic* presents two ways into the immediate non-modal concept of actuality, but these two ways are not mutually exclusive ways, one of which one can follow while disregarding the other. The first immediate concept of actuality is derived from the relation of inner and outer and the second immediate actuality is the result of the absolute determining itself as a mode of itself, which manifests the absolute as immediate actuality. These two ideas of immediate actuality are not exclusive to actuality. The modally determined actuality shows these characteristics as its moments but not in the form of inner and outer or the absolute and mode but as possibility, actuality, contingency and necessity. The derivation of actuality from non-modal domains (the logic of inner and outer and the absolute) proves that actuality proper, or actuality as modally determinate, is not reducible to the prior domains from which actuality as immediacy is derived.

The first immediate actuality is seen in the result of the identity relation of the inner and outer, a relation which ceases being a relation and emerges as an immediacy. For Hegel, essence mediated by existence *appears*. The appearance of essence necessitates a division between that which appears as substrate and the appearance as surface. This division as the product of the mediation of essence with existence further sets itself as comprising two self-subsisting domains, the world-in-itself and the world of appearance. Unlike Kant, the two world-model for Hegel necessitates a relation between them due to the co-dependence of one world on the other (SL 448/ WL-II 163-4). This relation is not regulative, meaning that it does not remain only at the level of relating one to the other as they are, but constitutive of

appearance and world-in-itself, meaning that the relation is essential to both in having the idea of a division between the worlds in the first place albeit proving that the division is unsustainable given their co-dependency. For Hegel, the essential relation comes with three forms expressing the relation where the relata prove themselves identical to each other resulting in a further progression to determining the identity derived from the relata, such as whole and parts, force and its expression and the inner and outer. For Hegel, the relation of inner and outer proves itself to be a non-relation or the vanishing of the relation since it involves a moment of true identity between the inner and outer.

The inner and outer is the most explicit form of the essential relation, meaning that the one is what it is due to its relation to the other. The inner is the inner of the outer while the outer is the outer of the inner. Their identity lies in this determination which also constitutes them as distinct from each other. The inner is an inner in virtue of being an outer and the outer is an outer in virtue of being an inner. As Hegel puts it, 'the inner is immediately *only* an outer, and it is this *determinateness of externality* for the reason that it is the inner; conversely, the outer is only an inner because it is only an outer' (SL 461/WL-II 181). Hegel here emphasises that the constitution of an inner or an outer presupposes its opposite as a determinateness. In this determinateness, one passes over into its opposite. Inner and outer are thought to be distinct from each other in virtue of their form, a form determination that renders the inner as inner in opposition to the outer and likewise the outer stands in opposition to the inner. Their form difference constitutes a dependence of the determinations of the otherness, which gives the one very characteristic to be what it is only in opposition to the other. However, for Hegel, the transition between the inner and outer does not suffice to establish their unity because their *unity* must be indifferent to their differences. The thought of the inner and outer in their mutual transition cannot result in this indifference to their difference because the difference perseveres in the transition. Their unity has to be

constituted through their identity, but this identity should not be simple equality to self because in their simple form each involves a relation to its other as a determinateness. Their identity, therefore, has to be reflective identity meaning that it repels itself from itself and turns back to itself through its repelled self as its other. This reflective movement ensures that the inner is an inner insofar as it is an identity mediated by its own other and the same applies to the outer.

The inner and outer constitutes an identity for themselves. The externality (or the outer) is the *expression* of the inner and the inner is the unexpressed outer, which is the same as the inner. This unity is indifferent to the differences between the inner and outer, and hence it is of a different nature from the inner and outer due to remaining indifferent to the determinations yielding itself. Hegel conceptualizes this unity as actuality (SL 464/WL-II 185). What this unity further amounts to is the job of modal determinations that are to be derived from the immediacy of actuality.

However, for Hegel, this unity, rather than actuality proper, first takes the form of absolute as such. The fact that the unity involves its determinations as its own moments within itself while remaining indifferent to its own determinations, posits the unity as the absolute as such. It is an actuality in virtue of involving the inner and outer, but it is an absolute insofar as it is the void of its determinations due to its indifference to the difference between the inner and outer. To be precise, Hegel calls this unity absolute actuality and firstly accounts for the determinations that render it absolute.

Hegel suggests that the absolute as such contains two contrary moments in itself. The absolute is an absolute identity, in which the difference of any kind is totally absent. On the other hand, it is at the same time the total inclusion of every determination, which stand as different from each other, such as the determination of being, and that of essence. This inner

contrast in the absolute leads Hegel to suggest expounding what the absolute is not by means of externally attributing certain determinations—i.e., rendering it explicit through the determination of being or essence—but rather only by means of *exposition*. However, the point at which the exposition begins should be external to the absolute; then the absolute proves that its externality is no more than its own expression, which involves its externality as its reflection turning back to itself (SL 468/WL-II 190). Hegel suggests two complementary types of exposition of the absolute due to its two-fold nature. While the negative exposition reveals the absolute as indeterminate, the positive exposition recognizes the absolute as the ground of all determinations of being and essence.

The negative exposition renders the absolute explicit by negation. Since the absolute has all the determinations that being and essence have, '*the determining of what is the absolute* appears to be a negating, and the absolute itself, appears only as the negation of all predicates, as the void' (SL 466/WL-II 187). If predicating is determining and determining is a type of negation for the absolute in virtue of its utterly determinate state, then to define what the absolute is to negate the absolute. Every attempt to determine the absolute is to turn the absolute into something determinate, which the absolute is not. Hence the negative exposition reveals the negativity within the absolute. On the other hand, the positive exposition recognizes the absolute as the ground of all determinations of being and essence. However, these prior determinations in the absolute cannot be as they are in their relevant domains because the absolute can only accommodate these determinations as sublated—i.e., without their distinguishing features—since as they are, they render the absolute externally determinate. Hegel suggests that their sublatedness in the absolute is a turning back to the absolute from the externality of the absolute.

The two expositions of the absolute express the absolute as different from the beginning of the exposition since these expositions determine the absolute. If we concede, as

a derivative idea of the logic of the inner and outer, that the unity of inner and outer is determined to express itself, then, the two expositions are the absolute's own expression in the form of reflection within itself. The negative expression is already explained as external reflection, that proves itself to be the *immanent* reflection of the absolute. On the other hand, the positive expression as the expression of the unity of all determinations posits a base in which determinations are grounded. When this base is understood as the absolute, the determinations as the ones that arise from the absolute (i.e., determinations as present) and return to it (i.e., determinations as sublated or vanished), are the reflection of the absolute, through which the absolute determines itself. In the consideration of the positive and negative expression, Hegel maintains that two expositions amount to the expression of the absolute reconciled as the *reflection* of the absolute.

The reflection of the absolute is something other than the absolute as such although it is the absolute's own reflection. Hegel conceives this new structure belonging to the absolute as *attribute*. The attribute conceived as the reflection holds the moments of negativity and turning back to the absolute. As for the return to the absolute, the attribute constitutes the identity of the absolute through the self-reflection, whereas as for the negativity, it is the moment of repelling of the absolute from itself; hence, the attribute is posited as an external other to the absolute as well as the identity of the absolute. Hegel maintains that the externality of the absolute when posited as such is the *mode* of the absolute. The mode, for Hegel, is the true externality of the absolute, meaning that it is the expression that extends beyond the absolute while remaining as the mode *of* the absolute. Hegel (SL 470/WL-II 193) maintains that the mode is the reflected identity of the absolute in virtue of its being an externality and at the same time *posited* as the externality of the absolute. The unification of this doubling constitutes the fact that it is identity yielding reflection, which is no other than the absolute reflectively determining itself. In this reflection, the absolute proves itself to be

what it is. So it is not a determination of becoming seen in the doctrine of being but rather a reflective exposition of what the absolute is. At the beginning we started with the idea of the absolute as the unity of the inner and outer, and now we have come to the same idea through the immanent reflective movement of the absolute. However, while the absolute as the unity of the inner and outer is governed by the idea of expression, namely, the outer is the expression of the inner, Hegel now suggests that the idea of the absolute as self-reflective movement is more than just the expression of the inner in the outer, which still involves the idea of difference. The absolute as the true identity or the unity of differences is the '[…] *manifestation*[59] of itself for itself […]' (SL 471/WL-II 195), which is the same as a self-subsistent being, or actuality.

Hegel's *Logic* presents two ways into the immediate concept of actuality, which is not yet revealed to be determined on its own conceptual domain but only derived as an immediate concept from other domains. This can only provide us with a relative concept of actuality, namely, actuality as the unity of the inner and outer and actuality as the absolute manifestation of itself for itself. However, for Hegel, actuality has its own logical structure, which the logic of the inner and outer and the absolute cannot sufficiently account for. In order to reveal actuality as such, Hegel suggests conceiving actuality as an immediacy derived from the logic of the inner and outer and the absolute. For Hegel, the immediacy of actuality like any other immediacies of the *Logic*, except pure being, is a determinate immediacy, meaning that the immediate actuality preserves and proceeds further than the determinations from which it is derived. This will bring forth another set of determinations characterizing another type of being in the form of actuality. Modalities, for Hegel, are the determinations that the actual yields for itself. By virtue of being immanent determinations of actuality, modalities are distinct from the mode of the absolute, which proves itself to be the

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[59] My emphasis.

identity of the absolute by being truly an externality, namely externality posited as externality. Modality, for Hegel, is then derived from the non-modal notion of actuality or the immediate actuality but this immediacy does not persist in the derivation of modalities since modalities are the determinations, which render actuality as modally determinate.

To conclude, modalities are often thought to be without restriction regarding what kind of being they can be the determinations of. For example, the positions arguing for the primitiveness of modality, such as Shalkowski's account (1994), implies that modality is thought of as a fundamental nature of entities, which amounts to rendering each and every being modally determinable. Hegel is not an absolute modalist, meaning that he does not suggest that each and every being has a modal quality, nor thinks that actuality is the foundation of all and every being. For this reason, Hegel's treatment of modality should not be taken as a standpoint to make explicit Hegel's entire system as a type of modal position in the contemporary debate.[60] However, this should not let us turn our eyes away from Hegel's concise treatment of modalities. Hegel's treatment grants us proper access to the nature of modality without exceeding the limits of what modality makes explicit in a specific type of being, actuality. This section leads to a substantial question of what modality is for Hegel, which has so far not been answered. The next two sections will provide a perspective with which Hegel's understanding of modality and actuality is made explicit.

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[60] As an example for the reading I provide, the various determinations of the *concept* involve more than just modal determinations and hence the concept cannot be explained solely through actuality, possibility, contingency and necessity—though it may incorporate them all in some respect as seen in judgement and syllogism. However, Paul Redding (2017; 2020) offers a global argument through the local arguments of Hegel's treatment of modality. He presents Hegel's idealism as a type of modal actualism similar to Stalnaker's actualism in respect of the idea of possibility as contained in actuality. According to Redding (2017, p. 372; 2020, p. 536), Hegel's possibility as reflectedness of actuality can be read as an argument granting the existence of the mind in actuality since Redding regards Hegel's possibility as the product of the activity of mind. The similarity of Redding's Hegel to Stalnaker's version of actualism lies in the fact that both Stalnaker and Redding's Hegel entertains possibilities as a product of an agent—for Stalnaker, propositions/properties as possibilities are the product of agent in actuality and for Redding's Hegel reflectedness of actuality implies the mind produces possibility within actuality. I will engage with Redding's interpretation of Hegel in detail in 7.1.1..

3.2. Hegel on Modality

Modality, in general, signifies a feature that comes second after the subject-matter to which it is attached. In *de re* modality, modal concepts operate as the specific features of things as their subject-matter, and in the same fashion, in *de dicto* modality, they operate as the features of the statements. Regarding the sub-ordinate nature of modality, Hegel's understanding shows no difference, but the difference lies in what Hegel conceives as the subject-matter of modality. As distinct from modality as the feature of things and statements, modality, for Hegel, only signifies the determinations of *actuality*. This sub-section serves the purpose of introducing Hegel's concept of modality by contrasting it with historical and contemporary figures. This will contextualise where Hegelian modality can be pinpointed and in what sense Hegelian modalities should be understood.

The section will be in the following order: Firstly, I argue that Hegel understands the nature of modality as objective and immanent to actuality, as opposed to subjective and transcendent understandings of modality. Secondly, I will state that the immanence can be articulated, at best, in the derivation of modal concepts from actuality itself. As I understand, this is not only an argumentative aspect in Hegel's treatment of modality, but the immanent derivation shows that modality is an inseparable feature of actuality. Lastly, I argue that this view designates the domain of modality as the domain of actuality. Following this idea, we can have a sense of modality, in which the domain of actuality can well be understood as the least reductive domain. Under these considerations, I will argue that Hegel's treatment of modality operating in the domain of actuality could be seen as an alternative way to understand modalities without a non-modal foundation in the context of contemporary modal metaphysics.

Hegel's first discussion on modality is found in *the Science of Logic* in the category of measure[61] where he distinguishes his understanding of measure from Kant's modality. In the Kantian framework, modality, contained as an *a priori* category in the understanding, functions as a relational operation between the determinations of objects and the faculties of cognition while standing *external* to these constituents of the relation. This externality renders explicit that modalities in Kant are not determining/constitutive categories 'but rather express only the relation to the faculty of cognition' (CPR A219/B266). So, modalities are in Kant merely regulative categories where they appear as postulates that entail correspondence to the experience. Yet, unlike the ideas of reason, the sense of *regulative* here refers to the analogy of the postulates about the modal status of objects to the experience (CPR A180).[62] For Kant, modal categories do not determine directly what an object *is*. The other categories determine, for example, that the object is real, or has a certain quantity, or is the cause of some effect; but modal categories do not add to this list of features of objects. They determine, rather, that the object stands in a certain *relation* to the conditions of experience. So in that sense, modal categories determine how *we* are to regard objects, rather than how objects *themselves* are to be conceived. For instance, for Kant the possible is defined as agreeing with the formal conditions of experience, and the actual is defined as agreeing with the material conditions of the experience (CPR B266).

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[61]For more about the relation between mode and measure, See Ferrini's paper (1988) 'On the Relation Between "Mode" and "Measure" in Hegel's Science of Logic: Some Introductory Remarks'. Although Ferrini does not regard the distinction between mode and modality, the analysis provided in the paper enlightens the conceptual relation between mode and measure.

[62] The meaning of 'regulative' in modality differs from the regulative ideas of reason in respect to the correspondence to the experience that modality seeks for its validity while regulative ideas of reason relates to the understanding(CPR A643/B671), which means that ideas indirectly correspond to the experience through the understanding. However, one might think absolute possibility exceeds the limits of modality, considering Kant's (CPR B285) remark that absolute possibility '[…] belongs solely to reason, which goes beyond all possible empirical use of the understanding'. Since this issue is tied with Kant's understanding of possibility, I will elaborate this in the last chapter where I compare Hegel with Kant in terms of modality after providing the complete examination of Hegel's treatment of possibility.

Hegel rejects Kant's understanding of modality for two main reasons: First, in Kant's understanding, modality falls under subjectivity, namely the operation of cognition in relation to its object, and second, modality is conceived as an external regulative category that leaves the objects undetermined. Hegel is right in his analysis of Kant since Kant takes modality as a matter of *how* an object is known, rather than a matter of *what* the object is. As Kant (CPR A219/B266) states, '[n]o further determinations in the object itself are hereby thought; rather it is only asked: *how*[63] is the object itself related to the understanding and its empirical use […]'. For Kant, *how* the understanding conceives its object in its empirical instantiation amounts to conceiving of the object alongside modal features.

In Hegel, modality is another objective determination of being, but being here is not qualitative, quantitative, nor existential, but a being that is actual. This indicates a shift from the question of *how* things are known to *what* they are, i.e., that which is the subject-matter of modality is objective determinations of an *actual*.[64] By this, Hegel's modal treatment inevitably turns into a metaphysical investigation into the determinations of the actual, which is not concerned with the ways in which cognition, the understanding or knowing grasps the objects in their modal relation but concerned with the modal determinations of being as actuality.

Following Hegel's understanding of modality, it is important to distinguish Hegel's view from the contemporary idea that explains modality as the *ways* in which the actual is or might have been, seen in Lewis and Stalnaker. The idea of *ways* when taken as expressing

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[63] The emphasis is mine.
[64] I am partially indebted to Guzmán for the understanding of modality alongside the question of 'what' in Hegel. He considers the determining power of modality in the objects as the differentiation point of Hegel from Kant. However, for Guzmán (2015, p. 76), modality is also part of determining of 'what is true'. He understands that the categories of the *Logic* are all about *what is true*, and modality is not exempt from this fashion. I do not agree with him only because the *Logic* is not concerned about what is true in the categories and the only truth Hegel talks about is the one that is constituted by the determinations of categories with the question of what is. To my understanding, Hegel does not approach to categories with the question of what is *true*, since the question itself carries a determinate value of *true* into the inquiry, which is not compatible with Hegel's consistent presuppositionless analysis of the categories of the *Logic*.

modalities makes the modal investigations not directly concerned with the actual but concerned with *the ways* (such as possible worlds in Lewis) in which the actual is or might have been. Although these ways reveal the modal relations among things, they nonetheless are not modal as such. In this view, the ways fall outside the domain of modality since they are themselves non-modal but expresses modal qualities.[65] Hegel's understanding of modality, however, indicates that modalities are the inner determining structure of the actual, through which the actual manifests itself. The manifestation does not take any other form than to be modally determined so it is not in a non-modal form. However, one might find a similarity between Hegel's conception of mode as *way and manner* (*Art und Weise*) and the understanding of modality as the ways in which the actual is. For this, we need to emphasise the subtle yet important nuance between mode and modality in Hegel.

In the chapter *Actuality* of Hegel's *Logic*, we come to see that mode and modality are distinct in terms of how they are conceived in the subject-matter. The mode operates as the *external* determination of the absolute, whereas modality refers to the *inner* determining elements of actuality. Findlay (2004, p. 210) is one of the few commentators who points out this distinctive use of these terms in Hegel. However, for him the distinction is not very important since Hegel removed the section on the absolute later in the *Encyclopaedia Logic*. I think that in Hegel's analysis, the transition from the mode to modality holds a substantial idea enabling us to contrast modality as the determination of actuality to the mode as the determination of the absolute.

Hegel (SL 466/WL-II 187) thinks that the philosophical investigation into the absolute should not reveal any more determinations than it already has. The exposition of the

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[65] There are many other philosophers in the history of philosophy, who concede that modal features of entities are revealed through non-modal properties. For instance, according to Newlands (2018, p. 96), Spinoza's modal metaphysics exemplifies such view in virtue of the definition of the necessary thing, which implies that the thing is due to its essence or to its cause (EP1P33S1) where essence or cause determine the modal property of the thing.

absolute then could be made explicit by the exposition being an external determiner determining further the absolute. Insofar as the mode determines the absolute, the absolute becomes something more determinate, and the mode naturally becomes an inner determination. This shift in the two concepts indicates a bigger structural change, which Hegel names actuality. Actuality corresponds to this developed structure of the absolute because actuality as immediacy is *determined* by its *inner* elements or by its modalities. That is, modality is of a determining structure, which is immanent to actuality since actuality engenders its determinations/modalities in its own conceptual sphere. So modality is not just a way or manner in which the actual is externally regarded but an inherent constitutive element of actuality. The distinction between modality and the mode underlines the fact that modality always indicate a determination in an immanent relation to actuality, whereas the mode signifies an external determination of the absolute.

Given that Hegel argues for a conception of modality, which refers to the immanent and objective determinations of actuality, I shall expound more the immanence of modality in contrast to Leibniz, whose modal treatment requires the transcendent idea of God. Leibniz's conception of actuality presupposes possibility as its condition to exist since actuality, the world we live in, is created as the best among an infinite number of possible worlds. Actuality is constituted through God's will on the grounds that God chooses the most perfect due to his most perfect being. For Leibniz (M §45) possibilities are already a proof for God's existence because they are non-contradictory, limitless, and without any negation, but in turn, possibilities owe their presence to being conceived in God (M §43). Possibilities are posed in God's mind as essences, which precede existence but nonetheless they are real insofar as they are in God's mind (M §43). The reality *in* possibilities has its source in God, and God's understanding is also the reality or actuality *of* the possibilities. Since what is possible or actual is either due to God's thought or to God's will, God is supposed to be *necessarily*

present before allowing possibility and actuality. Leibniz's idea confirms that God includes the identity of existence and essence hence it is necessary being (M §44).

The idea of the best world out of the possible worlds presupposes an idea of God that is necessary and yet transcendent to the world of his creation. One way to consider this idea is that for God to be immanent in his creation, God is supposed to reduce himself to be actual just as the created entities. However, this is not what Leibniz looks for in God on the grounds that the actual exists contingently in virtue of another actual and of time, and that God eternally exists due to his own concept without an other. Briefly, God cannot merely be actual[66] in the sense of the created entities. We need to delineate another actuality of a kind that defines the actuality of God and differentiates it from the created entities. Since God is certainly necessary whose existence is different from the existence of actualities created by God's will, hence, transcendent, a new kind of actuality must come along with necessity. So God is necessarily actual. Provided that the possibilities, preceding actuality, are conceived in God's mind, modal concepts find their foundation and determinations in the transcendent idea of God.

In comparison to Hegel, this view could create a problem of a transcendent domain that philosophical thinking cannot penetrate. Nonetheless, this problem is not the case in Hegel since the twofold concept of actuality, self-differentiating totality proving itself as a modality, prevents Hegel to fall into a transcendent or another domain for modality in virtue of the one side of actuality which operates as a modal determiner alongside possibility,

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[66] Nachtomy (2014, p. 173; 2017, p. 80) argues that Leibniz holds an actualist position in virtue of the idea that the possibilities that are conceived in God's mind presupposes the God's existence as *actual*. I don't agree with this idea because the existence of God is not supposed to be as *existing actual.* An actual existent, for Leibniz, has a ground outside its concept while God's existence is in virtue of his own concept. So, I rather think that in Leibniz's philosophy, God is not merely actual existence but necessary that exists through itself. This could be read as an element of actualism in Leibniz, which does not make Leibniz's stance completely actualist. Therefore, the position Leibniz holds at best could be a version of possibilism in virtue of arguing the priority of possibility over actuality and necessity (M §45).

contingency or necessity of another actual[67]. It is right to say that Hegel's modal metaphysics

does not require a transcendent domain to account for modalities because the restrictive

modal domain to actuality suggest that modalities are immanent to actuality as opposed to a

transcendent view like in Leibniz.

Hegel's understanding of modality can be made clearer by looking at *de re*/*de dicto*

distinction in modality in contemporary modal metaphysics. Insofar as *de re* is conceived in a

broad sense, Hegel's theory might roughly be defined as corresponding to *de re* modality

since actuality as immediacy is conceived as an existence or being. However, *de re* implies

modality is to be about *things*, which is not compatible with Hegel's to be a precise

understanding of modality as the determination of actuality. *De re*/*de dicto* distinction is not

sufficient to articulate this fine detail in Hegel. For this, I suggest *de actualitate*, meaning that

the theory is merely concerned with the actuals and actuality. This precise categorisation

represents Hegel's theory appropriately, which later on enables us to demonstrate Hegel's

alternative position in modal metaphysics.[68] The categorisation is necessary to make explicit

that the subject-matter of a modal theory is supposed to be actuality. So, for Hegelian

modality, it is the one that is merely concerned with the determinations of the actual and the

actual itself. For this reason, it does not aim to make sense of every determination of being or

existence from a modal perspective, meaning that modal determiners does not belong to the

domain of being or that of existence but only to the domain of actuality, or of being-as-

actuality. Furthermore, Hegelian modal theory is not a metaphysical theory to explain

everything in a modal way. Hegel's modal theory only aims to expound modality with the

logical structure derived from the interaction of modal concepts. Accordingly, it is crucial to

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[67] This view is based on Hegel's real modalities where an actual comes to be conceived as a modal determiner according to its position to another actual. I will examine this idea in 5.2..
[68] One might find unsatisfactory to think outside the distinction of *de re* and *de dicto* regarding the limited arguments above. For more, I will present a detailed discussion in the next chapter where I elucidate Hegel's modal metaphysics.

pay attention to the use of metaphysical concepts, in the *Logic*, belonging to the other prior categories of being and essence and how their explanatory power falls short when it comes to modality. This is not because modality is a higher metaphysical category, which could explain metaphysical subject-matter better than the others, but because in Hegel's system, the logic of each category falls short when it comes to explain a more complex category. In brief, thing metaphysics as *de re* modality does not do justice to Hegel's modal theory. So regarding it as *de actualitate* would be an appropriate categorisation when delineating the limits of modality according to Hegel's treatment of modality.

Following that, the Hegelian idea of the immanent derivation suggests that the modal reasoning does not need a foundational non-modal explanatory term to make explicit the modal determinations of the actuals. Even though, in Hegel's *Logic*, the role of the determinations of previous categories is explicit at some structures of modal concepts, such as formal possibility as *self-identity* and contingency as *grounded*, this does not mean that modal concepts operate under the rubric of those previous determinations. These determinations merely play a descriptive role in the domain of modality. For example, formal possibility is defined as self-identity, not because it implies the idea of self-identity established in the logic of reflection as essence reflected into itself, but because it implies the self-referential determination of actuality. Hegel's modal theory, in this regard, provides a theoretical insight, suggesting a different logical structure for each category. This idea then also develops modality through a new logical structure that incorporates the previous logical domains without taking them as its foundation. Hegelian modality, in this respect, stands as an alternative to the current views that entails a non-modal domain for modal metaphysics.

In Hegel, the domain of modality is restricted to that of actuality. The restriction designates the scope of modality that prevents Hegelian modalities falling into a foundational domain on which Hegelian modal metaphysics is based. Firstly, Hegel conceives modality as

the determinations of actuality. That is, the actual is a type of entity that manifests itself through its modalities. Therefore, modality has to be about an entity that has the capacity of manifesting itself. For Hegel, being, existence (Existenz) and essence do not have such capacity of manifesting themselves. Secondly, due to this restriction, modality cannot account for the determination in these non-modal metaphysical domains (SL 477/WL-II 201). For example, modality cannot account for what a *thing* is, but it can account for what *modally determinate* being (actuality) is. The following passages of the second remark for being, where Hegel (SL 69/WL-I 95-6) argues against the understanding of being with possibility, demonstrates how Hegel conceives the restriction of some certain concepts to their relevant domains: 'If it has somewhere been said that existence, which is held form the start to be equivalent to being, is the completion of possibility, then another determination namely possibility, is presupposed along with it; so being is not declared in its immediacy but precisely as not standing on its own, as conditioned'. For Hegel, the attempt to grasp being with possibility is to conceive it as mediated, which eventually asserts a presupposition that being is already possible. For Hegel, this is not the right analysis to understand being *qua* being because to make explicit pure being—being without determinations— one should leave aside any possible conceptions about being, hence thinking being as immediacy. This does not mean that being is not even possible but means that neither possibility nor impossibility is a feature of being. For Hegel, only being as actuality can be possible. From this idea, we can deduce that each category in Hegel's *Logic* refers to a domain that has its own capabilities of explaining the logical structure. Following the order of categories in the Science of Logic, it is clear that being as such is not modally determinable, yet actuality entails modal determinations in its own domain. One can, of course, apply modal categories in an external way to being or existence. Hegel's point, however, is that only actuality contains possibility and the other modal categories *immanently* within itself.

3.3. Conclusion

I have argued that Hegel understands modalities as objective and immanent determinations of actuality. Hegel's derivation of modal concepts from actuality delineates the domain of modal metaphysics as the domain of actuality. However, this suggestion remains only a projection without discussing what the domain of actuality is for Hegel. The next section will constitute actuality as a domain in which modal concepts operate as determiners.

4. AN EXAMINATION OF HEGEL'S TREATMENT OF FORMAL MODALITIES

This chapter demonstrates the derivation of formal modalities from the concept of actuality in Hegel's treatment. Although the term derivation might evoke an idea of foundation from which modal concepts are derived, Hegel's idea shows a way of deriving modal concepts without falling into a foundationalist territory. This distinguishes Hegel's account from the views in contemporary modal metaphysics, which explain modality by various other metaphysical concepts that appear as the foundational explanatory concepts for modalities. The idea of deriving modalities from a single modal concept is not so common in contemporary modal metaphysics but the idea is hypothetically stated in Theodore Sider's *Reductive Theories of Modality* (2005), where necessity is placed in the centre as a fundamental term from which its negation, possibility, is derived.[69] Sider's hypothetical analysis, showing the possibility of such a derivation, falls under the alethic modality, in which the limited modal operators (possibility and necessity) can be expounded in such a way that the foundation again comes to be necessity. Although it is *hypothetically* possible, Hegel's account *proves* an inclusive modal framework without a non-modal foundation by the self-explanatory concept of actuality. In this sense, Hegel's account provides a convincing view for the question of whether modal concepts can be derivable from one another without appealing to a non-modal foundation.

This chapter consists of four sections. The first section will briefly discuss Hegel's use of *formal* in his treatment of modality. Then the chapter will examine formal determinations of actuality, possibility, contingency and necessity in the order that they appear in the *Science of Logic*. Section Two and Three analyses formal actuality and

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[69] The desire for such idea can also be found in Shalkowski's work (1994), which suggests an ontological foundation for modality. He argues that such a foundation is possible because the world has modal qualities inherent in itself. However, his suggestion does not go further than positive regards for the possibility of such an idea.

possibility beginning from formal actuality's initial state that immediately contains possibility within itself. The inclusion of possibility within actuality determines not only actuality but also possibility. Section Four introduces formal contingency as the unity of actuality and possibility, in which the moments of this unity preserve their distinction from one another and formal necessity as the identity of actuality and possibility. The chapter concludes that the beginning of Hegel's treatment of modalities formally constitutes the way in which modal concepts are made explicit without seeking a non-modal foundation.

4.1. What Is It to Be Modally Formal?

For some commentators in Hegel scholarship, formal means to be determined or grasped in only thinking (Longuenesse, 2007, p. 123) or by abstraction in the mind alone (Redding, 2017)[70]. In these commentators' views, thinking becomes the only operative power to reveal the determinations of the formal modalities. However, when the formal modalities turn into real modalities, where content determination comes to play a substantial role in the determination of modal moments, thinking cannot be reducible to only formal determinations, because, in real modalities, thinking is also at operation. So, thinking cannot be peculiar to form determinations and must be immanent to each and every determination of the *Logic*. The reading I suggest regards formal, or form determinations of modalities, as one-sided, contentless determinations.

Formal determination or form implies that the concept at hand demonstrates one-sided characteristics. In the logic of form and content, Hegel claims that the nature of form is to be subordinate to something else, hence always points to an other which it forms (SL 396/WL-II

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[70] Although Redding does not explicitly state how he understands formal in Hegel. We can predict the ascribed view from his understanding of possibility in Hegel. Redding (2017, p. 371-372) argues that possibility, defined as abstraction or a type of reflection within actuality (EL 143), evokes the idea that possibilities are contained in the actual mind as *abstracta*. So, given that these determinations fall under formal possibility in Hegel, it is right to think that by formal, Redding understands the determinations in thinking.

94)[71]. This one-sided characteristic is also present in formal modalities. For example, the formal possibility is deficient or one-sided in virtue of being *only* a possibility of actuality.

Even though form determination does not provide a full sense of modality, it has a crucial place to begin Hegel's analysis. To reveal the importance of form determination in modality, we need to consider it alongside two previous categories that develop themselves as actuality. Form, in the logic of the inner and outer, demonstrates the contentless self-identity of the transition from inner into the outer, and vice versa (SL 463/WL-II 184). This unity proves itself to be actuality. Further, in the logic of the absolute, form determination demonstrates itself as the mode of the absolute, which again proves itself as actuality. Given that the form is substantial for the two determinations from which the *Logic* derives actuality, a closer look into the logic of the inner and outer and that of absolute explains why Hegel begins actuality chapter with *formal* modalities.

The absolute is determined only through form determination, or through its mode. The determination of the absolute is its expression. Hegel explains modality alongside formal determinations at first only because the mode of the absolute (i.e. the absolute as actuality or the absolute as truly itself) proves that '[…] the absolute is *absolute form*'(SL 477/WL-II 201). That is, the absolute is only determined such that the presence of the form precedes that of content. However, since the absolute is conceived as indeterminate at first, and the concept, through its exposition or its determining, reveals that its determinacy is the absence of content, the form constitutes the content as identical to itself. Where the absolute reveals itself as the manifestation of itself, Hegel (SL 471/WL-II 194) writes that '[w]hen therefore one asks for a content of the exposition, for what the absolute manifests, the reply is that the distinction of form and content in the absolute has been dissolved; or just this is the content

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[71] Hegel here summarizes essence, ground-connection, matter, and content as the other which form determines.

of the absolute, *that it manifests itself*'. With this form determination at hand, Hegel (SL 471/WL-II 195) claims that the *manifestation* of the absolute turns absolute into actuality. We find this actuality as the first givenness or immediacy in Hegel's modal treatment. The logic of the inner and outer first leads to the domain of actuality, but this initially takes the form of absolute actuality, or the absolute. This absolute then leads logically to actuality proper.

The *Logic* begins with immediate actuality since the prior determinations from which actuality is derived cannot explain this new structure that they give birth to. Immediate actuality first manifests itself in its formal determinations, formal in the sense of one-sidedness. As we will see, on the one hand, actuality and possibility show a one-sided relation between each other where possibility becomes deficient in opposition to actuality, whereas actuality becomes a possible actuality or contingency. On the other hand, contingency can grasp the difference between actuality and possibility, whereas only necessity becomes their identity. This implies that none of the formal modalities can grasp the complete determinations they have.

4.2. Formal Actuality and Formal Possibility

The opening of the modality section in Hegel's *Science of Logic* is maybe the one of most difficult passages to engage with. One difficulty is that Hegel lays out two prior determinations of actuality that the very concept itself does not yet prove; actuality as the unity of the inner and outer and actuality as the determinate/modified absolute. But nonetheless the concept of actuality remains indifferent to these determinations since at this point actuality as such is not yet examined. So, we should leave any determinate ideas about actuality and take the concept as a minimal point that is given to our investigation. Another difficulty is that the pre-settled conceptions we might have in mind often obscure the *Logic* rather than make it clear, such as the idea that actuality is the unity of essence and existence,

and that actuality is an actualisation of the possibles. We can list as many pre-conceptions as we wish but it is certain that Hegel's *Logic* does not operate on the basis of those.

Having a rigid preconception seems to be one of the reasons why McTaggart (1910, p.163) gets confused by this section in this analysis and unfortunately finds illegitimate Hegel's derivation of actuality. McTaggart (1910, p. 163) rightly argues that the idea, that the inner is outer and the outer is inner, proves that their distinction vanishes into their identity. Hegel understands this identity as actuality (SL 464/WL-II 185). However, McTaggart consistently reads the inner as substratum and the outer as surface, which may be helpful in the logic of the inner and outer but is confusing in the logic of modality. This leads McTaggart to read possibility as substratum. Then he argues that "[...] in taking Possibility as a Substratum, we have gone back to a position already transcended—which is, of course, illegitimate". The *transcended* position is the vanished distinction between the inner and outer into their identity. Given this idea, McTaggart thinks that the distinction between possibility and actuality begs the question. Further, he maintains that if the logic of the inner and outer does not give us the first distinction between actuality and possibility then it is not possible for anyone, including Hegel, to make this distinction. In McTaggart's reading, the difficulty is twofold: first his consistent reading of the doctrine of essence on the basis of the terms, substratum and surface, leads him to think of actuality as surface and possibility as substratum, which is not Hegel's point because actuality at best can be considered the unity of surface and substratum in this framework. The second difficulty is that his assertation of substratum and surface obscures the shift in concepts from the inner and outer to actuality and possibility. So, he quickly gives away his judgement that Hegel's distinction between actuality and possibility is illegitimate.

What McTaggart misses is that Hegel is not in favour of developing one consistent framework to understand each and every category in the course of the *Logic*. This could

imply two points: a) Hegel does not presuppose a single framework or method in light of which all categories are to be understood; and 2) Hegel does not assume that a single unchanging method will emerge in the course of the *Logic*. It is certain that Hegel develops his theory of modality without having a stable framework in mind. I think that the strong interpretation of Hegel's *Logic*, suggested by Houlgate (2006), rigorously interprets this Hegelian idea by emphasising the presuppositionless aspect of the opening of the *Logic* and the aspect of letting go of the subject at hand. The presuppositionless beginning of the *Logic* has implications in the further developments of the *Logic*, such as where Hegel demonstrates developed categories in a minimally determinate sense in order to show explicitly the native logic of each category. The *minimally determinate sense* implies that the derivation of a previous category already constitutes a determination for the investigation of the next category. That is, there has to be a minimal sense contained in every category following after a complete analysis of the previous one. Hegel preserves the same attitude in the logic of modality by beginning from the most minimal point that is left over from the previous categories and by letting go of the determinations without applying a pre-settled framework. In Hegel's modal treatment, actuality as immediacy carries the minimally determinate sense coming from the previous categories, such as the immediacy of the unity of the inner and outer and the determined absolute.

In Hegel's treatment of modality, actuality is first understood as an immediate concept, which is, on the one hand, the result of the unity of the inner and outer and the result of the determined absolute, on the other. This unity is taken as immediate in the domain of the logic of modality since the unity is the result of the determinations of the inner and outer, to which the logic of modality remains external. In the logic of the absolute, Hegel reveals that the absolute is meant to become a mode (a determination) of itself. That is, the absolute, as the complete unity of its determinations, is not completely determined, but it is a mere

activity of determining itself thereby constantly turning itself into something determinate in its mode. Actuality, therefore, is in its immediacy simple *immediate* actuality, or simple existence. But equally it is the *form-unity* of the outer and the inner and so must also contain the moment of being-in-itself or *inwardness*. Yet it remains immediately different from such inwardness, so the latter is not actuality itself, but possibility. Such possibility differs from actuality, and yet is simply the inwardness, or reflectedness into itself *of actuality*

So we have two specifications for the analysis, which are left over to actuality. Firstly, actuality demonstrates itself as the formal unity of the inner and the outer, and second actuality is the determined absolute. Regardless of the two specifications of actuality, the *Logic* takes actuality as immediate or in a minimally determinate sense because the logical inquiry has to find the specifications of actuality in the concept of actuality itself. Therefore, actuality is supposed to be understood as immediate at first[72], but it is not pure immediacy[73] but an immediacy that is *derived* from the logic of the absolute and the inner and outer. Actuality is no more than a mere being or existence in virtue of its immediacy. In other words, immediate actuality lacks modal determinations, which makes it different from mere being or existence. Actuality, therefore, is in its immediacy simple *immediate* actuality, or a being or simple existence.

The unity of the conflicting ideas of immediacy and being-derived is, for Hegel, the first to begin the analysis in the chapter of *Actuality*. Hegel states the first conceptual tension in actuality as following:

> 'Actuality is formal inasmuch as, as a first actuality, it is only
> *immediate*, *unreflected* actuality, and hence is only in this form
> determination but not as the totality of form. And so it is nothing more

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[72] Here immediacy does not have any particular connotation rather than a place holder that implies actuality as a minimally determinate concept.

[73] Pure being can be given as an example to the idea of pure immediacy, meaning that being does not have any determination, neither nothing prior to itself nor containing anything coming after itself.

than a *being*, or […] *existence* in general. But because *by essence* it is not mere […] existence but is the form-unity of the in-itselfness or inwardness and externality, it immediately contains *in-itselfness* or *possibility*'(SL 478/WL-II 202).

This passage suggests two thoughts: a) actuality as immediate and b) actuality as the formal unity of the inner and outer. The former expresses the idea that actuality is no different than being or existence, insofar as it is conceived as merely immediate. However, this idea cannot give us the complete determinations of actuality because actuality is derived from the unity of inner and outer. Actuality, as the derived concept has to carry the specification of being unity as well. For this, Hegel asserts that actuality contains actuality (externality) and possibility (in-itselfness/inwardness). Following this, Hegel makes explicit how the unity of inner and outer is understood in the logic of modality, namely that actuality is the formal unity of possibility and actuality.

Here we should distinguish two senses of actuality in order to grasp this peculiar determination. Actuality is first thought as immediate actuality, but it is then thought as the form-unity of the inner and the other because it is thought first as *immediate* actuality and then as *actuality*. When it is thought as actuality proper, it is thought as form-unity that contains two forms as its moments, actuality and possibility. This explains that actuality remains *immediately* different from the possibility that it contains.

Actuality contains externality (actuality) and innerness (possibility) as its moments. This is because actuality is not a simple immediate but is derived as an immediacy from the logic of the inner and outer. The moments (externality and innerness) turn into a descriptive means in the concept of actuality because the immediate here is not immediate as such but actuality as immediate. If immediacy is understood as immediate *actuality*, we come to see that actuality contains its form determinations of actuality and possibility.

Actuality contains possibility only insofar as it makes explicit its constituents, namely form determinations. Its constituents show the characteristics of immediacy and in-itselfness. The in-itselfness of actuality is understood as formal *possibility*. Actuality includes an in-itselfness because the in-itselfness indicates a self-identity that is the result of self-reflective movement of the immediate actuality. Here, Hegel's understanding of identity would be helpful to understand why possibility at first arises as in-itselfness or an implicit self-identity. Identity is considered as a result of the self-production within a concept, which posits an other to itself, constitutes its self-identity as something other than what is posited. It is similar to thinking that the object takes anything, not belonging to itself, as an other and establishes its self-identity by *distinguishing* itself from others.

The constitution of identity takes place in the relation of actuality to possibility through a self-distinguishing activity. Actuality posits an other to itself or a negative to itself. This negative is possibility. The other of actuality (possibility) presupposes the positor (actuality) as an immediate. Since actuality is already an immediate and it is later presupposed as an immediate by possibility, actuality is proven to be immediate that it already is. Actuality is immediate because of the new determination of the unity of the inner and outer to which the inner and outer remains indifferent. Actuality's activity of positing and possibility's activity of presupposing prove that actuality is immediate according to its own logic, not in virtue of the logic of the inner and outer and that possibility is the reflectedness of actuality or the inner identity of actuality.

In Hegel's treatment, the concept of actuality is of a central position. It is the minimal point that modal analysis can be reduced to. Given that we have argued modality pertains to the determinations of actuality, it is right to designate Hegel's position as distinct from those which read possibility as a primitive foundation for everything that is, such as Leibnizian modal metaphysics and Lewisian possible worlds metaphysics. For Hegel, actuality comes first before

possibility and possibility is derived from actuality (Burbidge, 2007, p. 17). This means that actuality is prior to possibility not in virtue of the order of the argument, but as shown above, its conceptual significance is proved to be the first. Furthermore, actuality proves itself to be self-differentiating by setting an other for itself because it is not just *immediate* but also the *form-unity* of inner and outer—and so must contain the moment of being in itself from which it is immediately different. The self-differentiation is crucial for the various modal determinations, which are derived from actuality since otherwise the progression of the *Logic* would stop at actuality as immediate, or the *Logic* has to assert a concept to proceed its progression. Neither of those could be the case for Hegel's *Logic*.

Now that the modal concept of possibility is derived from actuality without further detailed characterisations, Hegel's treatment moves onto the determinations of possibility. Hegel reveals an unsustainability in possibility stemming from the absence of its other, actuality. That is, possibility entails a reference to actuality. The reference makes explicit the idea mentioned in actuality that possibility presupposes actuality for itself because possibility is simply the *self-reflection of* actuality.

Since possibility is taken as the reflection of actuality, Hegel accounts for the reflectedness as the determination that makes explicit the in-itselfness of actuality. One way to understand the reflectedness and in-itselfness is to take it as mere reflection in itself. This corresponds to Hegel's conception of identity in regard to lacking its negativity or a reference to its other but merely implying a self-reference (SL 356/WL-II 38-9). So, in a sense, the very reflectedness of actuality confirms that possibility proves itself as self-identity (SL 478/WL-II 203). Possibility with this specification does not yet seem to presuppose actuality but nonetheless given that it is the reflectedness *of* actuality (SL 478/WL-II 202), the subtle reference remains in itself. That is, possibility is a self-identity as a mere reflectedness but more importantly it is the self-identity *of* actuality.

Possibility, for Hegel, contains two seemingly distinct aspects that prove one and the same idea that possibility is an unsustainable concept that only subsists in relation to actuality. On the one hand, possibility is a negativity in virtue of being a negative or an other to actuality. This possibility finds its conceptual significance in its relation to actuality. On the other hand, possibility is the identity of actuality, meaning that it is a one-sided form determination that *implicitly* relates to actuality.

Firstly, possibility is a negative moment of actuality. Hegel (SL 479/WL-II 203) writes that '[…] this in-itself is determined as *sublated* or essentially only with reference to actuality; as the negative of actuality, it is *posited* as negative'. That is, possibility has to be in relation to actuality to which it belongs because possibility is posited by actuality as a non-immediate negative of actuality. Hegel conceptualises this side of possibility as negative because it is posited by actuality as what actuality is not, namely non-immediate. So, it is a one-sided concept that necessarily implies a relation to the immediate in virtue of being a negative. The logic of positing and presupposing makes explicit that possibility is meant to be in relation to actuality. Remember that possibility is explained as the negative of actuality because actuality makes possibility explicit in order to prove what it itself is, namely an immediacy. In turn, possibility presupposes actuality as an immediate or a given. In virtue of this logical connection, possibility always presupposes actuality. In other words, possibility is an incomplete concept without actuality, and in turn, actuality requires possibility to actualise itself or operate according to its concept. Actuality differs from possibility in terms of its immediacy or its givenness because the immediacy can be without any further reference to another concept. That is, actuality is not totally deficient without possibility because there is at least one specification, immediacy, – regardless of how limited and minimal it is. However, Actuality, despite its immediacy, sustains itself as modally determined only with the form determination of possibility and actuality.

As for the second or positive meaning of possibility, it is defined as an unrelational self-identity that does not refer to an other but it is the mere suspension of its reference to its other, even though it is derived as the reflectedness *of* actuality. This is because it is determined as the self-identity *of* or a self-relation *of* actuality. The point is that possibility is conceived here simply as the non-self-contradictory self-identity of something. This is what Hegel calls the *mere* possibility of an actual. Hegel (SL 479/WL-II 203) writes that '[…] it is the relationless, indeterminate receptacle of everything in general. – In this formal sense of possibility, *everything is possible that does not contract itself*; the realm of possibility is therefore limitless manifoldness'. These lines suggest the following two ideas. Firstly, possibility as an *indeterminate receptacle* means that it is a domain in which everything is held without a relation to one another since the receptor is indeterminate and it, as a domain, also remains indeterminate about what specific kind of everything is contained in it. This indeterminacy mirrors the conceptual inefficiency in possibility, which does not determinate the actual to be this or that in its domain. It can only determine the actual to be various possibilities that are all self-identical to themselves remaining indifferent to each other. For example, in the domain of mere possibility, the possibility of A does not exclude the possibility of non-A.

Since we know that possibility is a determination of actuality, the domain of possibility as manifoldness simply indicates entities, that are conceived in this unity, are taken under the form determination of possibility. So things are present not as actual but as merely possible due to the form determination of possibility. Here Hegel's statement (SL 479/WL-II 203) that '[…] this in-itself [possibility] is determined as sublated or essentially only reference to actuality' makes explicit that even mere possibility contains a reference to actuality, a reference that indicates possibility is a form of actuality. Since possibility is a form determination in actuality, if we consider the totality alongside only this form

determination, possibility comes to operate as the encompassing form of the manifoldness. However, the determination of things as possible does not mean that entities are reduced to non-being or non-existence because the domain of possibility is not beyond actuality. On the contrary, Hegel's idea of the positedness of possibility signifies that even if possibility is taken in its most independent sense, it implies that possibilities are contained in actuality. So, the domain of possibility has to be within actuality as a determining form that renders entities as possible.

The idea of manifoldness, however, does not let entities co-sustain themselves in this loose indeterminacy because the manifoldness implies the *implicit relation* of the elements held in the unity. So, they are not only mere possibles or self-identities in virtue of the positive meaning of possibility but also one entity relates to another in the manifoldness. Hegel, by emphasising this implicit relation, maintains that '[…] every manifold is *determined in itself* and *as against an other*' (SL 479/WL-II 203). That is, possibility amounts to the determination of identity but does not halt there. The relation engenders more characterisation than merely free-floating self-identical actuals. The first characterisation to think about is the difference between the opposite components of the manifold, such as the possibility of A and the possibility of non-A. Hegel argues that the possibility of something inevitably engenders its opposite within its own conceptual domain. The possibility of A ensures the possibility of non-A since possibility also implies that anything possible is not-to-be-in-itself (SL 479/WL-II 203). In a sense, the multiple possibilities generating their opposites are not determinate enough for any of them to be or to come into actuality only because they are merely possible.

For Hegel, possibility, when taken in its most absolute form, is also meant to engender its opposite, impossibility, since the concept of mere possibility does not carry sufficient determining power in itself to actualise anything possible. In other words, under the rubric of

formal possibility, everything *actual* is *impossible* because possibility is self-contradictory.

Let's dwell more on the shift from possibility to impossibility. Since possibility is, for now, a formal determination and a moment in actuality, it is always one-sided, insufficient. For example, when we say the rainbow is *merely* possible, what we really mean is the mere possibility of a rainbow without any conditions from which a rainbow emerges—such as the conditions of atmosphere, refraction, reflection, and dispersion of the sunlight—because formal possibility is only limited to determining the form by which it signifies nothing more than self-identity. Only because possibility is not sufficient to determine an entity's presence, it is more appropriate to change the statement to that the rainbow *possibly is*. If possibility is left as is without any further consideration, the possible implies nothing more than this indeterminate presence/non-presence. Yet since every possible is in the domain of possibility, the concept is the ground for any entity to be possible.

Hegel (SL 479/WL-II 204) argues that this form determination indifferently determines the content as possible. For that reason, any content, that the possible may hold, is a possibility without the significance of the content. That is, regardless of the determinations that engender an actual, the actual is understood as a possibility under the rubric of this formal determination. For example, the fact that the rainbow is possibly black is as possible as the fact that the rainbow is possibly colourful under the rubric of possibility. In a sense, the rainbow could be anything without any restriction, except the restriction of form forcing content (the colour of the rainbow) to be possible. That is, possibility determines rainbow (an actual) to *possibly* be this (black) and that (colourful). Although each possibility expresses the self-identity of the rainbow, when considered in relation to one another in the domain of possibility, each becomes contradictory since the presence of one comes with the presence of another. This proves that possibility operates according to its concept, i.e., it merely means to be possible and nothing else.

Following the example of rainbow, we recognise two non-identical aspects about it—albeit each aspect indicates self-identity, and this constitutes an example as to why Hegel (SL 479/WL-II 203) thinks that difference emerges among possibles. The rainbow is black is different from the fact that the rainbow is colourful. However, all and every possibility of the rainbow to be such-and-such includes a contradiction in the actuality of the rainbow. It is such a contradiction that states two things at the same time. First, the possibility that the rainbow is black is the true actuality of the rainbow because it is derived from the self-identity of the possible rainbow. Second, the possibility is that rainbow is colourful is the true actuality of the rainbow again because it is derived from the self-identity of the possible rainbow. The presence of each possibility guarantees that each content (being black and colourful) is possible, yet each is in opposition to one another. That is the concept of formal-possibility Hegel puts forward, a possibility that holds all and every possible being, which eventually collapses into a contradiction in virtue of the inclusion of the opposites.

Another way to prove the shift from possibility to impossibility, we need to look back into the first meaning of possibility that possibility is posited as only *a moment* of actuality. Possibility as a determination of the totality cannot be the entire determination but only a side of the totality because its positedness indicates that it is one-sided, so it is posited *by*. In this sense, possibility shows itself as a deficient, uneven form determination according to the totality (SL 479/WL-II 203). Since possibility can only attain its own conceptual characterisation alongside its other, namely that actuality as the other gives the essential specifications to possibility. That is to say, possibility means, at the same time, to be determined as not-to-be-in-itself. That is, possibility requires in-itselfness, a specification that gives the possible its significance, but this specification is granted by its relation to actuality. Its own specification does not belong to itself but to its relation to actuality. In other words, it makes itself explicit when it is related to actuality. Remember that Hegel defines possibility

as in-itselfness (implicitness) of actuality, and now it is defined as not-to-be-in-itself due to its inevitable relation to its other (SL 479/WL-II 203-4). Hegel, by this idea, derives impossibility from possibility as an inherent feature of possibility.

However, Hegel does not argue that possibility contains its impossibility in such a way that a possible contradicts another possible. In contrast, these two possibilities are only opposite possibles such that the possibility of A opposes the possibility of non-A. Hegel (SL 480/WL-II 204) writes that 'the possibility is the connection comparing the two; as a reflection of totality, it implies that the opposite also is possible'. The contradiction emerges in possibility in virtue of its one-sidedness, meaning that it is only *a* reflection of actuality. Possibility in this sense is an insufficient form determination for actuality. To complete itself, it has to contain actuality but, in this conception, possibility *cannot* 'because possibility by itself does not in any way entail actuality, there is nothing in sheer possibility as such that guarantees that the possible will be actualised' (Houlgate, 1995, p. 39). So anything possible is as much impossible. In other words, in the mere possibility, impossibility implicitly lies. That is the contradiction of possibility.

Hegel does not conceive contradiction as unintelligible and radically accounts for every contradiction he encounters in the course of the *Logic*. Here the contradiction of possibility is demonstrated in such a way that it becomes the self-annihilating determination for possibility. Possibility is determined in such a way that it has an other to itself for it to be. This otherness is the one that possibility does not explicitly oppose, so it is not impossibility, but the other is that which possibility is not, namely, actuality. Given that possibility is what it is, only in its other, the very concept of possibility defined as the in-itselfness of actuality is proven to be incomplete because the fact that possibility is in-itself indicates that it is in its other namely the in-itselfness *of* actuality. To put this differently, possibility is insofar as

actuality is. So, the contradiction of possibility is only resolved with the sublation of itself into actuality in virtue of not being other than actuality.

The conventional understanding of the concept reads possibility as the non-*actualised* essence. For Hegel, possibility does not constitute an unrevealed essence or potentiality[74] for actuality to come into presence because it is a logical moment that it has to be included in the totality (SL 479/WL-II 203), a totality that gives the modal character to possibility and strips off any connotation that possibility might mean anything non-modal such as essence and potentiality. With this account of possibility, Hegel fortifies the idea that actuality does not emerge out of possibility or presupposes possibility, but actuality comes first, and possibility becomes the one that is derived from actuality and that always presupposes actuality.[75] Regarding this aspect, Hegel comes closer to the Spinozist idea that whatever *is* is in actuality.

Hegel's actuality-centred modal metaphysics construes possibility as deficient.[76] Given that possibilist accounts grant priority to possibility over actuality such as Leibniz's possibilities, which precede the actual entities by virtue of being in God's mind, Hegel undermines this idea by this conceptual reconstruction of possibility. Hegel persuasively argues that possibility presupposes actuality. Reading Leibniz's view through this idea leaves

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[74] Although Hegel does not explicitly discuss about potentiality, potentiality and possibility are usually thought of as having a similar signification in the literature such as Zander (2014, p. 181). I suggest taking them to be distinct concepts by comparing Hegel's possibility with Aristotle's potentiality. Aristotelian potentiality contains a telos of being actual. What is potential is yet-to-be actual. However, Hegelian possibility lacks this telos in possible beings. What is possible is possible. Another reason why potentiality cannot be thought of as possibility in Hegel is the thought that potentiality renders actuality secondary, as opposed to the priority of actuality over possibility in Hegel.

[75] Houlgate (1995, p. 39) and Burbidge (2007, p. 22, p. 25) are in agreement with the idea that actuality actualises possibility. However, to my understanding, this idea subtly suggests that possibility has to come before actuality where actuality presupposes for itself possibility as its other in order to operate according to its concept, namely, to actualise. The idea rightly states that actuality, by its concept, has to actualise something, but the problematic part is to consider that actuality actualises possibility. Rather, I think that actualisation only takes place within the concept of actuality as it comes to be contingency and necessity. In virtue of the priority of actuality over possibility in Hegel's modal treatment, the actuals are not actualised possibilities.

[76] There is no doubt that Hegel, with this idea, gets closer to Spinoza, who defines possibility as the imperfection in the intellect (EP4D4); however, Hegel finds the problem with possibility not in the intellect, which, for Spinoza, is limited to conceive possibility, but in the very concept itself.

the reader of Leibniz two options: either that God is necessary, which requires another claim that God is necessarily *actual* holding possibilities in the mind, or that God is *non-actual* but nonetheless necessary. For Leibniz, it is certain that God is the one that is more actual than any other actual entities. So, what is left is to accept Hegel's idea that possibilities eventually presuppose actuality. This is only an example of what Hegel reveals in the determinations of possibility namely, the inherent presupposition that turns possibility into a deficient and dependent concept. The presence of actuality is the case, even if possibility is conceived in its least restrictive sense like in Lewis's possible worlds theory, which argues for the indexical actuality, that whether or not a world is actual is indexed to the perceiving participants of the world. Accordingly, any possible world is actual according to their inhabitants and anyone not participating in the world can call the world possible. Even in the least restrictive Lewisian sense, possibility requires a concept of actuality in order to determine which world is possible according to the participants of a world. By the nature of possibility, any such view, willing to develop possibility-based account has to presuppose actuality and turn *possibility as such* into the *possibility of* actuality.

To recapitulate, I have argued that Hegel's account of formal possibility shows the unsustainability in the concept as a need for a reference to actuality in order for possibility to *be*. Furthermore, insofar as possibility is analysed in isolation from actuality—i.e., the receptacle of everything that is actual—, the concept reveals its meaning as the connector of everything possible. However, Hegel finely reveals that there is no such sustainable conception of possibility without a reference to actuality since the connector of everything possible includes the opposite elements that render any possible parts of the connection as impossible. The investigation into mere possibility leads us to the derivation of impossibility out of possibility itself. This is the point where the *Logic* takes a step forward in the analysis of modalities by arguing that the co-presence of possibility and impossibility falls into a

contradiction. The sublation of possibility back into actuality shifts the conception of actuality, the immediate unity of actuality and possibility, to actuality as the reflected/determined unity of actuality and possibility or as contingency. Hence, contingency, as a new modality, comes out of actuality itself and further determines actuality.

4.3. Contingency and Formal Necessity

In the logic of contradiction, Hegel reveals that the contradictory relations amount to the collapse of the relata into an immediacy. Here in the logic of modality, Hegel states that the contradictory presence of possibles, generating impossibility, annihilates their conceptual independence and they altogether fall into an immediacy, which only means a return to actuality in the domain of modality. This immediacy, however, is not the first actuality only because the conceptual derivations until this point take place as the reflective determination for actuality. This reflected immediacy demonstrates itself as the unity of actuality and possibility, a unity differs from the first unity in terms of showing different characteristics that Hegel conceptualises under the concept of contingency. Contingency is the determinate unity of actuality and possibility, whereas actuality as immediacy is the immediate unity of actuality and possibility.

So this unity, as different from the first unity, grasps possibility and actuality not in their mere isolated forms but in relation to one another. In the reflected actuality, possibility explicitly comes to be *the possibility of* an actual. This is a similar idea to the common understanding of possibility. For example, whenever we express something as possible in a propositional form—e.g., A is possible, or A possibly is—we indirectly convey the idea that there is something actual before possibility to which we identify as possible. Hegel (SL 480/WL-II 205) expresses this idea in the following lines: '[…] the formal possibility that has determined itself as being *only* possibility and hence the formless actuality which is only being or […] existence in general. Everything possible has therefore in general a being or

a[n] […] existence'. Only with the conception of reflected actuality, the talk about possibility comes to have an explicit reference to the actual, or the possible comes to *be*, in other words. On the other hand, the relation of actuality to possibility also determines what actuality is since the relation reduces or determines actuality to be the possible but not in the sense of mere free-floating possibility, but in the sense of contingency.

Since this unity shows different characteristics than the immediate unity of possibility and actuality, there must be another concept for such a relation. Contingency is just the name that Hegel gives to the explicit unity of actuality and possibility. In this sense, contingency comes to be the determination of actuality, a determination that makes explicit actuality as something contingent.

Traditionally, contingency is, such as in Spinoza, the concept for the existents/non-existents that their reason for existence/non-existence remains outside or the reason for existence/non-existence is not found in its essence as necessary (EP4D3). Hegel follows the traditional view by his concept of ground (the principle of sufficient reason) in the determinations of contingency. Accordingly, for Hegel, the concept of contingency could demonstrate itself as grounded and groundless. The two opposite aspects of contingency are derived from the relation between actuality and possibility. Just as above we explained the transition from possibility to the possibility of actuality and from actuality as such to actuality as possible, the same determinations are at hand in the conceptual sphere of contingency. In other words, the unity is conceptualised as contingency because the unity demonstrates contingent characteristics, to be grounded and to be groundless. For Hegel, being *grounded* and being *groundless* constitute the very characteristic of this unity.

Let's analyse first what Hegel means by the groundlessness of contingency. Each side of the unity has the conceptual capacity to be the other namely, possibility as actuality and

actuality as possibility. This renders the unity transitory since the sides do not reach a synthesis, but one turns into another. Here, Hegel (SL 480-481/WL-II 205-6) points out that if mere possibility is inevitably cancelled out, then the unity turns out to be nothing more than actuality, which is immediate and hence, groundless. Its reason is not in the other but in itself. On the other hand, possibility also showed that when it is in relation to actuality, it contains a being, or an immediacy. This aspect indicates that in contingency, possibility is nothing less than the actual i.e., it has a being/immediacy in a minimal sense. According to this aspect, contingency is again groundless. The groundless contingency simply means that it does not hold the reason in the other but only in itself. This point naturally is where Hegel departs from the conventional understanding, which reads contingent as having an indeterminate ground to be otherwise.

Secondly, by putting a different accent on the connotations of constituents, contingency reveals itself as having a ground. Since the development of possibility is bound up with actuality and actuality reflectively determines itself through possibility, the one side constitutes itself as contingent through the other (SL 480/WL-II 206). The contingent has a ground because contingency is the actuality of possibility. In short, the actual is contingent because of its possibility, and the possible is contingent because of its actuality. This boils down to the idea that the contingent is an actual, which has a ground in the other. However, the Hegelian twist here is that the otherness between the constituents of contingency is immanent to contingency. Regarding its constituents as its ground, contingency in general is not grounded in something else but it is grounded within itself, or precisely ground*less* since it is immediately given. The fact that contingency is groundless is the moment that contingency fades away and comes to operate as necessity.

Hegel's concept of contingency develops a fundamental principle that anything contingent has to be actual. By this principle, contingency explicitly differs from mere

possibility since possibility insists on its distinction from actuality. According to this side, the contingent proves itself to be distinct from possibility in virtue of containing actuality. However, the contingent is not merely actual, since actuality is only one of its moments. Even though the contingent is immediately actual, it again immediately contains possibility, but this possibility is not actuality as possibility or possibility as actuality. It is possibility as possibility. In Hegel's vocabulary, it is possibility as positedness, meaning that possibility is explicitly what it is. So, in contingency, the actual is not mere immediacy but an actual with its possibility that is determined to be contingent. The actual is not only what it is but also it is what it could be.

Let's consider the side of contingency indicating that the actual is what it could be. Here we need to focus on the operation of possibility. As explained previously, possibility as mere possibility holds the opposing possibility of being this and that. This structure of possibility is preserved in contingency in virtue of possibility contained in contingency in opposition to actuality. Contingency is the actuality of possibility, but equally it contains possibility in opposition to actuality. Such possibility is thus mere possibility that expresses the possibility of A or non-A. The relation of actuality and possibility in this unity makes explicit why the actual is what it could be. The contingent by virtue of being an actual includes its possibilities within itself. Hence, it is certain that the question as to whether the contingent is present is pointless because it is already present due to its actuality. One might rightly think that Hegel holds a strong actualist position by his concept of contingency as the contingent already implies the actuality of an entity.

Contingency is a modal determination for the actual since the conceptual structure of contingency signifies that it is always a determination of actuality, precisely it is the concept for the determined actuality, indicating that the actual is present by itself but could be by another. In contingency, actuality proves itself to be possible and possibility proves itself to

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be actual. The determinate relation between the constituents of the unity engenders a conceptual change in actuality. Hegel calls this unity contingency because the unity is not a regress to the immediate unity as actuality but implies a further modal structure that immediate actuality cannot express. However, to understand contingency as a modal concept is open to debate as Knappik (2015, p. 59) argues that since contingency is modally identical to first formal conception of actuality by involving possibility and actuality in a unity, '[…] the notion of contingency does not by itself introduce a new modal operator. Rather, it serves to highlight a particular explanatory status'. As I argued above, contingency pertains to reflective unity of actuality and possibility, whereas the first formal actuality is the immediate unity. If we do not recognize this difference, then contingency might seem to be a non-modal articulation of what formal actuality is. However, contingency amounts to a conceptual change in the immediate actuality; hence, it appears as a new form or a modality of actuality, which implies the actual is contingent because it has a ground and has no ground.

To recapitulate, contingency is understood as the unity of actuality and possibility and this unity sets forth a developed structure where it proves itself as groundless and grounded in virtue of the transition of the sides into one another and the mutual conceptual development of both. The idea suggests not only that contingency implies that the actual finds a ground in possibility, but also that the actual, by virtue of its *immediate* presence, is groundless. Contingency as groundless no longer operate as such anymore since what is immediately present implies another conception that Hegel names as necessity.

Hegel's concept of necessity operates as a unifier of differences. However, it does not eliminate the differences but only emphasises the identical elements within the differences and shows how the differences are accommodated in a single unity. Given that the difficulty to state the certain characteristics of concepts in Hegel's system due to their variable connotations depending on the domain of the determinations, what Hegel seems to have in

mind with necessity can be taken as the unifier of differences in general.[77] We can see this sense operating throughout different books of Hegel concerning different subject-matters. For instance, in the *Encyclopaedia Logic* §9, Hegel distinguishes the speculative philosophy from empirical sciences by suggesting that philosophical thinking seeks a concept of necessity that unifies the differences between form and content in the empirical, and that this necessity is absent in empirical sciences. Therefore, the empirical sciences treat necessity as external to the facts by taking necessity to be similar to the law of the facts. Furthermore, in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* §152, Hegel maintains that the law in empirical sciences implies one-sided necessity that stands external to its object. He suggests the law as necessity is supposed to indicate the unity of law and its object. Again, in the judgement of necessity in the *Science of Logic* under the hypothetical judgment (SL 576-7/WL-II 337-8), we encounter the same structure of necessity as the unifier of subject and predicate. These ideas from different books point out a common understanding of necessity as the unifier of differences. It is right to conceive this feature as indispensable and substantial to Hegel's necessity. In this sense, the first conception of Hegelian necessity is nothing similar to those that present necessity as the iron fist of the law enduring above the order of things. Nonetheless, these types of necessity cannot be taken as proof to make explicit what necessity is in the domain of modality. For that reason, we should investigate what Hegel means by necessity in the domain of modality.

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[77] It is quite unusual that Lampert (2005, p.75) recognises Hegel's necessity with the term multiplicity as opposed to identity. He states: 'On my reading, contingency has to do with difference, the possibility that is in one thing being actualised in another; necessity has to do with multiplicity, the spilling out, and the return, of actuality. (Readers sometimes err in thinking of necessity in Hegel as a kind of identity rather than a kind of multiplicity.) Contingency becomes necessity when external difference becomes internal multiplicity.' Although it is not explicitly stated by Lampert where Hegel implies a type of multiplicity in necessity, the several passages of the logic of formal necessity express necessity as the *identity* of actuality and possibility (SL 481/WL-II; SL482/WL-II 207-8). *Pace* Lampert, I think that contingency expresses the unity through difference, whereas necessity expresses the unity through identity. Necessity as identity is quite consistent with other forms of necessity seen in other categories of the *Logic* as well as the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Hegelian necessity, according to its concept, requires differences to be present. In the case of modality, those differences appear as actuality and possibility. For that reason, Hegel's derivation of necessity is bound up with contingency since contingency is determined to be the first unity of differences. In other words, necessity first emerges as the necessity of contingency (Houlgate, 1995; Burbidge, 2007). In contingency, as necessity operates, it annihilates the difference in the sides of the contingent. Contingency is necessary not only because the very concept of necessity requires differences that contingency provides but also because it is the inevitable result of the transformation of actuality into possibility, which also turns itself into actuality again. In contingency, there lies a necessary element which constitutes the full circle of reflection of actuality through possibility back into itself. In contingency, we come to recognise that every possibility is in relation to actuality, a relation that demonstrates a becoming of the actual as possible and that of possible as actual. In other words, the becoming proves two things at once: first, actuality and possibility are distinct from each other since actuality becomes possibility insofar as possibility becomes actuality. Regardless of the becoming, the sides preserve their distinction. Second by this distinction, each proves itself to be self-identical. However, this identity is only found in their other. Hegel finds the elements of necessity on the second aspect where each finds their identity in the other. Actuality and possibility convert themselves logically into one another, but each thereby proves to be itself. The fact that each remains *identical with itself* in becoming its other is necessity. Hegel does not operate here with a preconceived notion of necessity, but he demonstrates that actuality and possibility remain themselves even in proving to be one another, and so prove to be irreducible, and he names this identity with oneself in the other—such irreducibility—*necessity*.

In Hegel's formal modality, necessity underlines the identical elements between the differences of actuality and possibility, but this identity relation is not the correspondence of

essence to existence as seen in the traditional reception of necessity such as Leibniz's

necessary being, whose existence is identical to its essence. In Hegel's account of modality,

necessity turns the actual into something self-identical.[78]

Hegel (SL 481/WL-II 207) argues that whatever is necessary is actual but never writes

or means anything such that whatever is necessary is possible. This is because the necessary

is not merely possible. But equally necessity is inconceivable—or impossible—without

possibility and therefore without contingency, since it is only by relating to itself in

possibility that actuality is necessity. If actuality were to lack possibility altogether, it could

not be necessity, but would be simple actuality or mere existence—in which case it would not

even be actuality. The idea Hegel suggests is that in the development of each identity,

actuality remains while possibility collapses into actuality as its immediacy. This is why

necessity is often conceived as that which is *not merely possible* or that which *cannot* be

otherwise. The *cannot* indicates that necessity contains *sublated* possibility or possible as

collapsed.

Let's trace further this idea in Hegel's analysis of necessity. Hegel (SL 481/WL-II

207), in the paragraph which opens necessity, explains why possibility is sublated in the

necessary; hence, the necessary is always actual. One way of explaining this idea is to

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[78] Mohanty (1999, p. 215) notes that '[…] Hegel often criticized the idea of modal necessity' where he discusses the different instantiations of necessity in Hegel's system. Mohanty does not exactly indicate where and how often Hegel criticises *modal* necessity. In favour of Mohanty's argument, I can regard Hegel's remarks in EL 143 R that 'actuality and necessity […] are truly anything but a mere *mode or manner* for something else'. Hegel further discusses that actuality and necessity hold inwardly complete determinations for themselves without owning to something else. So if one follows those lines, they may find Mohanty right. However, *pace* Mohanty, I argue that Hegel in EL §143 R states what actuality and necessity imply when they modify something else. That is, for an entity to be actual and necessary, it is supposed to have complete determinations in itself. In this sense, necessity and actuality are reduced to be determinations or modalities for the entity that proves itself as necessary and actual. Furthermore, Hegel's idea of the reflected actuality as the unity of possibility and itself proves actuality to operate as a modality and for modal necessity, the emergence of necessity out of contingency proves necessity as a modality of actuality, which implies the self-identity of the actual. Moreover, in formal necessity, we see that necessity determines actuality as the immanent reflection, which can be rendered as a modal determination since every modal determination is the various reflections of actuality.

emphasize the groundless aspect of contingency by following Hegel's account of necessity given in the *Encyclopaedia Logic*. The groundless contingent cannot operate according to its concept only because anything groundless cannot be contingent as such (EL §147 A). On the contrary, necessity is the concept for the groundless or for anything that is what it is immediately, or anything '[…] within which being conditioned falls away'(EL §147 A). Remember that contingency is conceived as groundless in virtue of the immediacy of actuality and the collapse of possibility into immediacy. The transition of possibility into actuality constitutes necessity as the self-relational movement of actuality through possibility back into itself.

The statement that the necessary is groundless is an explicit a reference to the groundless contingency. 'The necessary is an *actual*; as such it is immediate, *groundless*; but it equally has its actuality through an other or in its ground' (SL 481/WL-II 207). As we know from contingency, 'the contingent is an actual, which is determined as only possible' (SL 480/WL-II 205). So it is has a ground or a possibility. The actual here indicates two meanings, to be *groundless* and be *grounded*. Hegel (SL 481/WL-II 207) writes that 'the contingent is therefore necessary because the actual is determined as a possible [...], equally because its possibility[...] is simply sublated and posited as being'. So far necessity is of a similar structure to contingency. Contingency is necessary only insofar as we conceive the contingent as groundless. That is, the contingent in its minimal sense is actual and by being only actual, it is necessary since possibility becomes sublated in it. The version of the contingent, having possibility as sublated, renders explicit to what extent the contingent is necessary.

The contingent actual is grounded in possibility because it is determined as a possible. That is, the actual loses its immediacy in possibility and comes to be mediated or grounded by possibility and more precisely by the duality in possibility itself: by the fact that

possibility is that of A *or* non-A. So possibility as the ground and actuality as the grounded constitute a ground-relation, which is destined to sublate itself into being, just like the sublation of possibility into immediacy, a possibility (SL 480/WL-II 206) operating as a ground for the possibility of A and non-A. Hegel writes that '[w]hat is necessary *is*, and this being [the self-identical actual] is itself the necessary' (SL 481/WL-II 207).[79] However, Hegel (SL 481/WL-II 207) distinguishes the two senses of being by stating that '[a]t the same time, it is in itself; this immanent reflection is an other than that immediacy of being, and the necessity of being is an other. Thus, this being is not the necessary'. The being derived from the sublation of the ground-relation is not actuality as such, but it is a being, the in-itself (ansich*sein*), and appears as the reflection of actuality, but as a reflection that turns the actual into something self-identical, hence necessary. It is crucial that the very reflection itself is not the necessary, yet it renders the actual necessary. This is because it is a modality that determines the actual to be self-identical. It is right to think that necessity is a modal determination for the actual, an actual, which is present as a self-identical entity without a ground.

If something is only identical to itself or merely actual, it is necessary. If the entity is possible, not as merely possible but has a possibility for its being, then the entity is not necessary but contingent. Where the possibility is suspended in the contingent actual, there the actual emerges as necessary. Only the moment that possibility is suspended from the matter at hand, the matter at hand comes to be what actually is. In other words, the actual becomes necessary by *relating to itself* and so remaining *identical with itself* in the possibility from which it differs. Insofar as the actual differs itself from the possible through relating itself to itself, the actual constitutes itself as necessary.[80] Hegel (SL 481/WL-II 207) puts this

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[79] The translation is slightly changed.
[80] Burbidge (2006, p. 29) suggests the identity that comes around with necessity is the identity of actuality to possibility. '[…] formally necessary is a contingent actual. Having its actuality identical with its possibility,

idea in an elegant way: '[A]ctuality, in that from which it is distinguished, in possibility, is identical with itself. As this identity, it is necessity'.

The transition of possibility into actuality in the contingent unity brings forth the identity relation, which is shown as the self-relational reflective moment of actuality, just the formally similar to the logic of identity where essence proves itself as identity through its reflective return to itself from its other, immediacy. In the logic of modality, however, the identity, associated with necessity, implies the result of the reflective movement of actuality or the result of actuality's relating itself to itself in possibility. That is, identity emerging in the necessarily actual is not a relapse of the *Logic* from the domain of modality to that of identity because the very determination that turns the actual into necessary is not the reflectivity of essence, which engenders an identity through its other but that of actuality, which again engenders an identity by relating itself to itself in its other. So, in the domain of modality, the actual only manifests itself as an identity, which is nothing other than necessity itself.

Hegel's concept of necessity provides the transition from formal actuality to real actuality. Necessity is not a form determination standing against another form within actuality but is the entire form determination of actuality. That is, necessity is not one-sided, which requires another moment to operate in actuality. Although it is not one-sided, it is still formal because the result of the transition of formal moments into one another constitutes necessity (SL 482/WL-II 207). In a sense, necessity is nothing different in kind from the moments from which it is derived in terms of being formal. Each moment by being a form

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alternative possibilities are excluded'. He simply suggests that the necessary amounts to the fact that actuality is identical with a possibility by which other possibilities are eliminated. However, this account omits the fact that actuality is *in* possibility identical to itself. The underlying reason for the emergence of identity here is not that actuality is identical to possibility, but that actuality is identical to itself in possibility. because actuality transitions into possibility and possibility into actuality, in this mutual transition (in contingency), actuality finds itself in the very fact that the possibility becomes actuality. Strictly speaking Hegel does not argue the identity between actuality and possibility, the identity here is only that of actuality.

determination constitutes necessity as a form determination too. However, actuality by proving itself to be self-identical, hence necessary, remains distinct from its moments of actuality and possibility, the moments that cannot individually establish a self-identity for themselves. In this sense, the necessary actuality is different in kind from its constituents. This is the transitioning concept of necessity that leads the *Logic* from formal actuality to real actuality.

4.4. Conclusion

I have demonstrated that Hegel's derivation of modal concepts originates from actuality, namely, actuality as the immediate unity of itself and possibility. Contingency accounts for this mediating relation between actuality and possibility, whereas by necessity we grasp the shift from a relation of difference between actuality and possibility to self-relation of actuality. With this completion of formal determinations, we see the idea more explicitly that modalities are the determinations of actuality. Hegel's treatment of formal modalities presents a framework that overcomes the issue of reduction by the derivation of formal modalities from actuality. The framework is incomplete without examining real and absolute modalities but nonetheless the opening of Hegel's complete modal treatment suggests a minimal yet compelling idea that the domain of modality is bound up with that of actuality.

5. AN EXAMINATION OF HEGEL'S TREATMENT OF REAL MODALITIES

This chapter examines Hegel's account of relations among actuals as distinct types of modal determination.[81] It is important to note that real modalities are not reducible to formal modalities, yet real modalities contain formal determinations as the form determinations of the determinate actuality. Formal modalities are the determinations of immediate actuality, whereas real modalities are the determinations of formally determinate actuality or, as Hegel calls it, *real actuality*. I will firstly discuss what it means to be *real* for any actual and what it means to be modally determinate. Then I will examine Hegel's derivation of real determinations of actuality, possibility, contingency, and necessity. This chapter will make explicit two aspects of the main argument of the thesis: a) Hegel's modal metaphysics does not require a non-modal foundation from which modal concepts are derived[82] and b) actuality, in a determinate sense, implies the totality of independent(self-subsistent) actuals relating to one another, which encompasses the expressions of each individual actuality in the form of modal determinations.

Formal modalities constitute the minimal modal determinations for anything to be actual. This also renders the actual no longer something immediate as being or existence but mediated and determinate. Once the actual makes itself to be a determinate actual, the *Logic* further analyses this new structure in which the determinate actual finds itself in relation to

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[81] In section 3.2., I argued that Hegel does not conceive modality as a term for relation. What I wanted to emphasise there is Hegel's concept of modality as distinct from that of Kant's. The relation here is not the one that Kant ascribes to be a modal relation. For Kant, the relation of the cognitive capacities to the experience amounts to a modal relation. For Hegel, modal relation pertains to the relation among the actuals, and involves no experiencing cognitive subject. In addition to that, For Kant, modal determinations do not add anything to the subject-matter in question because modal concepts are not constitutive of things but merely express its relation to the experiencing subject, whereas for Hegel, the relation of actuality to another actuality is a modally constitutive aspect that manifests actuality in another way than that what it formally is.

[82] I do not omit the fact that modal concepts are derived from non-modal ones such as the unity of the inner and outer, and the absolute, which are both non-modal, and actuality is derived from these concepts. By suggesting modality is not derived from non-modal *foundation*, I claim that Hegel's modal concepts cannot be reducible to non-modal foundations in order to understand their nature. The distinct sense of derivation is that which enables this structure by letting emerge new categories without being able to be reduced to prior ones.

other actuals. When an actual is determined as formally necessary, it becomes a self-subsistent entity. The self-subsistence of actuality, resulting from formal modal determinations, designates another layer in the nature of actuality. Formal actuality cannot *subsist* on its own, it can only *be* something through its negativity, or possibility as such, whereas actuality, formally determined as necessary, constitutes itself as self-subsistent in virtue of remaining identical to itself 'in that from which it is distinguished, in possibility'(SL 481/WL-II 207). Formal actuality when determined as necessary, no longer posits a possibility for itself to be determinate since it relates itself to itself. This renders formally necessary actuality to be self-subsistent, as it now contains its negativity (possibility) as sublated within itself. Its distinction from possibility lies in the fact that necessity constitutes actuality's *self-identity* or its *in-itselfness* while rendering actuality distinct from possibility.

A determinate something is bound up with an *other* of itself which makes the determinate something to be relative to its relation to its other. The determinate actuality involves the relation of the same kind: namely, an actual relates to another actual, not to something merely possible. As Hegel puts it, 'it [the actual] is a *self-subsistent* which has its reflection within itself, its determinate essentiality, in another *self-subsistent*'[83] (SL 482/WL-II 208). Accordingly, the determinate actual contains two seemingly contrary thoughts: to be a self-subsistent but nonetheless to be in relation to another. The contrariety stems from the fact that a self-subsistent indicates a minimal determination for anything to be without another by which the self-subsistent being is mediated, and that it is nonetheless in relation to another self-subsistent being in which it finds its essential determinations. These seemingly contrary elements are indeed accommodated in the nature of Hegel's concept of *formally determined necessarily actual*. When the actual is determined as formally necessary, it implies that it is a unity of actuality with itself in its other, possibility. More precisely, it is a

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[83] The emphases are mine. The translation has been adjusted.

unity which is blind to the fact that its moments, actuality and possibility, are distinct. Nonetheless, the mutual transition of distinct moments, actuality into possibility and vice versa, constitutes the unity since the fact that actuality finds its identity in possibility necessarily follows from the fact that possibility too finds its identity in actuality. Determinate actuality as unity is blind to these transitory movements and is a self-subsistent being, which is *indifferent* to the distinction between actuality and possibility. The actual as this unity, Hegel argues, is real actuality because this actuality is something determined or mediated, as opposed to the immediate actuality, which asserts itself as formally distinct from possibility. This determinate actuality presents its determinations in the relation of actualities in which an actual relates itself to itself in another self-subsistent actual. Briefly, formal actuality is understood in relation to mere *possibility*, whereas real actuality relates to another real *actuality*.

5.1. What Is It to Be Modally Real?

A confusing aspect in Hegel's real modalities is Hegel's use of the term *real* as an adjective of actuality. However, real actuality is a confusing term only if one conceives of actuality as a synonym for reality or all there is. However, actuality is not synonymous with reality, existence and being. Hegel uses the term real in a more technical sense than is commonly employed. Hegel's most elaborate treatment of reality takes place under the *Quality* section of the *Doctrine of Being* where Hegel presents reality as a qualitative determination of being. Being as something real comes with positive and negative aspects. For being to be qualitatively determinate is to be affirming itself, which eventually sets itself distinct from another being. This distinction stems from the negation of reality, the non-being of a being, mere lack (SL 85/WL-I 118). For Hegel, to be determinate is to involve these two aspects together. 'Reality is quality, [Dasein]; it therefore contains the moment of the negative and is the determinate being that it is only through it' (SL 86/WL-I 119).

The term reality is a logical moment alongside another moment, negation, within determinate being, Dasein. In the doctrine of being, reality is an affirmative quality of Dasein namely, it is what Dasein is without negation revealed in it. According to Hegel, for anything to be Dasein is to be a minimally *determinate* something. With this, we have two aspects of it: a) to be real is to be inseparable from negation, and b) to be real is to be determinate. Hegel's treatment of real modality conveys these two meanings that make explicit real actuality's inclusion of possibility as a negation and determination within it.

What the term *real* means for Hegel at its most minimal and irreducible sense is to be determinate: to be this, rather than that. To be determinate is to be mediated by its non-being, its negating other. That is, if the subject-matter is *real*, then we already know that it is determinate. Being is real insofar as it is negated, by which being proves itself to be determinate, namely a specific being, Dasein. Since to be real is minimally to be determinate, determinate actuality pertains to real actuality in which its modal determinations, its possibilities, are contained as its negation. The relation of an actual to another actual is part of what it is for an actual to be real.

The distinction between form and content is also important to identify what real means for Hegel in his modal treatment. To be real is to involve content, a unity of form and matter. Hegel's treatment of form and content suggests a major argument that form is a one-sided aspect of the thing at hand as opposed to content, which also contains its own form and matter within. Hegel (SL 85-86/WL-119) criticizes Plato's conception of form due to it being the only reality, which lacks negation. This is an insufficient and one-sided concept of reality as reality also contains negation. Plato's reality corresponds to the ideal, abstract moment of Hegelian reality. For Hegel, reality contains the moment of negative alongside the positive.

The elements of Hegelian reality can be found in Hegel's treatment of real modalities where the positive and negative aspects of the real echo in the distinction between form and content. Content appears as the affirmative unity of form and matter, against which form stands as the negation of the content. Hegel's term real implies that the subject-matter involves form and content determinations. Real modalities for Hegel are real because when actuality is formally determined, it acquires a content from its relation to another actuality, whereas formal actuality lacks content since it is in relation to formal possibility as its formal negativity. For this reason, Hegel begins the real modalities with a discussion over form and content and distinguishes formal from real modalities in terms of real actuality's content that is indifferent to the formal modal determinations.

5.2. Real Actuality and Real Possibility

The opening paragraph of section B of Hegel's Actuality Chapter highlights the first conceptual difference that real actuality contains against formal actuality by referring to formal necessity. 'The necessity which has resulted is *formal* because its moments are formal, that is, simple determinations which are a totality only as an immediate unity, or as an immediate conversion of the one into the other, and thus lack the shape of self-subsistence' (SL 482/ WL-II 207). This unity, due to the immediate transition of formal actuality into formal possibility and vice versa, falls into contingency as explained in the previous chapter. Hegel (SL 482/ WL-II 207) maintains that the unity is indifferent to the difference between formal actuality and possibility. That is, considering actuality and possibility under the term unity neglects the difference between them since their difference prevents us to consider them under a unity. The unity implies that formal actuality and possibility are both recognized as identical to each other because actuality does not express itself as immediate actuality, nor does possibility express itself as only self-identity unlike their formal counterparts do, but one articulates itself in the place of another. To be precise, the unity might still imply that its

formal moments are present as different from one another. However, Hegel's point is that

actuality constitutes a self-identity for itself in the mutual transition. This self-identity in

formal actuality is the formal necessity of actuality. Actuality, in its formal necessity, renders

possibility sublated, and this implies that possibility transitions into actuality, whereas

actuality remains within itself in the transition of possibility. This is the reason why Hegel

(SL 481/WL-II 207) thinks that necessity is an actual that is self-identical to itself in

possibility. The self-identity turns actuality into something indifferent to its determinations,

which in the first place determines its self-identity. The indifference of this self-identity to its

distinct moments is a way for actuality to realize itself. Its realization amounts to the

sublation of the formal differences of actuality and possibility. Hence, the identity becomes

unable to express these formal *differences* since it is constituted precisely as the *identity*

between them.

The transition from *difference* to *identity* in formal necessity is a new structure that

Hegel understands as real actuality. 'As the *immediate* unity of the form determinations, this

necessity is *actuality*, but an actuality which, since its unity *is now determined as indifferent*

to the *difference of* the form determinations, has a *content*' (SL 482/ WL-II 207). The

immediacy of the necessary actuality and the immediacy of actuality as such appear to be a

nodal point on which the formal unity of actuality and possibility, on the one hand, and

actuality as such, on the other, converge in virtue of their common specification of

immediacy. Formal necessity is actuality that is established by its very possibility, because

such possibility suspends itself as such and proves *not just to be possibility after all*. In other

words, actuality is necessary when its very possibility is not just its *possibility* but the

impossibility of its not being actual – that is, when such actuality *cannot not be*. However,

this new conception of actuality cannot simply be reduced to formal actuality because the

immediacy here is the immediacy of *the unity of itself in its suspended possibility*, which is

not merely an immediate actuality without possibility as in the formal sense but is mediated by possibility, and in its mediation, it comes to be immediate again. For Hegel, content is a formed matter, which is indifferent to the differences of form and matter. For this reason, actuality as the immediate unity has a content which is indifferent to its own distinct moments of formal actuality and possibility.

Considering that the content is indifferent to its form, it comes to be clear why Hegel considers real actuality as having a content that formal actuality lacks. Real actuality is indifferent to the difference between formal possibility and actuality. The content is the self-identity of actuality made explicit by its formal necessity. Since it is a self-identity, it remains blind or indifferent to the formal differences between formal actuality and possibility. Through the content that real actuality contains, the difference in the formal determinations shapes the content and turns it into a multiplicity. 'This content as an indifferent identity contains the form also as indifferent, that is, as a mere *variety* of determinations, and is a *manifold* content in general' (SL 482/ WL-II 207-8). Real actuality, therefore, consists of content (the identity of actuality and possibility) and its different formal determinations (the difference between actuality and possibility) within itself.

The term *real* here has the sense that it stands distinct from its form determinations, such determinations (formal modalities) that cannot account for real actuality. For this, form determinations have to be considered alongside a content. Though Hegel (SL 479/WL-II 203) claims that formal possibility, as sublated, contains a content too[84], possibility, as a form determination, attaches to it and renders it only formally possible while remaining indifferent to the content. Hegel notes that for this reason, any 'absurd' and 'non-sensical' statements

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[84] Hegel here is not very explicit as to why formal possibility contains a content, one reason might be that possibility, in virtue of its inevitable relation to actuality, since every possibility is the possibility of an actual, utilizes its actuality as its content.

can be categorized under the rubric of possibility: '[I]t is possible that the Sultan may become Pope […]' (EL §143 A). The *mere possibility* of an actual expresses the actual in such a way that it remains alien to what the content of the actual is. Thus, under the rubric of formal possibility, everything conceived as possible posits its opposite as possible as itself. 'A is A' implies 'non-A is non-A'.

Nonetheless, the content is derived from the formal modalities, so it has to have some bearings on formal determinations. The upshot of the form and content determinations in the context of the logic of modality is that the formal modalities engender a manifold content. When conceiving determinate actuality as the unity of form and content, we get real actuality, which is not only something immediate as such but *determined* to be immediate. Real actuality, in virtue of having content, is immediately distinct from the unity of form determinations, which is too determined as the identity of different formal moments. The distinction lies in the fact that formal necessity as the unity of actuality and possibility is merely formal due to the identity relation emerged from the mutual conversion from *formal* actuality to *formal* possibility, whereas, in addition to the formal moments, real actuality also contains content. The fact that actuality involves a form and content constitutes real actuality as a self-subsistent being, which is distinct from its formal counterpart as well as from its formal necessity.

Self-subsistence is a central notion to understand real actuality because, by self-subsisting, actuality shows itself as containing its modal determinations within itself and relates itself as a self-subsistent entity to other actualities. This relation is a network of connection that constitutes further modal determinations for self-subsisting actuals. To reveal what Hegel's understanding of real actuality is, we again need to analyse the distinction between actuality and existence in Hegel.

'Real actuality is *as such* at first the thing of many properties, the concretely existing world; but it is not the concrete existence that dissolves into appearance but, as actuality, it is together [zugleich] an in-itself and reflection within itself [Reflexion-in-sich]; it preserves itself in the manifoldness of mere concrete existence; its externality is an inner relating only to *itself.* […] Its relating to an other is the manifestation *of itself*, and this manifestation is neither a transition (the immediate something *refers* to the other in this way) nor an appearing (in this way the thing only is *in relation* to an other); it is a self-subsistent which has its immanent reflection, its determinate essentiality, in another self-subsistent' (SL 482/WL-II 208). [85]

However, the distinct conception of actuality might not be so clear as Hegel claims that immediate real actuality is *immediately* the thing with properties. Some interpretations of this section accentuate the beginning of the quotation while not giving enough attention to the end where Hegel lays out his distinct conception of actuality. For instance, Brown (2019, p. 30) argues that Hegel, in this paragraph, refers to the opening of argument of his treatment of modality where Hegel states that actuality is mere being or existence (SL 487/WL-II 202). Accordingly, the quotation I presented seems to fortify the argument that actuality as such is existence. However, Brown fails to emphasize that Hegel also immediately adds a nuance that actuality is not existence by virtue of containing in-itselfness and reflection-within-itself. Containing in-itselfness and reflection-within-itself allow an actual to be self-subsistent, whereas, as we know from the logic of existence, an existent (thing) for Hegel does not contain its reflection within itself, rather its reflection is its properties. An existent (thing) subsists only in its properties, and it is not self-subsistent because properties are external to and conceptually different from it. Properties constitute a network of the relationships among things through which a thing relates to another thing. In this relation, a thing subsists over the

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[85] The translation is slightly changed.

properties of another thing. This constitutes that the determinations of the thing are the combination of the properties it has. Without the properties, nothing comes to light about the thing. Therefore, the thing dissolves into its properties through which it appears. On the other hand, actuality amounts to another structure of relationship where one self-subsistent relates to another, while an existent relates to properties. An actual relates to an other, which is its own kind, whereas an existent relates to an other, which is a different kind, namely properties. This produces a noticeable conceptual difference between actuality and existence. However, Brown only emphasizes the resemblance between actuality and existence without regarding their distinction. In the quotation above, I understand that Hegel resists such a reading that reduces actuality to the thing and existence. However, the passage is open to another reading that accommodates existence within actuality insofar as it is recognized that actuality has a moment of immediacy that articulates itself as being or existence, but this does not manifest the whole actuality. Towards the end of the quotation, Hegel explicitly states that the manifestation of actuality is not anything conceptually similar to the transition of existent(thing) into appearance because, for Hegel, the existent subsists over appearing properties into which it dissolves while the actual preserves itself in its self-subsistence. So, it is a crucial point in Hegel's modal theory that actuality is irreducible to existence. In 2.4.2, I argued that properties are not modal determinations and here the passage above proves the same idea from the perspective of the logic of modality.

Another interpretation that fails to notice the distinction between the actual and the existent (the thing) is found in Findlay's examination (2014, p. 212), where Findlay suggests that formal modalities require content without which they have no significance. He maintains that the required content is borrowed from the existing world of things and properties. This leads Findlay to express the relation among self-subsistent actuals, as the relation of things. Although Findlay elegantly grasps the complex relation of real actuality and real possibility,

his idea of the content as a thing in the existing world surely does not well represent the fact that the content is the product of the identity of distinct formal modal moments, which is not borrowed from an existing world, it belongs to the world that is actual.

One way of thinking this actuality-existence dichotomy in a way that favours the interpretation that actuality is existence, is to suggest that real actuality, by virtue of its immediacy, is existence. That is, if real actuality is only understood as immediacy as such, then it amounts to existence in virtue of the immediacy of existence that is similar to actuality. Note that if we stop here and do not expound the further determinations of actuality, we do not have a clear conception of actuality, leaving aside a distinct conception. The clear and distinct conception of actuality comes with the modal relations that render actuality distinct from existence.[86] In brief, actuality, without modal determinations, is reducible to existence, if one can distinctly conceive it as actuality at all. To my understanding, Hegel suggests, in the given passage, that the self-subsistent nature of actuality is that with which we can grasp actuality as distinct from *mere* existence.

Now that we have the thought of self-subsistent actuality, the *Logic* proceeds further to explicate the inner element that constitutes the relation of one self-subsistent actuality to another. For Hegel, the inner element is possibility. Just as formal actuality, real actuality contains possibility as 'the moment of in-itselfness' (SL 482/WL-II 208) and sets itself distinct from it. '[S]ince it is in the first instance only *immediate* unity, it is in *one* of the determinations of form and hence distinguished, as the being [das Seiende], from the in-itself or possibility' (SL 482/WL-II 208). The distinction in question stems from the fact that the form determinations, actuality and possibility, are still distinct from each other although in

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[86] Immediacy in Hegel's *Logic* functions as a place holder without considering determinations of the subject-matter. For instance, being, existence, actuality and objectivity hold a moment of immediacy before their particular determinations. What sets them distinct is their determinations, with which we come to recognize that each belongs to different domains where each is expressed by a different logic.

real actuality, their distinction is absent. In real actuality, formal actuality can only sustain its difference from possibility insofar as real actuality is only formally conceived or is conceived as one-sided. That is, real actuality, when it is immediately grasped, sets itself distinct from possibility because, in its immediacy, the actual does not reveal its *real* mediation, real possibility in itself. Actuality, if when it is conceived as an immediate unity, demonstrates one side of its form determinations, namely, actuality, whereas another form determination, possibility, stands distinct from the immediate real actuality.

So far, under the rubric of form-content determinations, real actuality contains its distinct form determinations (formal actuality and formal possibility) and content (real possibility), which stand indifferent to each other. Under the rubric of modal determinations, it is a self-subsistent actuality that is real, in the sense that it is determinate by relating itself to another of self-subsistent actuality. The relation of one self-subsistent actual to another takes place by the medium of possibility. To make this modal relation explicit, we should analyse the possibility that real actuality contains.

Hegel's arguments for the possibility contained in real actuality is rather a complicated one. Although the distinction between real actuality and the possibility contained in actuality is formally constituted, Hegel (SL 482/ WL-II 208) suggests that the possibility in *real* actuality is also *real* only because it is contained in real actuality (SL 482/WL-II 208). The thought that enables us to understand possibility as real is the function of possibility presenting itself as a content within actuality. This content constitutes another difference between formal and real possibility where formal possibility *has* a content (SL 479/WL-II 204) while real possibility *is* a content for actuality (SL 482/WL-II 208).

Here, Hegel makes an instructive remark on the distinction between formal and real possibility by stating that 'when we delve into the determinations, the circumstances, the

conditions of a fact in order to discover its possibility, we do not stop at this formal

possibility but consider its real possibility' (SL 482/WL 208). This remark might be

misleading if not enough attention is paid. This might mean that real possibility presupposes

a fact (Sache). This naturally means that the very activity of seeking possibility requires one

to presuppose a fact, which we do not know yet if it is actual or not. Given that Hegel's

choice of language, real possibility seems to account for the determinations of a fact

retrospectively. However, this should not be the case because *fact* for Hegel is neither strictly

actual nor something that possesses modal determinations, rather it contains ground and

condition as its determinations. To my understanding, Hegel here uses the term *fact* in a loose

sense, which can be taken as synonymous with matter at hand. Otherwise, if we take the fact

in the sense that Hegel explicates in the logic of ground, then possibility here corresponds to

the condition of the fact.[87] I would rather prefer to emphasise the logical distinction between

condition and possibility and to avoid using condition to describe possibility. The passages

that Hegel seemingly takes possibility as condition at best can be read as an analogy to

contextualize possibility. This will grant a clearer sense of what real possibility is.[88]

This deviation from the logic of modality to the logic of fact expresses real possibility

within the vocabulary of the logic of ground and condition. Although this seems to be a

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[87] In the literature on the Actuality Chapter, the distinction between real possibility and condition is overlooked. However, this is quite crucial to identify and emphasize that they do not operate in the same way. Often Hegel seems to use condition interchangeably with possibility. However, it is clear that Hegel has in mind that they operate differently in the following quote: 'In the sphere of the conditioned ground, the conditions have the form (that is, the ground or the reflection that stands on its own) *outside them*, and it is this form that makes them moments of the fact and elicits concrete existence *in them*. Here, on the contrary, the immediate actuality is not determined to be condition by virtue of a presupposing reflection, but it is posited that that the immediate actuality is itself the possibility' (SL 483/WL-II 210). Though it is quite rare to identify condition and possibility as distinct concepts, in the literature on Hegel's treatment of modality, Yeomans highlights this distinction in his article 'Hegel's Expressivist Modal Realism' (2018, p. 123) where he argues that as opposed to the externality of condition, possibility is 'more an internal feature of the actual'.

[88] If one argues the opposite of my suggestion, they will face a critical question that undermines Hegel analysis of a fact in SL 414-17/WL-II 119-23). Because since Hegel does not account for the fact with determinations that might convey a sense of possibility, any interpretation understanding possibility as a condition of a fact should face the challenge that Hegel's analysis of the fact misses determinations: Therefore, it should be revised. It is perfectly plausible to pursue this option and revise the relevant part of the *Logic* but since it is out of the scope of this chapter, I will leave it to the ones who employ possibility and condition interchangeably.

detour if we think that real actuality and fact share a similar structure that both are the unity of form and content, the unity which is present out of its distinct determinations (diverse possibilities for actuality, conditions and ground for the fact) as their identity (SL 414/WL-II 119). Furthermore, the conditions of a fact constitute the whole content of the fact (SL 415/ WL-II 119), which is similar to the idea that real actuality utilizes its real possibility as its content. Considering that possibility contained in real actuality is real, it has minimally to be an existent, which is the same as the condition of a fact. These similarities might be taken as evidence for the explanation of real actuality and real possibility. However, this account might have the risk of undermining the concepts of actuality and possibility. As we already discussed that actuality is, for Hegel, a distinct concept from existence in terms of its self-subsistence, this distinction also amounts to a distinction in the determinations of actuality from that of the fact, namely, possibilities are not the conditions. Taking possibilities as conditions does not immanently reveal the true nature of real possibility because condition is supposed to lack a determining function when the subject-matter is modality. Possibility is a higher concept in terms of its more complex determinations and of its place in the *Logic*, hence irreducible to condition. Therefore, possibility as a condition for another actuality expresses a merely descriptive sense that does not carry the *Logic* forward. What carries the *Logic* forward is the thought that condition lacks, namely, an actual's relating itself to another actual in the form of possibility. This relation makes explicit that possibilities are not conditions as such for actuality and that while the fact springs forth from its conditions, real actuality is already there alongside its possibilities. The analysis of the relation among actuals will set the difference of possibility from condition. This requires us to examine how real possibility operates in the relation of actualities.

Hegel (SL 482/WL-II 208) firstly reveals that real possibility is the in-itself of actuality as its content. Secondly, Hegel (SL 482/ WL-II 208) states that 'real possibility is

itself immediate existence'. By its nature of being real, it contains immediate existence (Dasein) since in formal possibility we already have shown that possibility is indeterminate immediate actuality. So real possibility holds this moment of formal determination within itself, and this moment enables it to be *immediately* grasped as existence. When existence is immediately grasped, it presents itself as manifold. In other words, to exist, in its minimally determinate sense, is to exist in manifoldness; therefore, real possibility, by virtue of its immediate existence, is also a manifoldness.

We have two thoughts at hand, namely (a) that real actuality by its formal distinction from real possibility presents itself as immediate existence, and (b) real possibility also presents itself as immediate existence too, in virtue of the transition between formal actuality and possibility. Since each is immediate existence, in virtue of the form determinations, Hegel (SL 483/ WL-II 209) states that the manifoldness of existence is both formal actuality and formal possibility. As the form determinations, they are indifferent to the content or the real possibility of real actuality, where formal actuality and possibility are identical to each other. With this thought, we come to see that the distinction between formal actuality and possibility sustains itself even in real actuality.

On the other hand, in addition to their distinction, Hegel (SL 483/WL-II 209) argues that real actuality, when determined against the possibility contained in itself, also comes to be a real possibility. Real actuality comes to be determined in terms of possibility, but for Hegel, this possibility is real possibility because it is not the same as the possibility that formal actuality stands against. In other words, although real actuality is capable of setting itself *formally* distinct from possibility, it cannot be entirely distinct from real possibility because there remains no real actuality without the totality of its possibilities, whereas formal actuality as an immediacy remains distinct from formal possibility.

Hegel (SL 483/WL 209) argues that real possibility as a content already contains its form. This form also becomes the form of real actuality, a form which turns itself into an abstract moment in another actuality is just as formal possibility being an abstraction of formal actuality. Regardless of the similarity of this thought to Hegel's idea of formal possibility as the abstracted actuality, here the *Logic* does not make a circular move back by connecting this line of argument to that in formal modalities. Rather, Hegel's point is that '[t]his actuality, therefore, which constitutes the possibility as the abstract in-itself, is not its own possibility, but the in-itself [possibility] of an other actual' (SL 483/WL-II 209). When real actuality is determined as real possibility, this real possibility is not the actuality's own possibility, but it is the one that presents itself as a possibility *of* another actuality.

Hegel (SL 483/WL-II 209-10) argues that real possibility as manifoldness is the circumstances or *conditions* of a fact: 'Real possibility thus *constitutes* the *totality of conditions*, a dispersed actuality […]'. 'Whenever all the conditions of a fact are completely present, the fact is actually there […]. Although Hegel seems to use condition and possibility interchangeably here, to consider them as demonstrating the same conceptual operation might be misleading. The *Logic* does not move forward by taking advantage of the interchangeable use of the terms. There lies nothing in the concept of condition that makes explicit the operation of real possibility. Rather, the substantial thought in real possibility, which also constitutes its distinction from condition, is its transitive nature that presents itself as actuality in itself, and as possibility in relation to another actuality, whereas condition cannot turn itself into a fact, instead it disappears in the fact.

> 'This real possibility is now indeed the posited *whole* of the form, but of the
> form in the determinateness of actuality as formal or immediate and equally
> of possibility as the abstract in-itself. This actuality, therefore, which
> constitutes the possibility of a fact, is not *its own possibility* but the in-itself of
> an *other* actual' (SL 483/WL-II 209).

Real possibility is recognized as an actuality, insofar as the actuality turns itself into the possibility of another actuality. This might be a similar thought to the conditioning activity. That is the reason why Hegel states that 'real possibility thus constitutes the *totality of conditions*[...]' (SL 483/ WL-II 209). However, even if we have condition involved in this structure where the actual operates as the possibility of another actual, this does not mean that the former actual is merely conditioning the latter. Conditioning here is used in a descriptive sense in which we could express that the actual, as the possibility of another, is in the active process of determining another actual. Real possibility is the appropriate concept as the determination that makes explicit the nature of actuality is a modal determination. Hegel explains where the distinction lies between condition and possibility:

> 'In the sphere of the conditioned ground, the conditions have the form (that is, the ground or the reflection that stands on its own) *outside them*, and it is this form that makes them moments of the fact and elicits concrete existence *in them*. Here, on the contrary, the immediate actuality is not determined to be condition by virtue of a presupposing reflection, but it is posited that the immediate actuality is itself the possibility'[89] (SL 483/ WL 210).

This excerpt provides a solid comparison between condition and possibility. This leaves us two options: to consider condition (a) as a modality, or (b) as a descriptive term in the domain of actuality in order to illustrate (not make explicit) the operation of real possibility. As for the former, we have a difficulty since condition cannot be a modality as it is a determination of an existent that operates in the context of ground relation, and a modality, for Hegel, is a determination of actuality, not of mere existence. That is, condition is not that which the existent may or may not hold. It makes explicit how an existent comes about in the context of asking for reasons for its being. Modality, on the other hand, is a determining mediation as a secondary concept that comes always after the primary being,

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[89] The translation is slightly changed.

actuality. Condition, in its own logical structure, does not have a connation of modality. Conceiving it as a modal determination reduces the actual to a mere existent, in which case actuality, which is supposed to be modally determinate, expresses something behind or beyond its nature. Hegel clearly shows his intent by emphasizing the distinct nature of actuality in various passages of the *Science of Logic* and the *Encyclopaedia Logic* (SL 478/WL-II 202; SL 482/WL-II 208; EL §6 A).[90]

On the other hand, (b) preserves a consistent sense in Hegel's treatment of modality. As I have highlighted before, modal determinations are determinations of actuality, and condition, by virtue of being a non-modal determination, is not a modal notion. The least problematic way to conceive real possibility as condition is to take it for the purpose of illustration, not for making explicit what real possibility is.

The enabling idea to attain the concept of condition is that ground presupposes for itself an immediacy that conditions the ground. This immediacy is a condition that determines the ground, whereas proving itself to be conditioned by the ground. Hegel, in the quotation above, refers to this presupposition of the condition in the ground as the condition stands external to the ground and insofar as it is made explicit that the ground turns the conditioning condition into conditioned, the externality between ground and condition diminishes. The ground and condition prove themselves to be united under a single concept, namely fact (*Sache*). Condition as immediate existence contains its determination as its ground which falls external to itself. Condition comes to be capable of revealing the existence of a fact only when it is unified under the fact with its external ground. That is, to say that a fact exists, we must relate conditions to the ground in order to reveal why and on what conditions the fact

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[90] Although references to SL might be open to different interpretations, the reference to EL §6 A, is clear enough to see that he considers actuality as distinct from being and existence.'[…] [W]hen I speak of actuality, one should, of course, think about the sense in which I use this expression [actual], given the fact that[…] I distinguished quite clearly and directly […] from being-there[Dasein], from existence, and from other determinations'.

exists. For instance, the fact of conductivity proves itself to exist in a circuit-board insofar as there is electricity (condition) running through the circuit board (ground). The point is that the relation between condition and ground is supposed to be united under the fact. In other words, following the example, the fact of conductivity presupposes the unity of electricity (matter) and circuit board (form) within itself where condition and ground posit the fact as explicitly out there. For Hegel, this presupposition is external to the fact because ground and condition can sustain themselves without being under a fact, but their unity posits a fact that in turn when we look at it, we recognize that the fact is present, based on the presupposition that its condition and ground precede the fact.

As opposed to externally related condition and ground, actuality and possibility do not demonstrate such an external relation. Rather, their relationship is governed by their transitory nature. Hegel writes that 'the immediate actuality is not determined to be condition by virtue of a presupposing reflection, but it is posited that the immediate actuality is itself the possibility' (SL 483/ WL-II 210). This makes explicit that the very *externality* between condition and ground does not persist between actuality and possibility because real possibility is an internal element of actuality, not even internalized later in the development of actuality but always already internal to actuality. This ensures that the *Logic* here is not concerned with the determinations of condition and ground but those of actuality and possibility, which amounts to another type of determination, modality.[91]

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[91] One might think that the point, I have argued so far, is redundant as condition seems to do the same conceptual work as possibility in determining its subject-matter. However, it is crucial to preserve and emphasise that condition is an external determination for the fact and possibility is an internal one for actuality. This is where the distinction of these concepts lies. Apart from their apparent conceptual distinction, to preserve their difference is also important for the integrity of the categories of the *Logic*, which unfolds what concepts are themselves alone without assuming an external thought, idea, or another concept to their own domain. I strongly believe that Hegel's *Logic*—albeit without an explicit remark—follows the principle of the rationalist tradition, a principle that is articulated in Spinoza as that 'the true definition of each thing neither involves nor expresses anything except the nature of the thing defined' (EP1P8S2) and in Descartes in the form of seeking *clear and distinct* ideas of things.

With this distinction in mind, if we consider Hegel's statement that 'when all conditions of a fact are at hand, the fact is actually there' (SL 483/WL-II 210), we should carefully approach conditions with the meaning of possibility because possibility by being an internal determination of actuality is able to express more than what condition could express in the domain of modality. The thought that immediate actuality is possibility, is a *Doppelsatz* that also expresses that possibility is actuality. This *Doppelsatz* enables us to consider actuality as a self-constitutive entity positing itself in the form of the possibility of another actual. With the *Doppelsatz* at hand, it is clear that the conceptual scope of condition is unable to capture this relation as its externality to the existent fact does *not* allow us to make a similar *Doppelsatz* that condition is the fact, and the fact is condition.

In the relationship between real actuality and real possibility, Hegel identifies that when all possibilities of an actual are at hand, possibilities undermine themselves. To explain the self-undermining of possibility, let me first remind the reader of the two senses of formal possibility. Formal possibility is that which expresses the self-identity of something. To be possible for an actual is to be self-identical with itself and not be self-contradictory. Contrary to this, formal possibility also contains an opposition to the very self-identity it expresses in actuality by expressing that the opposite of the actual is also a possibility. In other words, possibility expresses the self-identity *of* actuality where other contrary actualities may well be considered as possible. Under the rubric of formal possibility, 'A is A' indicates the expression of 'non-A is non-A'. This immanent contradiction in the expression of possible beings is found in real possibility too. Accordingly, real possibility merely implies the self-identity of a determinate *something* (or Dasein), which is, on the one hand, free from the contradiction in virtue of 'its developed and differentiated circumstances and all else connected with it' (SL 483/ WL-II 209-10). On the other hand, it is prone to contradiction because the possible being is also in relation to other determinate beings, and real possibility

also determines them as self-identical and yet in opposition to other possibilities. This multiplicity of possible being presents an opposition to other possibilities, an opposition in which possibility, as the overarching connector of these self-identical actuals, expresses a contradiction that an actual may be itself and its non-being simultaneously.

This contradiction, for Hegel, is the point where real possibility proves itself to be sublated as a moment in actuality (SL 484/WL 210). This sublation affects two aspects of real possibility. (1) The immediate actuality comes to contain possibility for itself because it is no longer immediate but mediated/reflected in virtue of containing possibility, meaning that it manifests itself as possibility. (2) This immediate actuality not only contains possibility but also is determined as possibility in relation to another actuality. In other words, actuality reduces itself to possibility, which it already contains, in its relation to another actuality.

Hegel states an important aspect in real possibility, namely that real possibility does not transition into real actuality since possibility is *real* (or *determinate*) insofar as it is actual. The real possibility of the actual is no other than real actuality itself. 'This movement of self-sublating real possibility thus produces *the same moments that are already present*, but each as it comes to be out of the other; in this negation, therefore, the possibility is also not a *transition* but *a self-rejoining*' (SL 484/WL 210). However, this does not mean that real actuality is already real possibility because for real actuality to be possible it has to be in relation to another real actuality. For this reason, when the relation is suspended, there remains only real actuality, which Hegel conceptualizes under the term of self-sublation.

The self-sublation of real possibility is meant to be the sublation of these two aspects altogether, which will lead to the elimination of possibility within actuality.[92] Hegel (SL 484/ WL-II 210-11) states:

> [T]herefore, as its *immediate […] existence*, *the circle of conditions*, sublates itself, it makes itself into the *in-itselfness* which it already is, namely the *in-itself* of an other. And conversely, since its moment of in-itselfness thereby sublates itself at the same time, it becomes actuality, hence the moment which it likewise already is. – What disappears is consequently this, that actuality was determined as the possibility or the in-itself of an *other*, and, conversely, the possibility as an actuality which is *not that* of which it is the possibility.

Hegel's reference to existence is not existence as such but it is immediate *actuality*. For this reason, when the self-sublation of possibility(the circle of actualities) occurs, the possibilities that make another actual really there, come to be identical to actuality. This implies two distinct thoughts: (1) real possibility is already identical to actuality, since it is contained within an actual (so the real possibility of B is contained in an actual A); but (2), as this real possibility gives rise to *another* actual (B), that possibility itself *becomes* identical to actuality, since it is actualized *in* the new actual. So the new actual (B) is not just *other* than its prior real possibility, but it is that real possibility itself that *has become actual*. The self-sublation of real possibility results in its annihilation within real actuality since the circle of possibilities, that renders the real actual present as determinate, turns out to be

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[92] Note that sublation in Hegel's *Logic* does not always refer to a single connotation and the less is to refer to that of annihilation, disappearance, elimination, whereas it usually expresses the thought for making a concept a logical moment in a greater concept. One may criticise the use of sublation as annihilation or elimination here but I do believe that Hegel had in mind this connotation as he explicit states the aspect that make something really possible disappears in its self-sublation. For this reason, I suggest when we take real actuality as the subject-matter alone in its immediacy, we recognize the absence of real possibility. There is another reading could be suggested here. Possibility does not disappear but its conceptual function (its aspects Hegel points out) does, given that later on in the text (SL 484/WL 211) , Hegel builds on this lack of conceptual function in possibility by this that 'real necessity and real possibility are […] only apparently distinguished […]', a real possibility that no longer makes its subject-matter possible.

indeed no other than individual *actualities* combined in a greater actuality.[93] The greater actuality '[…] just is, and it has that immediate being precisely by having an actuality based upon the elimination of the process that led to it' (Winfield, 2012, p. 194). This elimination involves two aspects of the process of actualization: a) actuality is determined to be the possibility or the in-itselfness of another actuality and b) possibility, determined as actuality, is not the possibility that real actuality holds as its circle of conditions but is another actuality.

Hegel's closing argument for real possibility is that in its sublation, real possibility is a *self-rejoining* movement of actuality (SL 484/WL-II 210). It is a re-joining because real possibility in its sublation posits itself as actuality which it already is. 'This movement of self-sublating real possibility thus produces the same moments that are already present'(SL 484/WL 210). With the disappearance of real possibility, actuality manifests itself as identical to itself. This identity takes the form of necessity since actuality cannot be other than what it is under certain circumstances it contains in itself. Possibility does not pass over into real actuality, but it proves itself to be no other than actuality, in being a negation, which it already contains in its concept, just as the possibility of A inferring the possibility of *non*-A. The possible has the capacity to be otherwise and in its capacity, it resolves itself into actuality. Unlike the transition of formal possibility into formal actuality, for real possibility to be present, it must hold onto its distinction from actuality. Given that real possibility is no longer an other of real actuality, there remains no significance in their formal elements by which we could identify the two distinct from each other. Real

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[93] Hegel's conception of real necessity proves this view that real possibility becomes the real necessity of actuality, because under the same circumstances, the actual cannot be otherwise than the way it is because the unity of circumstances is what the actual is. In SL 486/WL 213, Hegel argues that determinate (real) necessity is actual necessity, i.e. necessity as the in-itselfness of actuality where actuality is not distinct from its inner being.

possibility proves itself to be real actuality in its sublation. Its other, actuality, is its very self-identity, — i.e., what it already is, real necessity.

Note that real actuality and the actuality that is determined as the possibility(in-itselfness) of another actuality, are distinct actualities. The former is the one that contains real possibility within it, as I call strong actuality. The latter is, however, contained in real actuality as being itself the possibility of it, as I call weak actuality. The weak actuality is not only actuality as such, but it is a possibility or a circumstance enabling the strong actuality. With this, we can make explicit the statement that when all circumstances of the actual are at hand, the actual is actually there, such that when the actual posits its possibilities or circumstances alongside its presence, the actual is there, but not the other way around. Without the actual fact, circumstances are not possibilities of the actual fact but individual actualities. Only when the actual fact is there, its constituting actualities are apparent as the circumstances(possibilities) of the actual fact, i.e., possibility is latent (Brown, 2019, p. 42-43), or possibility is recognizable after the fact (Ng, 2017, p. 281). In the self-sublation of possibility, the very quality of being the possibility of another is also sublated, and there we have the actuality from which we started, namely a determinate actuality.

With this conception of possibility, we come to see that weak actuality is possibility because as a possibility of actuality, its contradiction makes evident that actuality is determined as possibility i.e., itself and its non-being. Possibility functions according to its concept namely, to make the actual possible. In daily speech, this thought finds its instantiation quite frequently. When we talk about a *possible* event, let's say a phenomenon of rainbow, we simply strip off all distinct sub-events under the actual rainbow (strong actuality), namely reflection, refraction, and dispersion of the sunlight (weak actualities). Because the actual rainbow is conceived as possible, none of the sub-events, through which the rainbow presents itself as the actual proper, is apparent in the rainbow.

In the relation of real possibility and actuality, we come to see that real actuality is itself not real possibility on its own but contains its real possibility within itself as its circle of *actuals* with which it is determined to be another greater actuality that contains all determining actuals for itself. However, when real actuality conceived in relation to another real actuality or conceived as under a greater actuality, it reduces itself to be the possibility of another. These transitional aspects seen in real possibility and actuality constitute a network of modal relations amongst actuals where an actual is determined by another actual as its possibility, whereas the determining actual remains only a possibility of it. The following example could articulate this complex relation. The phenomenon of rainbow is determined by the sub-events of reflection, refraction, and dispersion of the sunlight. In turn, each determining sub-event is also determined by other actual determining (sub-)events that enable the sub-events of the rainbow to take place, because there also have to be the right circumstances for the different manifestations (reflection, refraction, and dispersion) of the sunlight. Each event, when considered in isolation from its sub-events, shows itself as immediate actuality. But this is not the only truth about them, they also show that they are present because of the sub-events enabling them. These sub-events are possibilities for the event to take place. This shows that the world of determinate actuality is constituted over the layers of relation of actuals, a relation that is governed by possibility.

5.3. Real Necessity and Contingency

Hegel's concept of real necessity, similar to that of formal necessity, is derived from the unity of actuality and possibility. However, real actuality and possibility do not constitute the unity in the same way as their formal counterparts do. Formal actuality and possibility are in a *restless* transition into each other. In this mutual transition, their unity, with the accent on their difference, is specified as contingency, whereas their unity, with the accent on their identity, is necessity. On the other hand, the unity of real actuality and possibility

does not comprise a transition from one to another since real possibility constitutes the movement of actuality's *self-rejoining* as opposed to the mutual formal transition between actuality and possibility. It is the actuality that returns to the self from its other, possibility. This very self-re-joining constitutes an identity of possibility (the circle of circumstance) and actuality, which Hegel conceptualizes as real necessity.

The opening argument for real necessity involves a complex thought that comprises two contrary elements in real possibility: (a) the negation is its true nature of possibility and (b) real possibility, in its self-sublating(negation), is a countermovement against its own sublating. Regarding (a), we already know that real possibility is the self-rejoining movement of real actuality. This re-presentation of real possibility as in its self-sublating, or disappearing in actuality, suggests that it negates its negation to actuality and hence proves itself as negated. This double negation constitutes the movement of self-rejoining (or identity) of actuality. As this identity, real possibility within real actuality amounts to the real necessity of actuality. On the other hand, (b) adds another aspect to this determination by stating the countermovement of real possibility against its own sublation. One way of making sense of this is to conceive its negation as real necessity. Real possibility stands in tension against real necessity while real possibility also proves itself to be real necessity. The latter (b), for this reason, is complex. Nonetheless, possibility as the negation of necessity is a well-recognized idea that is found in the systems of quantified modal logic.[94] However, the point that makes Hegel's argument more complex and even radical, is that real possibility is *already* real necessity (SL 484/WL-II 211). This identity and difference between possibility and necessity could only be regarded as consistent insofar as the negation here is not asserted in the concept of possibility by any external operation of thinking or a set of rules but is thought of as the negation that is already contained within the

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[94] The modal operator ◊ (possibility) is defined from □ (necessity) as a negation of it. $◊A = -□-A$.

concept of possibility itself. As Hegel reveals in formal possibility, possibility already

contains the implication of negation in the expression of A and non-A.[95]

However, Hegel still retains a sense of possibility that is already distinct from real

necessity. 'What is necessary *cannot be otherwise*; but what is only *possible* can be [...]'

(SL 484/WL-II 211). This means that not all possibility is already necessity. For Hegel, the

distinction of possibility lies in its formal determination that is contained in real possibility.

Mere possibility is the negativity of formal actuality. To speak of *negativity* here is to say

not only that possibility is other than actuality but also that possibility puts the actual in

relation to its other as in the example that the formal possibility of an actual (A) implies the

possibility of another contrary actual(non-A). The distinction vanishes insofar as real

possibility contains actuality within itself: therefore, it lacks a contrary other. That is, if an

actual fact is *really* possible, it cannot be otherwise. '[U]nder the given conditions and

circumstances, nothing else can follow' (SL 484/ WL 211). Without actuality, there can be

no talk of the real possibility of another actual. The inclusion of actuality within real

possibility is what makes possibility unable to operate as the ability of being otherwise.

Hence the transition from possibility to actuality by virtue of the inclusion of actuality

constitutes the self-identity of actuality. This new actuality is no longer possible but

necessary. This is the deconstruction of possibility, understood in such a way that the

moment that expresses its true sense is the moment that real possibility transitions into its

other, necessity.

This necessity in virtue of being identical to real possibility is limited as it takes up

its content from what is really possible. That is, the really necessary actual points back to the

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[95] One can read this idea as the metaphysical(conceptual) basis of why in modal systems necessity is conceived as the negation of possibility, although for the modal systems, this is simply a matter of rules where we happen to define them that way. Hegel reveals why such rule must be the case by only analysing the nature of possibility rather than aiming at defining the logical operations of modal concept.

possibilities from which it establishes itself. This necessity is not a self-determining necessity as we see in Spinoza's substance. Rather, what is determined as really necessary is bound up with the circumstances that can make the actual be otherwise. Hegel identifies this dependence in real necessity. '[…] [T]his [real] necessity is […] *relative. —* For it has a presupposition from which it begins; it takes its start from the contingent' (SL 484/WL-II 211).

The contingency from which real necessity takes its beginning is the moment of unity in real actuality, such unity that holds real actuality and its real possibilities with an accent on their distinction. Hegel's account of real contingency leads us back to the conceptual determinations of real possibility within real actuality. As we already discussed, real possibilities are the actuals on their own but are the possibilities of another actuality when they are contained in another actuality. Note again that each individual actual is already actual itself, but each is possible if and only if they are contained in another actual. Hegel's point (SL 485/WL-II 211) is that the moment, in which each actual is conceived as the possibility of another actuality, is the moment that the transition between actuality and possibility becomes apparent. The actual is contingent upon the very possibilities that it contains. On the other hand, we can evoke the sense of contingency that Hegel develops in formal modalities, namely the restless transition between formal actuality and possibility because in the domain of real modalities, the actual, operating as the possibility of another actual, re-presents this transitional movement. It is actual for itself but a possibility for another. It is right to state that real actuality, when determined by its real possibility, is contingent because it can be a *possibility* in relation to another actuality. But also, it is contingent due to its constitution from the circle of individual actualities, that are its own possibilities. This makes actuality as the unity of itself and its possibilities, hence contingent. So, something actual is contingent, for Hegel, because it depends on prior

conditions (its possibilities), but also because it is itself the possibility of a different actuality.

Since the relation of real actuality and possibility amounts to contingency, the derivation of real necessity from this relation has to have its bearing on contingency too. For this reason, the real necessity of an actual is relative to the real possibilities by which the actual is constituted. For example, the occurrence of a rainbow is necessary only insofar as there is present the series of occurrences of other actualities as its possibilities that make the rainbow actual. If these occurrences change, the actual rainbow changes too. If the sunlight is reflected, refracted, and dispersed not by the water droplets but by the icy clouds, there occurs no rainbow but sundog. Real necessity is therefore relative to the contingent relationship between the actual and the possible and hence determined by that relation. 'The really necessary is, for this reason, any limited actuality which, because of its limitation, is in some other respect also only something *contingent*' (SL 485/WL-II 212).[96]

One unusual note that Hegel makes enables us to think ahead a self-determining concept of necessity: '*necessity has not yet determined itself out of itself into contingency*' (SL 485/WL-II 212).[97] This is an intriguing point because Hegel is not concerned with a pre-established framework or a conception in order to understand the nature of any concept in the course of the *Logic*. The word, *yet* [*noch*], here certainly indicates a conception of

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[96] Di Giovanni translates the phrase 'das real Notwendige' as 'a necessary reality'. I have amended this translation because I consistently use real as an adjective for modal concepts such as real possibility and real actuality. Hegel here does not talk about reality at all but uses 'real' as a determination of modal necessity. To call the really necessary a necessary reality might evoke a meaning about *reality*. To avoid this, I prefer to follow using real as an adjective.

[97] Just two paragraphs later, Hegel states the same idea:' it[real necessity] is the turning back into itself from the restless being-the-other-of-each-other of actuality and possibility, but not the turning back from itself to itself'. Again Hegel uses the phrase from itself into itself (the movement of reflection) as a matter of comparison, which I find slightly problematic because according to what Hegel affirmatively provides in real necessity, we can do nothing but only assume that there be a concept of necessity that turns back to itself from itself. This assumption does more harm than any good in terms of making explicit the true nature of real necessity. Until we develop a further concept of necessity that turns into itself from itself, there would be no point to make this comparison. A couple of pages later, Hegel develops this necessity as the absolute necessity. However, the justification of absolute necessity cannot be found in real necessity.

necessity, which real necessity lacks. However, to assume a thought and ascribe it to real

necessity is inappropriate to grasp the nature of real necessity because this renders real

necessity insufficient, but only relative to the assumed concept of necessity. This assumption

undermines and does not affirmatively reveal anything significant in real necessity. The real

necessity proper, as the *Logic* makes it explicit, is relative and limited to the real

possibilities—contingent circumstances.

The following statement closes Hegel's analysis of real necessity: '*real necessity* is

in itself also contingency' (SL 485/WL 212). Here, Hegel does not argue that real necessity

is contingency. What he argues is that real necessity *in-itself* or *implicitly* contingency. The

phrase *in itself* carries the meaning that real necessity *contains* contingency in the same

manner as actuality containing possibility as its in-itselfness. Hegel explains the implicit

contingency in necessity with the vocabulary of form and content, which shows the

limitation of necessity in two aspects.

Regarding content, given that real necessity is limited, this limitation constitutes real

necessity's own contingency, from which anything that is really necessary emerges.

Considering that the limitation is the circle of actuals, taken as real possibility, the limitation

operates as the content of the actual in question. For this reason, '[…] real necessity,

although something necessary according to form, is still something limited according to

content, and derives its contingency through the latter' (SL 485/WL-II 212). It is important

to note that the content is contingent not because it is the *mere* possibility of actuality but

because the content is the *real* possibility of actuality. The content shows itself as the

constant transition between possibility and actuality where an individual actual is recognized

as the possibility of another actual yet nonetheless it remains actual in itself.

Regarding form, although this explanation seems to ascribe necessity to form and contingency to content, respectively, Hegel further claims that contingency is also contained in the form determination (SL 485/ WL-II 212). This is already an explicit argument given that real possibility is already necessity because it cannot be otherwise,—albeit what is merely possible can be. Hegel states that '[…] real possibility is the necessary only *in itself*, but as posited it is the mutual otherness of actuality and possibility' (SL 485/WL-II 212). Two key phrases, *in itself* and *as posited*, indicate (a) that implicitly (in itself), real possibility is necessary and (b) explicitly (as posited), real possibility contains contingency, the mutual transitions between actuality and possibility. Given that real possibility is that which cannot be otherwise, it is not distinct from necessity. Therefore, real necessity contains contingency—the difference between possibility and actuality that takes place in real possibility.

For Hegel, real necessity is itself not contingency, but it is contingent in virtue of containing contingent circumstances as determinations of itself. The common-sense opposition between necessity and contingency does not play a role in Hegel's analysis. Rather, anything really necessary is dependent on contingent circumstances. Necessity and contingency do not oppose each other, but nonetheless, they are contrasting concepts. Real necessity contains contingency as its negation. This, at first, seems like the structure Hegel introduces in the opening of his treatment of formal modalities, namely, actuality is that which immediately contains possibility. However, the difference is quite subtle, since in real necessity, contingency is not the in-itselfness of necessity, rather it is an external determination, whereas in formal actuality, possibility is already the inner determination of actuality. This externality renders the necessity limited to the contingent circumstances, whereas mere possibility cannot limit actuality but expands it to the extent that actuality falls in a contradiction in virtue of being the unity of itself (A) and its contrary self (non-A).

5.4. Conclusion

Hegel's treatment of real modality establishes a network of modal relations among actuals, which expresses the actuals in the form of possibility, contingency and necessity. An actuality operates as a possibility insofar as it is contained in another actuality. This actuality, comprising the other actuality as its possibility, turns the other into a determination for itself with which the former manifests itself as contingent. For Hegel, actuality involves multiple diverse actualities, by making them its own possibility while it could also be a possibility of another actuality. This complex relation reveals that an actual determines itself through another by the means of reducing another actuality to a possibility of itself. This relation shows itself as the relation of contingency in which, while each actuality preserves itself as self-subsistent, the manifestation of their natures depends on their relation to other actualities. In addition, since each actuality also proves itself as self-subsistent by virtue of comprising the totality of its own possibilities, actuality cannot be otherwise than what it is: hence, it is necessary. The necessity of actuality is not a self-developed form of necessity within an actuality, but it finds its constitutive determinations in other actualities. For this reason, this necessity still preserves the elements of contingency, and it is at best a hypothetical necessity i.e., only under certain circumstances, an actual cannot be otherwise.

Throughout the section, I have expanded the idea, discussed in the previous section, that the domain of modality is bound up with that of actuality, where only determinations of actuality are modal determinations. Although Hegel mentions the concepts of condition and fact in his treatment of modality, I have shown that these concepts could only be taken as descriptive, rather than as appropriate concepts carrying the *Logic* forward by making explicit the nature of actuality and possibility. I have argued that actuality and possibility, through their mutual transitions into each other, constitute an inner relation from which actuality

reveals its possibilities, whereas conditions remain external to the fact even though the fact comes into existence out of its conditions.

Hegel's treatment of real modalities follows the formally proven idea of the priority of actuality over possibility. The complex relation of real actuality and possibility further proves that possibilities are always latent in what there actually is. Real actuality precedes real possibility as real possibility is already a real actuality without being contained in another actuality. In this respect, Hegel's idea of the prior actuality does not carry the problematic aspect of Aristotle's idea of the priority of actuality over potentiality. For Aristotle, actuality is a process of actualization of potentialities. In this process, actuality has logically to presuppose potentialities as yet-to-be actualized beings. Potentialities are not in actuality unless they obtain a process that manifests them in actuality (*Metaphysics*, IX.6). For this reason, although for Aristotle, actuality proves itself substantially, temporally, and teleologically prior to potentiality (*Metaphysics,* IX.8), it must logically presuppose potentialities before itself as the starting point of the process of actualization.[98] By contrast, the Hegelian idea that real possibilities are already actuality suggests a more consistent idea of the priority of actuality. This prevents any assertion of possibility as prior to actuality because even though actuality comes out of the totality of its possibilities, these possibilities themselves are actual.

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[98] In the contemporary literature of modal metaphysics, Aristotle is well-recognized as an actualist due to his idea of the priority of actuality. Aristotle proves that in the three aspects, actuality is prior to potentiality (*Metaphysics,* IX.8). However, Aristotle's account leaves the door wide open to the doubt about whether his account exhausts the *logical* priority of actuality since in *Book Theta*, Aristotle's derivation of actuality follows from potentiality. So, potentiality comes prior to actuality at least in one aspect. This is due to the fact that Aristotle takes actuality as a process starting from non-actual potentialities and ending in actuality—although in *Theta VIII*, Aristotle argues that actuality is also prior to every principle of process because any entity, that is capable of employing the process of actualization, is already in actuality. Agamben (2017, p. 42) recognizes this difficulty in Aristotle's arguments as a 'constitutive ambiguity' with which he grants potentiality a role in the process as prior as actuality thereby presenting potentiality and actuality as the two ontologically equal sides of being.

Hegel's concept of real necessity shows that when actuality is developed in necessity, it remains contingent. Even though actuals are determined to be necessarily present, they still refer to the circumstances that render them necessary. Accordingly, the fully determined actual manifests itself both as contingent and necessary. The determinate actuality is contingent, insofar as we fixate on the circumstances from which it emerges while it shows its necessity in being the *unity* of itself and these contingent circumstances. The remarkable idea in this concept of necessity is that although the contingent actual is distinct from the necessary actual in terms of its conceptual qualities, its necessity cannot be considered in isolation from the contingent. With this, Hegel shows that there lies a contingency within real necessity itself.

Lastly, Hegel's treatment of real modalities corresponds to another layer in the world that modally presents itself. With the logical analysis of the modal concepts, we come to see that the world that modally presents itself contains manifesting actuals in a complex relation in which actuals actualize themselves by being inclusive of other actualities. Actuality further expresses itself as the absolute since it contains all determinations within itself.

6. AN EXAMINATION OF HEGEL'S TREATMENT OF ABSOLUTE MODALITIES

The previous chapter concluded that for any real actuality to be completely determinate, it is necessary that it contains the totality of its real possibilities. Real possibilities are not just possibilities as such, but they are real in the sense that they are determinate being, or actuality in the context of modality. The fact that their being is contained in another actuality gives them the characteristics of being a possibility for the other actuality. The total inclusion of real possibilities in an actuality therefore renders the actuality as that which cannot be other than its real possibilities. The totality of its real possibilities renders the actual necessary. In other words, with the accent on the transition between actuality and possibility, if every individual actuality is included as possibility in another greater actuality, then the greater actuality cannot be anything apart from the totality of its constitutive actuals. 'It is an actuality that has arisen from actuality, enabling actuality to become something self-conditioned' (Winfield, 2012, p. 192). The total inclusion of all determinations turns real actuality, which contains other actualities as its possibilities, into the absolutization of actuality. With this thought, we simply have a conception of actuality that is self-developing and self-determining[99].

The sub-section of *Absolute Necessity* in the *Actuality* Chapter completes our understanding of modality by adding absolute modality to formal and real modalities. Although Hegel also argues for a global outcome for the *Logic* out of his local treatment of absolute modal concepts, I focus only on his local arguments regarding the logical structure of modal concepts, excluding the role they play in later parts of the *Logic*. I will explicate the

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[99] Although self-determination might not be apt for specifying actuality of any sort because Hegel usually associates self-determination with the concept as such, I here suggest the term self-determination in its looser sense to highlight the fact that actuality is 'as a self-differentiating and self-determining movement[als sich von sich unterscheidende und bestimmende Bewegung, es selbsts]' (SL 487/WL-II 201). Though Hegel does not conceptualize this movement of actuality as an explicit self-determination (Selbstbestimmung), actuality carries a similar structure that projects the movement of the concept itself, such as the universality's self-differentiation into particularity and returning back to itself in particularity thereby constituting singularity.

modal determinations by limiting the exegesis to the vocabulary of modality. Although I will

mention possible reasons why absolute necessity evokes such concepts of *being* and *essence*,

I will not provide a detailed discussion over the reasons of this recall as it will detour the

purpose of the chapter. Moreover, due to the same limitation, the chapter will not be

concerned with the concepts of substance or causality, which absolute necessity proves itself

to be. Because substance, albeit derived from necessity, is not modally determined, its

necessity is not the identity of actuality and possibility but an identity between substance and

accidents, which amounts to an utterly new conceptual structure, that is inaccessible to the

logic of modality but expresses itself in the form of causality.

In this chapter, I will examine Hegel's derivation of absolute modalities. Hegel

suggests a different derivation of these modal concepts than that of their formal and real

counterparts, which will make explicit their distinct nature too. Each modal concept,

considered within the framework of their absolute determinations, still evokes the previous

logical moments of their formal and real counterparts as each contains a minimal bond by

virtue of being still an actual, possible, contingent, or necessary, regardless of their specific

kind. There is a similarity among formal, real, and absolute kinds but the logic behind each is

distinct. Even though formal and real modalities are contained as moments within absolute

modalities, absolute modalities show a different type of derivation and logical structure from

their formal and real counterparts. For example, actuality is always prior to possibility and

that possibility is derived from actuality as contained in actuality. This can be considered as a

similarity among the kinds. Perhaps more precisely, it is a consistent principle in Hegel's

arguments across formal, real, and absolute modalities, which nonetheless results from

distinct logical structures. Formal actuality contains formal possibility as its negativity, or as

its non-being. Real actuality contains real possibility as its constitutive circumstance.

Absolute actuality contains absolute possibility as its indeterminacy or emptiness. Though

formal, real and absolute actualities both contain possibility, the inclusion of possibility takes a diverse course of derivation in each kind. On the other hand, regarding the relation between necessity and contingency, Hegel offers another *Doppelsatz* that states, that the absolute necessity is contingency, and contingency is absolute necessity. The chapter will investigate this distinct logical structure which eventually refines and sheds light on the more developed structure of the previously examined modal concepts of contingency and necessity.

The chapter firstly examines what is to be modally absolute by providing a brief comparison between the absolute as such and absolute actuality. It is necessary to make explicit that when Hegel talks about absolute modalities, he is not referring to the absolute as such.[100] Though there might be structural similarities, the absolute as such and absolute modalities have different logical structures that eventually render absolute modalities incomprehensible by the concept of the absolute as such. That is, the concept of the absolute is not sufficient to examine the logical structure of absolute modalities, since that of the absolute in itself does not contain the determinations of modality. Secondly, the chapter examines Hegel's treatment of absolute actuality and possibility. The absolute determination of actuality renders actuality absolute possibility, which constitutes a new relationship between actuality and possibility. Formally, actuality and possibility are in a relation of negativity. In terms of real determinations, actuality and possibility have shown themselves to be transitory—namely, real actuality becomes the real possibility of another actuality, and real possibility is itself an actuality without being related to another actuality. This transitory aspect governs the relationship between real actuality and its real possibilities. In the absolute determinations of modalities, absolute actuality proves itself to be identical to its absolute possibility. Absolute possibility, in being identical to absolute actuality, is merely an empty

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[100] Though Hegel (SL 488/WL-II 217) states 'the *blind* transition of necessity is rather the absolute's own *exposition*, its movement in itself which, in its externalization, reveals itself instead', this does not shed light on why the absolute and modal concepts are expressed through different logics.

determination for actuality, meaning that it makes no difference to absolute actuality whether it is conceived as actuality or possibility. Absolute actuality, in virtue of being *absolute*, is indeterminate since it contains its possibilities within itself. The inclusion of all possibilities within actuality turns actuality into that which is no longer in relation to an other actuality. The determination that stems from this relation becomes absent because absolute actuality is only in relation to its absolute possibility, which is identical to itself due to the inclusion of all possibilities, which is the same as what it is as actuality. This collapse of actuality into indeterminacy—or possibility—, in virtue of the lack of relatedness to another actuality, constitutes absolute actuality's nature as contingent since it is determinate as absolute actuality as well as indeterminate as absolute possibility. Lastly, the chapter analyses Hegel's concept of contingency in absolute actuality, which leads the *Logic* to the concept of absolute necessity. The chapter will trace the *Logic* for the argument Hegel suggests that as opposed to formal and real necessity, which are determined by contingency, absolute necessity determines itself out of itself and falls into contingency. By examining the logic of absolute modalities, the chapter will make explicit the absolutization of modal concepts as well as fortifying their irreducibility to prior concepts by following Hegel's derivations. Hence, this will enable the examination to constitute a conceptual basis for presenting Hegel's treatment as a self-standing modal theory that only expresses the world that *modally* presents itself, as opposed to providing a comprehensive theory of the world.

6.1. What Is to Be Modally Absolute?

Hegel's concept of the absolute has drawn the attention of Hegelian and non-Hegelian scholars. Yet it is hard to identify a single sense of the concept in Hegel's philosophy since it is mainly taken as certain stages in being/thought, consciousness and so on. For example, *absolute knowing*, in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* deals with what happens once a consciousness develops itself into a stage where it can know itself not by the means of its

other but by merely itself. This is the point for Hegel where a consciousness develops a

concept of self-knowing *I* without the things outside the *I* (PS § 803). On the other hand, *the*

absolute idea in Hegel's *Logic* deals with the complete determinations of thought or being

that comprehends itself through itself. It is the idea that unifies and accommodates the

concept (subjectivity) and reality (objectivity) (SL 752/WL-II 573).

This section will not go over the multiple occurrences of the absolute in the *Logic* or

in the other works of Hegel as it is a detour to articulate only what is to be modally absolute.

However, Hegel's treatment of the absolute as such sheds light on the nature of absolute

modalities. Briefly, the section will only regard the absolute as such and its relation to what is

to be modally absolute. Although it is clear that Hegel's conception of the absolute plays a

significant role in the understanding of the absolute modalities, the difference between the

absolute as such and the absolute modal determinations cannot be omitted. The absolute as

such is itself an indeterminate totality of its determinations, whereas the absolute as a state for

modal determinations is the determinate unity of manifold modal expressions of actualities.

This difference makes explicit that absolute modalities involve their non-being within itself

and determines itself through their non-being without appealing to an external determination,

while the absolute as such determines itself through its external being, namely its attribute.

The underlying premise in absolute modalities is that to be modally absolute is to involve the

contrary of itself within itself, whereas the premise in the absolute as such is that the

otherness cannot be found in the absolute but only externally in the form of the attribute.

As discussed in 3.1, Hegel's treatment of the absolute takes place in the *Actuality*

Section of *the Science of Logic*. It comes after the discussion of the relation between the inner

and outer where Hegel suggests that the seemingly contrary concepts of the inner and outer

prove that each position itself is in the place of the other which engenders an identity of the

one in the other. That is, for the inner to prove itself as the inner, it has to make itself

expressed; hence, it becomes an outer. By the same token, the outer proves itself by the presence of the inner i.e., it posits itself an inner because, without the inner, there would be no outer. Their capacity to be the other of itself gives rise to the thought of unity in which each is included as identical to the other. In this unity, each finds its true self, namely, to subsist over one another. Hegel calls this unity *absolute* because the unity encompasses both determinations of the inner and outer; hence, it appears as a complete unity that relates to no determining element outside the unity.

The absolute for Hegel has two specifications. Firstly, it is a complete set of determinations which includes every determination of being and essence derived in the course of the *Logic*. Secondly although it is the totality of every determination, the absolute stands as indeterminate since there is no external determining element related to the absolute. It is the main tension in the concept of the absolute that the absolute turns into a collection of determinations while it remains indeterminate as the unity of these determinations. This is because determining the absolute amounts to negating it, and because the totality of every determination in itself does not imply their unity, each individual determination is conceived as a negation of the absolute as the unity. That is, the absolute would be known not in its own terms but with respect to a specific determination, which in turn would render the absolute relatively determinate, which the absolute is not supposed to be. For example, considering the category of condition as a determination of the absolute through which the absolute is made explicit, the understanding determines the absolute within the framework of conditioning and conditioned, which eventually leaves aside the other determinations in the nature of the absolute since its other determinations cannot be expressed by the framework of conditioning.

The important aspect of the absolute is its tension between indeterminacy and determinacy, which re-emerges in the absolute modalities, particularly in absolute actuality,

in the form of contingency, expressing that absolute actuality is an actuality and a possibility. Absolute actuality is the *unity* of actuality and real possibility, and thus actuality that can only have one outcome: namely, what is *really* possible. In this respect, such actuality is real necessity. It is thus *contingent* or a matter of indifference whether absolute actuality is determined as actuality or possibility, since such actuality is both at the same time. It is possible, therefore, for such actuality to be determined either way, and this is an absolute possibility that is built into absolute actuality itself.

The main point for the difference is that the absolute operates within the framework of the distinction between the inner and outer, whereas in absolute modalities, the inner and outer have truly vanished into a single concept, namely actuality. The determinations of the absolute stand external to it while preserving an indeterminate inner self that stands distinct from the external determinations, whereas absolute modalities are determined by their inner moments only. When the inner determinations(possibilities) are expressed, they carry no distinct sense from the expression. It is important to note that although the concept of the absolute resembles some of the structure of absolute actuality, this resemblance does not pave the way for the reduction of absolute actuality to the absolute as such. Absolute actuality's logical structure of being identical to itself in its possibility cannot be expounded by the absolute's logical structure of expressing itself in the form of its other, namely its mode. The sole purpose of this section is to claim that once the *Logic* explains the nature of the absolute, it does not ensure that the logic of absolute actuality is made explicit too. For this reason, we need to investigate the logic of absolute actuality separately.

6.2. Absolute Actuality and Absolute Possibility

Hegel's treatment of absolute modalities takes place in the subsection on *Absolute Necessity* where Hegel begins with a discussion on what determinateness is in real necessity that turns real actuality into absolute actuality. Hegel does not dwell much on the transition from real

necessity to absolute actuality. Rather, the section is completed with the statement that the unity of (real) necessity and contingency is absolute actuality (SL 485/WL-II 213). The statement simply points to the fact that real actuality proves itself to be the totality of actuals (contingency), as well as being something more than the mere totality of actuals. It also reveals their concealed identity, an identity that enables individual actuals to be conceived under a single and greater concept of actuality, i.e., by this identity, they make themselves logical moments of absolute actuality. With the emphasis on the mere *totality*, a collection of actuals, real actuality proves itself to be contingent while it also expresses itself as necessary with the emphasis on the identity of actuals as being *unity*. For this reason, real necessity spontaneously expresses real actuality as something absolute. Actuality is conceived as *absolute* when it is conceived as having necessity as its in-itselfness (*Ansichsein*), that is, as implicitly being necessity (SL 486/WL-II 213).

We have already argued in the previous chapter that when the actual contains the circle of *other* actuals as its real possibilities within itself, the actual determines itself through the other actuals as its inner determining features. If we hold onto this *otherness*, the actual expresses the circle of actuals as still external to itself. On the other hand, the inclusion of the other actuals within it makes explicit that the actual is necessary to be what it is, but it is limited to the given circumstances that the other actuals constitute.

The real necessity, as the identity between the circumstances and the real actuality that stems from the circumstances, is the determinateness that the actual contains in itself, and in turn, this necessity transitions real actuality into absolute actuality (SL 487/WL-II 213). Real necessity is the movement that overcomes the fact that actuality may or may not transition itself into the real possibility of a greater actuality. The greater actuality, when determined as really necessary, encompasses every real possibility(contingency) as sublated. When determined as necessary, real actuality is also conceived as including possible or

contingent moments within itself, which make real actuality contingent upon the circumstances. However, every possibility that may make the actual be otherwise has been suspended in it. Real actuality can no longer show both qualities of being an actual and possible at the same time. The actual fact, emerging out of its contingent circumstances, cannot be other than what circumstances make it to be. That is to say, the circumstances are the real possibility that is no longer *mere possibility* but the transition to a new actuality.

The totality of determining circumstances results in a single unifying concept since each determines a single fact to be present. The fact, emerging out of its contingent circumstances, cannot be other than what circumstances make it to be. Regarding this, actuality is not something hypothetically (really) necessary, depending on some external determining circumstance that may change what actuality is. Real actuality demonstrates this hypothetical necessity since it has not yet internalized its external circumstances. When previously external circumstances express the inner nature of the actual, the actual comes to be absolute. Neither anything inside (manifested self) nor outside (its manifestation) may alter what it is.

Considering that anything logical to be thought of is to have determinations through which it is constituted, absolute actuality comes to be recognized through its determinations, or in this case through its internality. Therefore, actuality relates itself to itself, thereby constituting itself as self-relating unity. What has disappeared is the distinction between the emerged actuality out of other actuals and the other actuals as the determinations of the emerged actuality. What stands external to real actuality has come to be the internal elements of actuality because each plays a constitutive role in what actuality manifests itself as. Absolute actuality is the absence of determining external actuals (its possibilities). It is a single receptacle of all possibilities within itself. Hence, this utmost inclusiveness renders actuality absolute.

Actuality is determined as absolute in virtue of the operation of real necessity, which renders actuality self-identical to itself through the suspension (sublation) of possibilities within actuality. Real necessity expresses that absolute actuality is nothing different from the unity of the previously external actualities as its possibilities. The thought is simply this that when all the actualities, constituting a single greater fact, are present as the real possibility of the fact, this fact is a *constituted* actual, which cannot be anything different from the unity of constituting real possibilities. While the concept of contingency can only grasp the greater actuality as distinct from its constituting actuals or as only the *totality* of these actuals, the concept of necessity can express that the constituted actual is identical to them, hence a *unity*. Without recognizing their identity or necessity in them, the greater actuality would be still distinct from the constituting actuals or would be a real actuality that could be otherwise depending on its real possibilities.

However, as the result of the determining operation of necessity, the constituted actual by containing every determination of itself, turns itself into an indeterminacy. The complete inclusion of real possibilities turns actuality into unity and as well as a totality with empty determinations. It is empty insofar as it lacks any determination in virtue of the absence of otherness. 'To say that it is absolute is to say that it needs reference to no external possibility to explain it' (Burbidge, 2006, p. 42). An otherness identifies real actuality as determinate. But when this other is contained within absolute actuality, the inclusion of the other ends up generating an indeterminacy. This reminds us of an aspect of *the absolute as such*. The inclusive totality of every determination where the absolute makes itself explicitly determinate paradoxically turns the absolute into an indeterminacy because its determining qualities are located within its concept. This same conceptual structure renders absolute actuality empty or indeterminate as its previously determining external elements are nothing different than what it is *in itself*. The determinations are indistinguishable from itself. Its real

possibilities are its actuality: Hence, they do not operate as determinations because they are now unable to specify actuality to be a this or a that. The only specific nature remaining to this is that it is determined as absolute, which circularly articulates the aspects of determinacy and indeterminacy together. The nature of absolute actuality, therefore, manifests this empty state that it is determinate and indeterminate at the same time.

Although there is a notable resemblance, to highlight the distinction between the concept of the absolute as such and absolute actuality will enable us to reveal the clear and distinct concept of absolute actuality, which is not reducible to the absolute. It is illuminating to emphasize why the absolute and absolute actuality are both conceived as 'void [*Leere*]' (SL 466/WL 187) and/or 'empty [*Leere*]' (SL 487/WL 213), but nonetheless, each progresses towards a different conceptual determination, attribute and possibility, respectively.

The absolute is *determined* to be empty or indeterminate in virtue of its concept that expresses the fact that the absolute as such involves everything that determines itself within itself. To be absolute is to involve its complete determinations. Yet, it eventually expresses an opposite quality, indeterminacy, where one of its determinations is held by the understanding to expose the nature of absolute. The understanding renders the absolute indeterminate in the attempt of determining it. The moment that the absolute is according to anything that falls external to itself is the moment that the absolute is relativized. Spinoza's substance, which Hegel thinks of as qualifying for the absolute before being substance, is grasped by the intellect through two attributes (extension and thought) among infinitely many. Hence, conceiving substance by extension or by thought renders substance relatively revealed, relative to one of the attributes. When the essence of substance is comprehendible by extension, its essence comprehendible by thought remains not comprehended and vice

versa.[101] Hegel argues similarly that the absolute is destined to be relativized if a quality standing external to its concept is taken as an aspect to reveal its nature. For Hegel, this externality is the attribute of the absolute through which the absolute comes to be determined according to the rubric of the attribute.

On the other hand, absolute actuality is also determined precisely to be empty or indeterminate. Its indeterminacy stems from its inclusive nature of involving every possibility that it encompasses within its concept. However, this indeterminacy modally expresses itself in the form of contingency, namely absolute actuality is an indeterminacy with respect to whether it is an actuality or a possibility.[102] Absolute actuality is not relative to the other of itself because there is no other of itself to which it can relate externally and it is that which in its absoluteness is to be indeterminate as to whether it is an actuality or a possibility. Possibility does not remain outside absolute actuality, but it is present in the very concept of absolute actuality, determining it as contingent. From this, we can see that the absolute as

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[101] Though this is not exactly how Spinoza conceives of substance and its relation to attributes. Even though an attribute only reveals a relevant essence of the substance respective to what kind it is (one of the infinitely many including thought and extension), for Spinoza the infinite number of attributes stands as a warranty that other essences of the substance is being revealed by other attributes, albeit the intellect cannot know specifically what those attributes are and hence what those essence of substance respectively. For Hegel this begs the question as it presupposes, rather than proves, an unknowable and impenetrable sphere for the intellect in substance. So, this is at best could be a weak point in Spinoza's argumentation. However, one may find Spinoza right, when considering that attributes are as infinite as substance itself. From this thought, we can say that at least we know there is an infinite number of attributes, even though we are in no position to make explicit what those attributes are. This difficulty partially may stem from the fact that Spinoza was unsure about the definition of the attribute in the early versions of Ethics, where he defines attribute as '[…] whatever conceived through itself and in itself, so that its concept does not involve the concept of another thing'(Letter 2 to Oldenburg, in Curley, 1994, p. 67). This definition of attribute is pretty similar to substance in the final version of Ethics. However, Spinoza must be aware of the similarity since he distinguishes it from substance in his further correspondence with Oldenburg (in Curley, 1994, p. 81). In the Ethics, attributes gain their proper place in Spinoza's system, but nonetheless the final definition of it may still be not free from a reasonable questioning.

[102] Prof Houlgate makes a very helpful remark on this indeterminacy in one of the earlier drafts of this thesis. Accordingly, Houlgate suggests that the indeterminacy I presented early in this section is different from the indeterminacy that expresses the uncertainty whether absolute actuality is an actuality or a possibility. As I explained previously, the first sense of indeterminacy stems from the fact that there is nothing other than or outside absolute actuality, whereas the second sense of indeterminacy expresses that absolute actuality is immediately determined as the complex unity of actuals (real possibilities) but indeterminate whether this unity is itself an actuality or a possibility. Although Houlgate suggests that the second sense of indeterminacy does not presuppose the first because it stems from the fact that absolute actuality is *immediately determined*, I think that the first sense of indeterminacy is needed to point out the cause of the second sense of indeterminacy. We have the second sense of indeterminacy because the absolute actuality as the complex unity of its determinations lacks an other as a further determination which decides whether absolute actuality is an actuality or a possibility.

such cannot alone shed light on the concept of absolute actuality. To investigate absolute actuality, we should consider its own determinations.

Hegel's derivation of absolute possibility appears in conformity with derivations of the formal and real possibilities in respect to that which is contained in actuality and derived from actuality. This highlights that actuality always comes prior to possibility. Even if possibility is considered in isolation from its relation to actuality, namely mere possibility, it inevitably refers to actuality, as we discussed in the examination of formal possibility. Absolute possibility is no different from its formal counterparts in this respect. However, the reason why it is *absolute* lies in the term *indeterminacy*.

The absolute possibility of an actual is its utmost indeterminate moment. Though one might think that the development moving towards a more determinate concept of possibility is supposed to make its primary being (actuality) more determinate too in the course of its conceptual development, I think that Hegel argues for the opposite that if something is absolutely possible, it cannot be anything specific that is *this* or *that*, but it expresses both together. Absolute possibility makes actuality no more determinate than itself. So, it turns actuality into something indeterminate. Hence, absolute possibility expresses the moment of absolute indeterminacy in actuality.

Burbidge (2007, p. 43) interprets absolute possibility in a twofold sense: (a) it is the possibility of *what is actual* and (b) it is pure possibility without the notion of actualisation. The twofold sense highlights the distinct characteristics of absolute possibility that express the indeterminacy of absolute possibility: '[t]here is no reason why it should be one rather than the other'. Although (a) rightly stresses that absolute possibility is only the possibility of actuality, meaning that it is not an independent possibility from an actuality, (b) might be

problematic by asserting a notion of actualisation since actualisation implies that it begins from possibility that precedes actuality.

On the one hand, with (a), we recognize that absolute possibility expresses the possibility of being an actual or a possible. For anything to be absolutely actual, it *necessarily* involves previously external actualities as its real possibilities. Real possibilities, conceived together in actuality, render the absolutely actual indeterminate, since it transforms its determining otherness as its own inner nature, by involving its otherness within itself. This otherness as possibility remains only the possibility for absolute actuality to be actual or possible. Burbidge's interpretation elegantly captures these aspects.

On the other hand, (b) might express that absolute possibility is an *unactualised* possibility. This interpretation inevitably invites us to assert an idea of actualisation in which that the process begins from possibility as the potential coming-to-be of actuality. This entertains the thought that favours the priority of possibility over actuality as it suggests that absolute possibility is the possibility that is yet-to-be actualised, hence not yet an actuality or contained in actuality. Burbidge's suggestion grounds the emptiness of absolute actuality on the lack of actualisation in possibility. However, the lack of actualisation is not the tenet through which absolute possibility is distinctly thought of. The distinct sense of possibility is revealed with its indeterminacy, not with whether or not it might actualise a non-actual being, but whether it expresses actuality as actual or possible. The indeterminacy implies that absolute actuality by virtue of this absolute possibility being its only determination is contingent, while also it is *determined* as contingent. Absolute possibility cannot be reduced to a possibility as something not-yet-actualised because it is still a determination enabling actuality to manifest itself as actual and possible. Hence, absolute possibility renders absolute actuality indeterminate, and this possibility is no less than the contingency of actuality.

The indeterminacy of absolute actuality shows a transitory aspect distinct from that of formal and real actuality and possibility. The transition between absolute actuality and possibility takes place only where actuality shifts into possibility. Absolute possibility is not an actuality but only a moment of indeterminacy in actuality. This one-way transition adds another layer into the determination of contingency that expresses actuality as indeterminate, apart from expressing the mutual transition between actuality and possibility, as seen in formal and real counterparts.

The thought stemming from the indeterminacy of absolute actuality is that even though actuality is empty and indeterminate in virtue of its absolute possibility, it expresses itself as determinate in terms of being contingent. That is, absolute actuality is determinate indeterminacy. On the one hand, it is utterly indeterminate as to whether actuality is possible, or it is actual. On the other hand, absolute actuality is determined to be contingent due to this very indeterminacy of two modal states, which is unable to specify what actuality is in itself.

6.3. Absolute Necessity and Contingency

In real modality, Hegel argues that real necessity is *in itself* or *implicitly* contingency (SL 485/WL-II 212). Anything really necessary comes out of the fact that external circumstances make it so. The really necessary actual is therefore limited and relative to the circumstances out of which it comes to be. This thought implies that necessity preserves contingency within its own concept as its constitutive element with which it becomes what it is. Contingency is the becoming of necessity. The becoming of necessity suggests two aspects: (a) that contingency becomes necessity and (b) that necessity is derived from contingency. However, this becoming has bearings on the concept of absolute necessity because now it presupposes its constitutive circumstances in itself as well as positing itself as an immediacy while remaining indifferent to its constitutive circumstances. The following two moments indicates this tension in necessity:

a) Necessity is the sublatedness of *contingent circumstances*, which is expressed by the statement that '[…] the presupposition which it had is its own positing' (SL 486/WL-II 214). The sublatedness of necessity indicates that necessity turns the contingent(external) circumstances into the inner moments of actuality. The circumstances are contingent because each circumstance is an actual itself but a possibility of a greater actuality. They are sublated because necessity accents on their identity rather than their difference and through this identity they are accommodated in actuality. Necessity constitutes the unity of them, but the moments of this unity are individually indifferent to this unity. The sublatedness of contingency can also be read as necessity's overcoming of contingency. On the one hand, necessity *presupposes* these contingent actualities for itself. On the other, the contingent actualities constitute or *posit* necessity as an immediate actuality, detached from themselves.

b) Necessity is a *unity* of contingent circumstances. Necessity unifies the circumstances, and this unity emerges as an immediacy or an actuality that cannot be otherwise, hence absolute while circumstances themselves are contingent and can be otherwise. Actuality comes to be necessary out of contingency and presents itself as an immediacy, which it is a mere totality of contingent circumstances. They are sublated in the sense that they become a moment under necessity. The positing of necessity is an immediacy posited as absolute actuality, which results from the sublatedness of the contingent circumstances.

As we discussed in the previous section, absolute actuality proves itself to be contingent even though it has been *really* necessary. The reason absolute actuality renders itself contingent is the doing of necessity, namely, positing of an immediacy and in-itselfness. This positing of necessity amounts to the sublation of the immediacy and in-itsefness. Absolute actuality is, therefore, an immediacy and yet expresses itself as non-immediate, positedness or contingency. In absolute actuality, necessity operates with its conceptual mark

that it sublates its posited immediacy. Hegel (SL 486/WL-II 214) states that 'thus it is necessity which is equally the sublating of this positedness or the positing of immediacy and of the in-itself, just as in this very sublating it is the determining of it as positedness'. Absolute actuality, which is derived from real necessity, leads back into contingency because it is necessary, and its necessity operates such that it undoes what it does. Hegel (SL 486/WL-II 214) expresses this paradoxical thought of necessity as the following: 'in its being it repels itself from itself, in this very repelling has only returned to itself, and in this turning back which is its being has repelled itself from itself'. To put it differently, the doings of necessity (positing an immediacy and in-itself) undoes its own doing, while undoing its own doing is also its doing.

Necessity determines absolute actuality as sublated where it becomes contingency, because its in-itselfness(possibility) is indeed the unity of actuality and possibility, transitioning this mere possibility into contingency. To clarify this, we need to emphasize Hegel's statement that '*determinate* necessity is […] immediate *actual necessity'*. 'This actuality which is itself as such necessary, since it contains necessity as its in-itselfness, is *absolute actuality* (SL 486/WL-II 213)'. So in a sense, the necessity that turns the totality of circumstances into absolute actuality is a possibility(in-itselfness) in absolute actuality because necessity by virtue of its unifying the disperse circumstances renders them no longer distinct from actuality. For this reason, necessity takes up the role of possibility and designates itself as the in-itselfness of actuality (SL 486/WL-II 213). Actuality and in-itselfness are one and the same because actuality is not different from the unified circumstances, and is therefore absolute.

Necessity, previously conceived as a determination for actuality, becomes an empty determination. Such emptiness recalls the thought that it is as empty as the absolute possibility of actuality, namely, it is unable to determine further than expressing that absolute

actuality is determinate and indeterminate at the same time. That is, absolute actuality can be A and non-A. As we already discussed that absolute actuality is not a mere possibility but contains its possibility as its determination or in-itselfness, the identity between actuality and its in-itselfness shows that it contains actuality and possibility. Therefore, it is contingent. Hegel claims that the conceptual doings of possibility namely rendering absolute actuality as determinate and indeterminate, are the same as that of necessity. Hegel expresses this thought in the following lines:

> '[…] this possibility is immediately nothing but *this mediating* in which the in-itself, namely the possibility itself and the mediating, both in the same manner, are *positedness*. – Thus it is necessity which is equally the sublating of this positedness, or the positing of *immediacy* and of the *in-itself*, just as in this very sublating it is the *determining* of it as *positedness*. It is necessity itself, therefore, that determines itself as *contingency*' (SL 486/WL-II 213)

This signifies that absolute actuality determines itself to be contingent in being necessity. This is because it determines itself to be being or immediacy that is identical with itself through negativity – immediacy that is mediated and dependent in being immediacy. Absolute actuality, therefore, manifests the unity of itself and its negativity that can only be articulated in the form of contingency, namely the unity of actuality and possibility, as in A and non-A. Therefore, necessity as the (in)determination renders absolute actuality contingent. In other words, given that absolute actuality is an actual necessity, 'it is necessity itself […] that determines itself as contingency' (SL 486/WL-II 213), only because it is *formally* and *really* indistinguishable from actuality in terms of their immediacy. The thought that absolute actuality is contingent implies that absolute necessity is contingent.

The thought that absolute necessity is contingency is often neglected in the traditional readings of Hegel's modal treatment (the works of Burbidge, Di Giovanni, and Houlgate). The rejuvenation of Hegel scholarship in the 1990s had to deal with the misinterpretations of

Hegel and with the charge that Hegel's system is solely rigid and has no place for contingency. The traditional reading emphasizes the necessity of contingency in Hegel's system in their analysis of Hegel's modal treatment against this accusation. No doubt that the traditional reading re-constitutes Hegel's reputation against this crude charge by highlighting that contingency is a necessary concept for Hegel's system. Brown, in his recent interpretation, finds the conclusion of the traditional readings worrisome as they only emphasize the *necessity* of contingency without giving enough attention to the *contingency* of necessity. For him, this has the risk of engendering a paradox for Hegel's system:

> 'This popular reading proposes that the system itself cannot be otherwise, that the concepts of the *Logic* are determined rationally by necessity, not by contingency, but that, in a paradoxical way, there also exists a place for the concept of contingency among the other concepts. This is paradoxical because, if contingency is one among many necessary concepts, the question then arises of whether the presence of contingency opens the way for new alterations of the otherwise seemingly rigid deduction of the concepts' (Brown, 2020, p. 136).

Although traditional readings rightly point out that contingency is a necessary concept of the *Logic* among others, another important thought in Hegel's treatment that necessity is contingency, remains overlooked. Brown suggests that any account taking the necessity of contingency should consider the contingency of necessity too. By doing so, the mutual transitive aspect between contingency and necessity can be established.

Prioritizing the contingency of necessity, however, involves its own risk of rendering the derivation of the categories of the *Logic* as a matter of contingency. Brown avoids this risk by presenting their mutual transition as the robust dialectic where necessity and contingency prove themselves in each other. However, oddly enough, in one sense, Brown's interpretation also gives absolute necessity a major position just as in the same way that the traditional reading does—albeit he criticizes this aspect of the traditional readings (Brown,

2020, p. 136). Brown accounts for the contingency of necessity by the utmost inclusivity of necessity. He argues that absolute necessity is contingency because absolute necessity includes the negative of the thing in question i.e., its possibility to be otherwise. 'The inclusion of the negative makes things unable to be otherwise because they are in every which way already otherwise than they are' (Brown, 2020, p. 135). By this, we have an all-encompassing concept of absolute necessity which renders itself absolutely contingent but nonetheless it is still necessary because the inclusion of its negativity within itself renders it free from the boundaries of an externality or contingency. This interpretation conforms to the traditional readings in prioritizing necessity over contingency because only in necessity can contingency render necessity contingent. To my understanding, Brown's suggestion makes an important point by highlighting the contingency of necessity, and his account can be considered as complementing the traditional readings rather than offering an alternative to them. However, Brown's account does not recognize the fact that the contingency of necessity implies being mediated by itself or dependent on itself. Absolute necessity with the inclusion of contingency no longer expresses that *it is what it is* but expresses that *it is because it is*. That is, it grounds or conditions itself. Regardless of its *self*-conditioning or *self*-grounding, it is nonetheless a conditioning or grounding, hence it is contingent upon itself.[103]

Contingency preserves itself in absolute necessity and renders it blind. The *blindness* of necessity can be understood, likewise its two aspects, in two complementary ways: absolute necessity is blind (a) because the absolutely necessary actuality ignores the other free actualities and asserts itself as the only free actuality despite the other actualities playing a determining role within it, and (b) because the determinate relation of real actuality to

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[103] I am grateful to Prof Houlgate for bringing up this important remark on the sense of the contingency of necessity.

another amounts to a contingent emergence of a new free necessary actuality, which is itself blind to this contingent emergence.

In the literature, the blindness of necessity is interpreted in many ways, some of which introduce further concepts to explain it, which I think, Hegel intentionally omits.[104] The reasons for the blindness of necessity can be categorized under two points: a) the lack of teleological form[105] and b) the contingent circumstances that render the actual absolutely necessary[106].

According to the first reason, absolute necessity is blind because it lacks a teleological form (self-developing inner form). The multiplicity of actuals does not ensure that one relates intrinsically to another. Their contact appears as an *external* connection for themselves. While an absolutely actual is in itself self-determining, another actual falling external to the former remains a possibility of the latter, a possibility that is contingency in virtue of the fact that it is itself actuality without being in relation to another actuality. So the contingency in the relation between the two actuals is a consequence of the fact that they are reflected into themselves and quite separate from, and free from, one another. If there is any relation between them, this is not in virtue of the inner development of their actual being but in virtue of external connection or contingency, but this externality is itself a consequence of the fact that they exhibit 'reflection into self as being' (SL 487/WL-II 216).[107] Their relation is not

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[104] This is rather my understanding of Hegel, which, as I stated in many places of this thesis, takes the principle seriously that a true determination of a thing expresses nothing behind or beyond the nature of the thing. With this principle in mind, I prefer to approach with caution to the interpretations of blind necessity appealing to another concept such as purpose (Ng, 2017).

[105] This idea is most explicitly stated by (Ng, 2017, p. 281) which relies on EL §147 A.

[106] 'This manifestation of what determinateness is in its truth, that is negative self-reference, is a *blind* collapse into otherness' (SL 488/WL 217). For Hegel, the determinateness of absolute necessity lies in the fact that it is contingent due to being derived from the contingent circumstances. Absolute necessity holds the movement of self-relation but itself is no different than the contingent totality of circumstances. Contingency is the reason why absolute necessity is blind. Because under the circumstances that could be otherwise, nothing specifically foreseeable emerges, apart from the fact that something certainly emerges.

[107] The translation is slightly changed. Di Giovanni consistently translates 'Reflexion-in-sich' as 'immanent reflection'. However, 'immanent reflection' does not sufficiently capture the movement of relating back to self. Reflection into self is slightly better at capturing this aspect of the term.

derived from and does not lead to the teleological determination because the relation is dictated externally. 'Absolute necessity is blind because the progression of contingent conditions has no self-determined purpose or goal, and further, the conditions and circumstances themselves are only indifferently related to one another in their ongoing progression' (Ng, 2017, p. 281).

The crux of Ng's interpretation is the lack of teleological notion, rendering absolute necessity blind. However, this reading might have the risk of being unable to express what necessity is within the boundaries of itself and why it is blind in its own conceptual sphere— namely, in the world that modally presents itself—as this inevitably appeals to a further category, teleology where the teleological object destroys the blindness together with necessity.

> We say […] that something quite different has emerged from these
>
> circumstances and conditions, hence the necessity that constitutes this process
>
> is called "blind". By contrast, if we consider purposive activity, then the
>
> content is a purpose of which we knew beforehand, so that this activity is not
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> blind but sighted' (EL §147 A).

One way of interpreting these lines is to consider the activity of necessity and that of purpose as distinct activities, neither complementary nor continuous. The purposeful activity is not substantive to Hegel's account of necessity in the *Science of Logic* because Hegel, in this remark, merely compares necessary being to teleological being, and the comparison itself has no place in the derivation of necessity. Ng's suggestion makes perfect sense if one aims to give an account of necessity in comparison to teleology, but I think the blindness of necessity can be explained without appealing to the notion of teleology. The immanent explanation requires us to comply with, what I think as, the Spinozist-Hegelian principle that the true

determination of each concept expresses nothing behind or beyond its nature. Necessity is blind not because it *lacks* a teleological self-constituting form. Note that this very *lacking*, when identified as an element of necessity, inevitably presupposes a conception of teleology which necessity does not accommodate according to Hegel's treatment of necessity in the *Science of Logic*. Hence, conceiving absolute necessity in relation to teleological activity is against the Spinozist-Hegelian principle by virtue of expressing something beyond the limits of necessity. The explanation for the blindness of necessity with teleology expresses this difficulty. For this reason, Hegel's note in EL §147 A is at best to be taken into consideration with caution.

The second reason why necessity is understood to be blind stands as an immanent explanation within the domain of modality. Necessity stems from contingency and preserves its intrinsic bearing on contingency, which renders necessity blind. What comes out of externally related circumstances is contingent, whose inner selves do not necessitate one to be in relation to another, but it is necessary that something comes out of circumstances. If we approach Hegel's remark in EL §147 A with this thought in mind, we come to see that in a teleological activity, the circumstances coherently and purposefully relate to one another and their unity renders sighted what comes out, while in the activity of necessity, the contingent *circumstances* from which a necessary being comes out leaves the necessary being in the darkness of indeterminacy about what kind of specific being occurs, regardless something occurs necessarily. Necessity is derived from and constituted in contingency as the unity of circumstances. These circumstances, either individually or collectively, do not accommodate a teleological unity in which the absolutely necessary being actualises itself according to its inner self. The absolutely actual is the unity of its own internalized circumstances, yet each is united in it contingently. Contingency is embedded in the concept of absolute necessity and eventually renders necessary actuality blind.

The absolutely necessary being is identical to itself in its negation or in its contingency. Hence, it is blind because it becomes what it is, only in *contingently* collected individual actualities, though the logical structure of absolute necessity itself also makes such "contingently collected individual actualities" necessary. These individual contingent actualities are manifested as unity in a greater actuality, but each lacks an inner element regulating them to be contained in a particular greater actuality. They only hold the possibility of being contained in another actuality. For this reason, although anything absolutely actual is necessary in itself, the circumstances out of which it becomes necessary are absolutely contingent. Absolute necessity is derived and constituted by the unity of these contingent relations of actualities, but those contingent relations are themselves made necessary by the logical structure of absolute necessity. In a sense, absolute actuality, when considered as a mere totality of contingently collected actuals, can be otherwise since its constituting actualities are collected arbitrarily, without inner self-organization. Hence, the actual emerging out of these circumstances as necessary is destined to be blind to the fact that what it would be. Although we know that if all circumstances of a subject-matter are at hand, the subject-matter cannot be different than the circumstances that make it emerge, the circumstances pointing out a single subject-matter do not come together by their inner force, but they are gathered externally, because there remains, in them, an element of self (actuality) that self-subsists without being contained in another actuality. The activity of necessity is incapable of putting an end to this paradoxical nature in actuality: hence, it is blind.

Absolute necessity by virtue of its contingency involves the mutual transition from actuality to possibility and *vice versa*. It is the absolute unity(identity) of transitioning the actuals into the possibles. Since the individual free actualities do not have any purposeful reason for them to be in relation to one another, they are able to transition themselves into possibility with respect to their position in relation to another actuality, just in the same way

that real actuality transitions into real possibility in relation to another real actuality. The only reason that makes explicit necessity's 'blind collapse into otherness' is its constitution from these contingent actualities (SL 488/WL-II 217).

Necessity is the *purposeless* free activity, free from external determinations yet its content (the totality of contingent actualities) is not self-generated but taken outside, whereas the purposeful free activity is the idea that realizes itself according to its own generated content or its purpose. Hence, the suggestion that necessity is blind because it is non-teleological does not point out the truth of the concept but rather expresses something (the teleological notion) beyond the nature of necessity. The determination in necessity, referring to its constitution from contingency, is sufficient to reveal its blindness without appealing to further notions.

Hegel makes a global argument that absolute necessity proves itself to be no other than *being* and *essence*. Before concluding this section, I would like to examine *being* and *essence* in relation to absolute necessity: 'Hegel does not regard absolute necessity as something other than being; he understands it to be identical with being, to be being that is what it is through itself alone' (Houlgate, 1995, p. 45). However, the other aspect of absolute necessity also appears to be a *non-being*, or *essence* by virtue of including the *relation* of other free actuals as its relation to itself. Absolute necessity as essence reveals its contingency as its *negation*. Nonetheless, it is being, and the way being reveals itself is through its negation just as in the forms of determinate being, such as something and other, and finite and infinite. Note that, this is not supposed to mean that being undermines essence in necessity because essence in necessity corresponds to the movement of relation. Hence, absolute necessity also proves itself to be essence, an essence, which is no longer the

negativity of being but a negation '[…] in the form of being […]' (SL 488/WL-II 216)[108]. In virtue of the conversion of negativity into negation, absolute necessity proves itself as being and by relating itself to itself as its negation proves itself to be essence. The shift in the concept of essence from essence as the *negativity* of being to essence as the *negation* of being can be read as a global argument for the *Logic* where absolute necessity accommodates being and essence as intrinsically unified. Absolute necessity *is* because it *essentially* is.

The shift from negativity to negation takes place in the relationship between actuality and possibility. Formal and real actuality holds its possibility as its negativity, a negativity that stands distinct from the actual but not a negation of it. At first, real actuality recognizes its real possibility as a negation for itself because real possibility is already an actuality, being. Absolute actuality '[…] comes to be only out of in-itself, out of *the negation of itself*' (SL 486/WL-II 214) as it is the unity of these actual possibilities. The negativity turns into a negation in absolute actuality due to the co-present self-sublating and self-positing activity of necessity.

> 'This negative[essence] breaks forth in them because being, through the same
> negativity which is its essence, is self-contradiction; it will break forth against
> this being *in the form of being*[109], hence as the negation of those actualities, a
> negation *absolutely different* from their being; it will break forth as their
> nothing, as an *otherness* which is just as free towards them as their being is
> free'(SL 488/WL-II 216).

The reason negativity turns into negation is that essence surfaces and presents itself as an other being to the being of necessary actuality. Its difference does not lie in the fact that it is

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[108] Throughout the Doctrine of Essence, Hegel argues that essence is the *negativity* of being. It is a non-being in another form than being itself. For this reason, essence cannot be strictly a negation for being but only a negativity. In the Doctrine of Being the relation among determinate beings is governed by negation because there being relates to another being. In the Doctrine of Essence, essence negates being only insofar as appears as being.

[109] My emphasis.

essence— i.e., essence is *not* being—but in the fact that it is essence in the form of being that *negates* the other being.

Determining itself in negation implies that actuality in its negation is nothing other than a possibility. This expresses that the actual, contained in another actual, renders the latter contingent. This contingency is the connection of the necessary free actualities. However, this external relation undermines the necessity of each free actuality because each is only externally mediated. Hegel claims that necessity will emerge in them as they are still freely self-mediating (SL 488/WL-II 216)—albeit externally connected. This inner necessity negates the fact that they are externally connected. This circular thought or a constant paradoxical activity of necessity demonstrates a) their determinateness is 'a blind collapse into otherness' or into their externality and b) their blind collapse into otherness is their true nature: '[…] the externality is its inwardness' (SL 488/WL-II 217). The governing term for this relation is negation. The necessity, for Hegel, expresses actuality as being with itself in its negation, being in its nothing, or the necessary actuality in its contingency. This negation comes forth because each actuality is free and only through itself alone.

Absolute necessity generates a contradiction[110]. Findlay emphasizes this double aspect of absolute necessity with the vocabulary of surface and substrate:

> 'The various individual elements of the world carry no mark on their faces of their relationships to each other. From the point of view of their surface being these relationships appear as external, as coming to them accidentally from without. Such relations belong to the depth, to the Essence of objects, and only "break out" and reveal themselves in their contacts with other objects. It

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[110] Hegel does not explicitly state that this is a contradiction. However, his treatment of contradiction in the doctrine of essence is governed by the thought of repelling oneself from itself to its opposite where one finds itself in the repelling of the other back to itself. The similar idea expressed in the lines where Hegel explicates the self-repelling movement in the concept of necessity: '[…] it repels itself from itself, in this very repelling has only returned to itself, and in this turning back which is its being has repelled itself from itself.'(SL 486/WL 214)

is only in the exhaustive testing of things by other things that it becomes clear what they essentially are'. (Findlay, 2004, p. 214)

Findlay's exposition is sophisticated in grasping the two distinct aspects of absolute necessity: (a) according to the side of being, the absolutely necessary actuality is free from its other, and is only through itself. This free actuality shows itself as absolute self-subsistence: 'it *is* because it *is*' (SL 487/WL-II 215). On the other hand, (b) according to the side of essence, the multiplicity of individual free actualities, which are unable to be recognized by their being in relation to one another, involves their relation to one another as concealed. This relating power in them stems from the doings of absolute necessity, namely, the movement in which absolute necessity repels itself from itself to its other. In its very self-mediation, it finds its true determination in relation to its other. Absolute necessity therefore is not immediately what it is, but it involves a mediation through its other. It is *because* it is (SL 487/WL-II 215).

Absolute necessity for Hegel does not signify the eternal subsistence of things in the way that they are. Spinoza's substance is such a concept that is absolutely necessary in the way that it is.[111] However, for Hegel, the actuals are determined as absolutely necessary, they still preserve themselves to be otherwise by virtue of the intrinsic nature of collapsing into an other, or the collapse of being into nothingness. The actual being in the world is destined to be otherwise, even under the rubric of necessity, because one way or another, actualities preserve contingency in their nature in the form of being externally determined even in their absolute necessity where they appear as if they are through themselves while they utilize their external determinations within themselves. Necessity is this internalization movement that

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[111] For Hegel, this is an aspect of substance but unlike Spinoza, Hegel thinks that this is not because substance is necessary but because substance is power that produces itself from itself and through its self-production it endures. In this production, it causes effects. The governing conceptual determination for substance is not necessity but causality. It is certain that every causal relation points out a relation of necessity between cause and effect, but not every necessary relation is causal.

swings back and forth between taking an externality as an inner element and recognizing that the externality is at first something given to it. For the reason that absolute necessity initially requires contingency to be present before itself and then it turns itself into contingency, necessity cannot produce itself from itself. For this reason, necessity is not yet a *true* self-determining activity but an activity of self-actualisation.

6.4. Conclusion

Hegel's treatment of absolute modalities reveals unsettled paradoxical thoughts: that actuality is possibility in the sense that it is determinate and indeterminate at the same time and that necessity and contingency, in their absolute determinate forms, are identical to each other. These paradoxical thoughts are expressed in the movement of absolute necessity that renders actuality as relating itself to itself in its negation. Actuality is necessarily what it is only in its contingency. It determines itself as identical to its being in its non-being.

Hegel's absolute actuality projects an undeveloped form of self-determination, a form that appears as absolute necessity, which manifests actuality as a self-actualising concept. Absolute necessity determines itself through itself but in its utmost self-determining moment, it collapses into its non-being, contingency. This does not mean that all necessary actuals are contingent because contingency is the relation among actualities. Free actualities are contingently related to one another, but equally are subject to absolutely necessary destruction since in this relation, free actualities collapse into their other. Actuality accommodates this paradox within itself and expresses the paradox through self-actualisation.

The activity of absolute necessity is an activity of actualisation. In a wider sense, the modalities of actuality are the moments in the actualisation. What absolute necessity adds into this is that in being determined as absolutely necessary, actuality manifests itself as the self-re-joining of itself through the totality of its distinct modalities. This means that

actualisation in Hegel's treatment of modality is not an actualisation of non-actual possibilities, but it is a form—perhaps an undeveloped and prefigurative form—of self-determination through which actuality manifests itself in its other and proves that its manifestation is nothing other than itself. However, the self-determination of actuality should not be taken as self-determination proper. The concept, for Hegel, has the absolute freedom of producing itself and determining itself through itself because the concept can truly capture the moments of self-determining organization within itself. This is the significant thought on which Hegel constitutes his idea of self-determination. The self-determining activity, in its proper sense, unfolds itself through the moments of the concept: universality, particularity and singularity, whereas actuality unfolds itself through modal determinations.

With the completion of the modal determinations of actuality, Hegel moves on to the category of substance, which is at first takes up necessity as its given. In other words, absolute necessity, as the movement of actuality relating itself to itself in its negation, proves itself to be substance. Although that substance takes absolute necessity as its beginning, it is irreducible to absolute necessity. Substance *produces* its own determinations, as opposed to absolute necessity, which is only the *manifestation* of actuality. In this activity of production, substance causes effects, and the governing conceptual determination of this activity is not modality but causality.

In the literature of modal metaphysics, modal concepts (actuality-possibility and necessity-contingency) are established as opposed to each other, which can be found as moments in Hegel's treatment too. However, Hegel's immanent derivation reveals another dimension that constitutes their dependence on one another as a moment of their nature. If Hegel is right in his derivation of modal concepts, then his theory of modality amounts to a notable criticism to the contemporary systems of modal metaphysics that are constituted on the idea that takes these concepts in their opposition to each other without considering their

intrinsic relation. For this reason, the contemporary theories of modal metaphysics cannot complete a self-sustaining modal theory without appealing to more fundamental concepts to make explicit what modal concepts are. The chapter has shown that the underlying promise in Hegel's modal metaphysics is the very derivation of modal concepts, which encourages us to re-consider what modal concepts express when they are analysed from a least question-begging point, actuality as immediacy. Hegel *derives* the modal categories (from actuality), rather than simply taking them as the result of an explanatory foundation. This immanent development of modal concepts projects a theory of modal metaphysics offering a self-foundation for modal concepts. In the next chapter, I will examine two recent interpretations by Brandom and Redding whose projects aim to relate Hegel to Lewis and Stalnaker in the light of the provided exegesis of Hegel's treatment of modality. The critical engagement with the recent interpretations will enable the thesis to set parameters in which Hegel's treatment would be fruitfully considered in the contemporary modal metaphysics.

7. TRACING THE TRAITS OF ACTUALISM IN HEGEL'S TREATMENT OF MODALITY

This chapter suggests that Hegel's treatment of modality can be interpreted as an actualist position. I have argued that as opposed to the contemporary modal metaphysical positions, Hegel derives modalities from the concept of actuality instead of reducing modalities to a non-modal primitive foundational concept. While the derivation of modal concepts from one another in Hegel's treatment already presents a distinct modal theory in comparison to the contemporary modal metaphysics, I will also highlight the fruitful insights Hegel's treatment offers in commonly discussed concepts of actuality and possibility. The comparative study between the contemporary analytic modal metaphysics and Hegel's treatment of modality cannot be complete without examining arguments in Paul Redding's and Robert Brandom's interpretations of Hegel. Redding and Brandom both argue that Hegel's metaphysics involves similar actualist and/or realist commitments to the positions in analytic modal metaphysics, particularly in post-Lewisian actualist modal theories. This chapter will examine Redding's and Brandom's projects of reconciliation between Hegel and the figures in the analytic tradition of modal metaphysics. The chapter suggests that both Redding's and Brandom's interpretations of Hegel's modal metaphysics canonize modality in Hegel as a ground for a grand theory, which can eventually be understood as leaving no room for non-modal categories of Hegel's metaphysics that express the non-modal aspects of the world. Secondly, the chapter suggests reconsidering Hegel's thought as against Lewisian possibility and Stalnaker's concept of actuality in order to reveal the unnoticed controversy in the understanding of actuality and possibility between Hegel and Lewis-Stalnaker in Redding's and Brandom's reconciliatory projects. Finally, the chapter concludes with a suggestion of interpreting Hegel's treatment of modality as a groundwork for a non-reductive actualist thesis.

7.1. Canonizing Modality In Hegel's System: An Examination of Redding's and Brandom's Hegelian Modalism

The recent grand interpretations[112] of Hegel's metaphysics, seen in Redding's and Brandom's works, introduce Hegel to an unfamiliar territory of analytic modal metaphysics. Paul Redding introduces Hegel to the debate in analytic modal metaphysics revolving around Lewisian possible worlds. Redding's interpretation attributes a form of modal actualism to Hegel's idealism. Similar to Redding, Brandom suggests an interpretation of Hegel placing modality at the centre of Hegel's metaphysics and relating Hegel to Lewis in respect of how determinate negation operates in Hegel in a similar fashion to how Lewis understands the operation of modal determinations. Although Redding and Brandom provide distinct reasons for the points of relevance between Hegel and the figures in the contemporary modal metaphysics, these two recent interpretations of Hegel share the same motivation of bringing Hegel to the territory of analytic modal metaphysics by means of excessively ascribing modality a central role in Hegel's metaphysics. This section argues that Redding's and Brandom's interpretations of Hegel draw a modalist picture of Hegel, which undermines the non-modal categories of the *Logic* and respectively their powers to make explicit the aspects of the world that do not express themselves through modal determinations. Modalism, I suggest, is the view that recognizes modality as the fundamental structure of the world. No doubt the place of modal categories in the *Logic* suggests that, for Hegel, the world has modal aspects in it. This does not mean, however, that modality is the only fundamental structure of the world. The section underlines that Redding's and Brandom's readings of Hegel, due to the attributed excessive role to modal categories, fail to capture the plurality of categories in making explicit the aspects of the world.

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[112] By grand interpretation, I understand those that suggest a reading of Hegel's project without dealing with its particular categories.

7.1.1. Hegel's Modal Metaphysics as Modal Actualism: Redding's Modal Actualist Interpretation of Hegel

Paul Redding's recent work on Hegel's *Logic* involves a series of interactions with the Actuality chapter of the *Logic* as well as its relevance to contemporary modal metaphysics. In this interaction, Redding suggests a new grand interpretation for Hegel's *Logic*: the *modal actualist* reading. Redding (2018, p. 52; 2017, p. 367) divides up the scholarship on Hegel's *Logic* into three camps, according to how to identify the purpose of the *Logic*.[113] The first camp regards Hegel's *Logic* as a continuing the project of Kant's transcendental logic, which regards the categories of the *Logic* as the categories of the thought. The second camp places Hegel's *Logic* into the Aristotelian tradition by arguing that Hegel's *Logic* is a project about the a priori categories of being, and thus a metaphysics (Redding, 2018, p. 52). Finally, the last camp suggests that Hegel's *Logic* is a project on the unity of being and thought, which encompasses the predecessors, such as Kant, in the history of philosophy, particularly in metaphysics.

Redding places his reading in the metaphysical reading of Hegel; but in contrast to the two interpretations in the same camp, he suggests a new way of reading Hegel's *Logic* alongside modal actualism in the analytic metaphysical tradition. For Redding, the modal actualist position, particularly Stalnaker's, involves similar traits to Hegel's idealism with respect to the concept of actuality that contains possibilities within itself, and thinking subjects that conceive the possibilities of the world in the form of propositions. The first claim is that, for Hegel, actuality contains possibility as reflection within itself (Redding, 2017, p. 371-2). As a continuation of the first claim, the second claim suggests that the actual

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[113] Redding in different papers suggests this division in the Hegel scholarship. For instance, in his entry on Hegel in Stanford Encyclopaedia, he divides the scholarship on Hegel's *Logic* into two camps, the transcendental logic and metaphysics, whereas he mentions another strand as the Aristotelian reading of the *Logic* in his papers of 2017 and 2018.

world contains thinking subjects or minds that can conceive possibilities or the world as being otherwise (2020, p. 535-6). With these claims, Redding suggests that Hegel's idealism involves an actualist thesis that accommodates *abstracta*, such as possibilities, within actuality by means of thinking subjects. In other words, possibilities, when conceived in an actualist manner, presuppose mind or thinking subjects in the actual world. Redding's interpretation of Hegel, therefore, renders actualism into a benign form of idealism with Hegel's understanding of actuality and possibility. This form of actualism, Redding argues (2017, p. 372), is not transcendental nor Platonic since the often-thought concept of possibility is now regarded as in the minds of actual subjects being in the actual world.[114]

The section will focus on the two actualist claims that Redding's interpretation attributes to Hegel. The section will argue that, while the first claim is right given Hegel's treatment of actuality in the *Logic*, possibility as the reflectedness of actuality can be understood other than the activity of thinking subjects or not merely there for thinking subjects as I argued in 2.2.2. and 4.2.. Following the exegesis I provided, Redding's second claim requires more arguments than what Hegel could offer in his treatment of modality. In Redding's interpretation, this requirement is fulfilled by the suggestion of understanding the *reflectedness* in possibility as the product of thinking subject, whereas I have argued in Chapter 4 that Hegel does not imply or presuppose by possibility the activity of thinking subjects.

For Redding (2021, p. 27), Hegel's concept of actuality involves objective determinations, such as properties and qualities of things, and subjective determinations, such

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[114] 'Abstracta like propositions, when understood non-Platonistically, presuppose the existence of subjects who, speaking and acting in meaningful ways, express abstract mental contents and presuppose other subjects who can understand such utterances and actions. Neither propositions nor minds can, in positivist fashion, be eliminated from or reduced within the actual world. Thus this type of mediated actualism entails a certain type of idealism—the idea of the necessity of the existence of the mind in the world—but this idealism is, I suggest, of a metaphysically benign form.'(Redding, 2020, p. 535-6).

as judging and syllogizing. This means that while Redding's first claim addresses the Actuality chapter of the *Logic*, his second claim is concerned with the Judgment and Syllogism chapters of the *Logic*.

The first claim directly focuses on Hegel's treatment of modality where Hegel suggests that formal possibility is contained within actuality as the reflectedness of actuality (SL 478 /WL-II 202). The same idea is expressed in Hegel's *Encyclopaedia Logic* §143, on which Redding grounds his interpretation, where Hegel explains possibility as abstract or 'the inward reflection' of actuality. Although Redding does not explain in what sense of reflection and abstractness Hegel understands possibility, he suggests that the Hegelian possibility, unlike Leibnizian otherworldly possibilities and Platonic transcendent abstract ideas, is part of the actual world. Correctly locating possibility within actuality in Hegel, Redding (2017, p. 372) suggests possibilities in Hegel are like mental entities, precisely propositions, that express the actual to be otherwise. In other words, possibilities as *abstracta* presuppose thinking subjects that can entertain and form possibilities. For Redding (2021, p. 34), when possibility conceived as propositions within actuality, it grants the notion of mind 'for free' in the actual world. In my view, it is not so clear where Hegel suggests possibilities as propositions in his treatment of modality, but Redding takes up Stalnaker's idea of possibility as propositions and re-considers this idea within the Hegelian framework.

One way of making sense of Redding's reading of Hegelian possibility as propositions is to regard possibility as the reflectedness of actuality, meaning that possibility is a mental entity, formed and processed by thinking subjects. Although Redding praises the presupposed notion of mind in actuality through interpreting possibility as *abstracta* or proposition-like entities, this causes a serious problem for the immanent derivation of possibility from actuality. If we follow Redding, then Hegel would have to provide a derivation of the notion of mind from actuality. However, as shown in 4.2., 5.2, and 6.2.,

Hegel's derivation of possibility from actuality does not appeal to any notions of subjectivity such as thinking agent or the mind.

Moreover, Hegel distinguishes his understanding of reflection, and particularly his discussion of external reflection, from Kant regarding the position of the subject in his exposition of reflection. Hegel clearly states that his understanding of reflection is not related to the subjectivity of consciousness, meaning that reflection in Hegel's *Logic* is an objective characteristic of things that have essential determinations. Possibility as reflectedness then loses its subjective meaning if we also follow Hegel's treatment of reflection. As I suggested in 4.2, Hegel gives sufficient explanation for objective determinations of formal possibility through his notion of reflection without appealing to a thinking subject doing the act of reflecting. Accordingly, the reflectedness of possibility is the movement of moments (in-itselfness and immediacy) of actuality. Actuality contains possibility because possibility is the negative self-relational movement of actuality, namely the reflection of actuality into itself. This should not imply a presupposition of mind nor thinking subject revealing the possibilities of actuality. The negativity in actuality is crucial to understand reflection as a metaphysical structure, rather than the product of the mind or thinking subject. If reflection is conceived as the mind's own doing, then the element of negativity finds no correspondence in Hegel's text. Reflection has to be understood as the negativity of actuality since the reason why negativity is present lies in the very (non-psychological) conceptual structure of actuality, not in how the mind conceives of it.

I will now move on to Redding's second claim that actuality contains subjects, which are able to reveal the ways in which the actual world can be otherwise. Considering Redding's interpretation of the Hegelian reflection, the second claim directly follows from the subjective understanding of reflection in the first claim. Redding supports his claim by addressing Hegel's treatment of judgement and syllogism. For Redding, Hegel's world as

such is actual (Redding, 2021, p. 20). The actual world for Redding's Hegel is that which objectively contains subjects (minds), which can conceive the ways (possibilities) in which things might be otherwise (Redding, 2021, p. 21). The structures of judgment and syllogism reflect the objective and subjective determinations of the actual world. With this idea at hand, it becomes clear why Redding moves from Hegel's treatment of actuality to that of judgement and syllogism in order to suggest a grand *actualist* interpretation in Hegel.

Redding's take on Hegelian judgement and syllogism is that the subject is involved in the determinations of objects. For this briefly explaining what judgement consists of for Hegel will suffice to make explicit Redding's position. For Hegel, judgement is the unity of the subject[115] (involving subjective determinations) and the predicate (involving objective determinations) taking various forms depending on the *logical* content of the constituents as well as how they relate to one another. By logical content, I directly refer to Hegel's discussion in SL 562/WL-II 317-8 where Hegel regards the content of the judgment as a purely logical one, by which Hegel means the logical determinations of the judgement. Hegel does not deny that judgements can have empirical contents, but in the *Logic*, he is interested specifically in their logical content. That is to say, Hegel's interest in judgement does not lie in the truth or falsity of specific judgements because for Hegel what makes judgement distinct from mere propositions is the involvement of logical determinations that characterizes various forms of judgement. In the light of SL 562/WL-II 317-8, we cannot see what Redding (2021, p. 27) means by his suggestion: '[…] Hegel treats some judgments as having *concrete content*'. [..] Hegel would link these concrete objects to similarly concrete *agents* doing the judging, and a similar move is found in more recently within *modal logic* in the approach of Robert Stalnaker.'

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[115] The subject in judgement and syllogism for Hegel is no more than the subject as in statements like 'S is P'.

The main problem rendering it difficult to relate Hegel to Stalnaker in this matter is the fact that although judgements express themselves in the form of propositions, such as 'the rose is red', judgements, for Hegel, involve various logical structures in which concepts relate to one another through their conceptual determinations, such as universal, particular and singular concept. For instance, the positive judgement is that which expresses the subject's determinations or qualities in its predicate. Hegel does not overlook the shared subject-predicate form between judgements and propositions. However, Hegel (SL 552-3/ WL-II 304-5) clearly states that his treatment covers the truth of judgement i.e., the logical determinations, not the truth or falsity of propositions. Judgement expresses itself in the form of propositions but what makes something a judgement is the logical process in which the concept transforms through its own moments of universality, singularity and particularity. By contrast, a mere proposition connects something singular with something singular. 'Aristotle died at the age of 73 in the fourth year of the 115th Olympiad' is such a proposition that connects a name with a date. For this reason, it is right to suggest that Hegel is not concerned with the propositions, which could be true or false according to their empirical (concrete) content. This objection to Redding's interpretation has two aspects: a) That is, there is a more significant difference between Hegel and Stalnaker than Redding recognises since for Hegel, judgements and propositions are distinct in virtue of judgment involving logical determinations as opposed to the lack of logical determination in propositions. b) according to Redding's Hegel, actuality contains subjects and so, presumably, contains propositions in the form of possibilities too, whereas, in my view of Hegel, propositions and judgement do not belong to actuality at all. Therefore, Hegel's position would differ from Stalnaker's even if Stalnaker *were* to distinguish between a judgement and proposition, as Hegel does.

To conclude, I have shown two difficulties in Redding's attempt to relate Hegel to Stalnaker in a grand actualist rendition of Hegel's *Logic*: the one is related to the subjective

(psychological) understanding of reflection, and the other is the correspondence between propositions and judgement, which is explicitly denied by Hegel. Redding's grand interpretation of Hegel's idealism as a form of modal actualism inherently shows these two difficulties in reconciling Hegel with Stalnaker. Redding takes modality to exhaust what it means to be in the Hegelian world. That is, Hegel's world is an actual world, contains subjective and objective determinations of the *Logic*. The world is then constituted in a modal foundation that understands the non-modal determinations of the *Logic* from the perspective of the modal. This aspect of Redding's project is visible in his reading of Hegel's judgement as propositions, which express possibilities of the actual. Apart from the difficulties concerned with particular categories of the *Logic*, Redding's interpretation might be thought of as offering a viable grand interpretation of Hegel's idealism considered as a modal actualist. However, the fact that Redding conceives of Hegel's idealism as a type of modal actualism brings about the worry about whether every category of the *Logic* is founded on a modal premise. Canonizing modality in Hegel's idealism has this difficulty in expressing the particular non-modal determinations of the logical categories of Hegel's idealism.

7.1.2. Hegel's Modal Metaphysics as Modal Realism: Brandom's Modal Realist Interpretation of Hegel

In the recent set of publications, Brandom (2014; 2015; 2019) suggests a grand interpretation of Hegel, which places modalism at the core of Hegel's philosophy. What is remarkable in Brandom's reading of Hegel is its objective that bridges the philosophical positions of Hegel and figures in analytic philosophy, which are often thought of as irreconcilable. Brandom expresses the objective of his project regarding Hegel as the following: 'We have yet to achieve a reconciliation and synthesis of the Kripke-Kaplan-Stalnaker-Lewis (David)

approach[116] to modality with the Kant-Hegel-Sellars one — but perhaps someday we shall'

(Brandom, 2014, p. 6). This wishful thinking turns into a strongly elaborated project and is

theorized as conceptual realism in *From Empiricism to Expressivism* (2015) and *A Spirit of*

Trust (2019). In this section, I examine Brandom's grand interpretation of Hegel, which reads

determinate negation in Hegel as a modal notion and places it as a metaphysical primitive

concept in Hegel's *Logic*.

Similar in spirit to Redding, Brandom sees a connection between his modalist reading

of Hegel and the figures in contemporary modal metaphysics. However, quite distinct from

Redding, Brandom (2019, p. 195) does not relate Hegel to modal actualism but more

interestingly to Lewis' modal realism.[117] For Brandom, Hegel's metaphysics involves

normative (deontic) and modal (alethic) commitments. The former makes explicit the

subject's involvement in doing philosophy by engaging with the various ways in which we

can make inferences while the latter makes explicit the world and objects as expressed in

various modal forms. Although Brandom (2019, p. 60) argues that normative and modal

aspects are isomorphic—e.g. '[…] in immediately grasping the deontic normative conceptual

content of a commitment, one is grasping it *as* appearance of a fact whose content is

articulated by the corresponding(isomorphic) alethic modal relations of material

incompatibility and consequence'—for the purpose of the section here, I suggest suspending

Brandom's arguments relating to normative commitments so that we can focus on the

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[116] By the Kripke-Kaplan-Stalnaker-Lewis (David) approach, Brandom refers to the metaphysical and perhaps the semantic 'revolution' in the intensional modal logic by arguing the intelligibility of modal notions through the possible worlds discourse. For more, see Brandom (2015, p. 145-8).

[117] Brandom is quite indifferent to the major division between modal actualism and modal realism regarding the modal status of the world(s). Brandom's take on the contemporary modal metaphysics is the idea of employing possible worlds discourse as a means of revealing material incompatibility and consequence relations in objects. Whatever form it takes, let it be Lewis' or Stalnaker's, Brandom only focuses on the material incompatibility and consequence which, he believes, lie as a foundation in these two different modal positions (Brandom, 2019, p. 147).

concepts of material incompatibility and material consequence, which, Brandom suggests, are themselves *modal* notions.

Brandom recognizes Hegel's understanding of the world as purely conceptual. Brandom's understanding of conceptualism is a form of realism, which suggests that the world is conceptual as it is without the involvement of subjects. He claims that he finds the elements of conceptual realism in Hegel: '[…] At the centre of Hegel's innovations is a non-psychological conception of the conceptual, according to which to be a modal realist about the objective world (the world as it is independent of its relation to any activities or processes of thinking) is thereby to be a conceptual realist about it.' (Brandom, 2014, p. 5). Again, the definition of the conceptual Brandom suggests takes us to Brandom's version of Hegel: '[…] Hegel understands what is conceptual as whatever stands in relations of what he calls "determinate negation" and "mediation" — by which he means material incompatibility and material consequence' (Brandom, 2014, p. 5). To put it briefly, Brandom's Hegel grants us a picture of the world, which expresses itself in normative and modal commitments through sets of material incompatibility and consequence relations.

Leaving aside normativity, material incompatibility decides which properties a thing can or cannot hold depending on the incompatibility relation of the current properties it holds, whereas material consequence, as implicitly implied in material incompatibility, enables us to concede what further properties a thing must hold depending on the current properties the thing holds. For instance, a copper coin in virtue of being copper is incompatible with being silver. As for the material consequence of being copper for the copper coin, we can conceive of the copper coin in different shapes and sizes since the property of being copper is compatible with various shapes (rectangular, circular and so on) but incompatible with melting at 961°C, whereas being silver is compatible with melting at 961 °C. The material

consequence of the copper coin tells us what must follow from the properties of the copper coin.

The governing notion in the material incompatibility relations is difference, which comes in two types. The one implies a contradiction between different items and the other implies a contrariety between different items. The former, as Brandom calls it, is *exclusive* difference expressing that one object, in virtue of its properties, excludes itself from being another object or from having another property. For instance, square and circle and copper and silver, when regarded in relation to each other, are exclusively different properties—e.g., an object's being square excludes it from being circle, and likewise, an object's being silver excludes it from being copper. The latter—contrariety—is *mere* difference, which explains the properties that can be designated in the relation of *compatibility*, such as silver square and copper circle. That is, the object's being silver does not exclude it from also being square. The difference between copper and circle persists but without the exclusion[118].

Despite the two distinct senses, exclusive and mere difference are not completely separate notions. Rather, the *exclusive* difference constitutes *mere* difference among things. Brandom (2015, p. 200) suggests that 'one can define mere difference solely in terms of exclusive difference, but not *vice versa'*. That is, two different properties could be merely different from each other without being exclusively different, but in turn, the exclusive difference they hold as against other properties grants them their characteristics through which we can think of them as merely different. For example, redness is an exclusively

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[118] Notably, Hegel provides an elaborate account of difference in the Doctrine of Essence, though Brandom does not refer to it at all. Therein Hegel reveals the reflective determination between identity and difference, which simply suggests that difference, when considered as absolute, involves identity by being different from its identity. That is, difference by being absolutely different relates itself to itself (identity), and in this relating, it reveals an identity within itself as something different from itself (SL 361/ WL-II 46-7). For Hegel, this is the only way for difference to be what it is. Needless to say, Brandom completely omits Hegel's treatment of difference, and hence his account lacks the element of identity. For this reason, in Brandom's account, a property in virtue of being exclusively or merely different from other properties cannot explicitly constitute an identity of itself. Its identity must be within the other properties that are exclusively different from it.

different property from greenness and a merely different property from softness. A thing may be red and soft but cannot be red and green. The set of exclusively different properties from redness makes explicit a variety of merely different properties a red thing may hold. However, a set of merely different properties from redness cannot make explicit what redness is exclusively different from.

As seen, Brandom suggests that the exclusive difference of a property determines which set of possible other properties a thing may hold. Accordingly, we can infer which properties are necessary, possible and impossible for a thing to hold. This is indicating a sense of modal determination, determined by material incompatibility (MI) and material consequence (MC) relations. However, it is not so clear whether Brandom thinks that MI and MC are modal notions or that they have an explanatory function in modal determinations, namely, making explicit modal determinations in things. If the former is the case, anything materially incompatible with another has to be admitted as modally determined. This suggests that a board is modally determined to be white in virtue of not being able to be black. However, this is a very limited account of modality since it cannot explicitly give us the possibility or necessity of the board having one or another property. We know that since whiteness is incompatible with blackness, it is necessary that although a whiteboard cannot be black, this doesn't mean that it must be white, presumably because its being white is something merely contingent. So, as white, it cannot be black, but it could have been a blackboard. Briefly, the material incompatibility among properties cannot explain the modal status of a thing that holds certain properties. This is because material incompatibility between properties does not actively determine a thing through its properties to be modally determined. This leads us to the second and more viable option, which suggests that anything materially incompatible with another only *expresses* modal determinations, i.e., material incompatibility of whiteness with blackness does not grant the whiteboard to be modally

determined but *expresses* the whiteboard in such a way that involves modal commitments such as the possibility of the whiteboard to be this or that. For instance, a board is possibly white or black but impossible to be both. In virtue of white being exclusively different from blackness, we can infer that the whiteboard expresses the possibility of being rectangular and the impossibility of being black.

However, Brandom seems to understand MI and MC relations as themselves modal. He (2019, p. 59) explicitly states that 'the relations of material incompatibility and consequence in virtue of which objective facts and properties are determinate are *alethic modal* relations: a matter of what is conditionally impossible and necessary'. The distinction, I suggest, between MI and MC as modality and as expressing modality is admittedly narrow but it helps us to see more clearly that Brandom falls into the problem of foundationalism just like the other contemporary analytic figures as explained in 1.5, 2.1.1. and 2.1.2..

To my view, Brandom's understanding of Hegelian determinate negation and mediation as MI and MC is the sign of a foundationalist reading of Hegel since MI and MC are present in the determinations of every object. The foundationalism becomes apparent in his following statement: 'Hegel's principal metaphysical primitive, determinate negation, is intrinsically and essentially a *modal* notion. […]. Modality is built into the metaphysical bedrock of his system' (Brandom, 2019 p. 141). This suggests a metaphysical primitive for Hegel's system, which is utterly absent in Hegel's *Logic*, let alone it being a modal notion. As I discussed in the chapters on Hegel's treatments of essence, property and modality, none of these concepts are determined only by determinate negation but involve reflective determinations. This does not mean that reflective determinations exclude the function of negation in the derivation of modal concepts, but that negation alone is not sufficient to reveal the nature of essence, property and modality. In Hegel's *Logic*, determinate negation cannot count as a metaphysical primitive. Let's focus on modality to explain my point.

Formal possibility is what it is by simply being *not* actuality. The element of negation here gives us the notion of formal possibility, but for Hegel, this is only one side of possibility, namely possibility as the negated actuality or possibility as that which is not actual. The other side is possibility as being reflectedness of actuality, meaning that it is a determination of actuality, which renders the immediate actuality contingent. The term reflectedness captures both the negativity and the determination of actuality through possibility as contingency. Moreover, it is obvious to state that neither negation nor reflection is a modal concept. As I discussed in 3.2., modalities, for Hegel, are determinations of a specific being, actuality. That is, other than being that is actual, there is not a type of entity that can make itself logically explicit only through modal determinations.

However, while Brandom's interpretation of Hegel seems to be vulnerable to possible criticisms favouring a close reading of Hegel's *Logic*, his interpretation of the Lewisian modal realism fails to capture the substantial claim of modal realism. For Lewis, the definitive characteristic of modal realism is realism about possible worlds. This is the standpoint from which Lewis can be thought of as separate from the rest of the possible world discourse, e.g., possible worlds as logical-mathematical entities, possible worlds as propositions. As I argued in 1.2., what makes Lewis' account a realist theory is the understanding of the plurality of worlds as real. Without this notion of worlds, modal realism might imply different positions such as various modal actualist positions (such as Stalnaker's and Adam's actualisms) diverging on the question of what possible worlds are, if not as real as our world.[119]

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[119] As mentioned in 2.1.1, for Stalnaker, possible worlds are sets of propositions that involve property relations, whereas for Adam's, possible worlds are the abstract structure, or as he calls it the logical furniture, of the actual world.

What is of interest for Brandom in Lewisian modal realism is the operation of MI and MC relations between worlds. Brandom's modal realism (2015, p. 204) suggests that 'there is a determinate way the world objectively is, and its being that way rules out (excludes the possibility) of its being some other ways'. According to Brandom, being objectively so-and-so removes it being possibly such-and-such by means of eliminating the possibility of being such-and-such. MI relations engenders the elimination of such possibilities for actual beings. For instance, an object's being silver eliminates the possibility of its being copper according to the incompatibility between being silver and being copper. Elimination is a key notion for Brandom but not so for Lewis because Lewisian possible worlds are not capable of eliminating or interacting, in any possible way, with the actual. According to Lewisian modal realism, an object's being silver in this actual world opens up a variety of different states of the counterparts of the object in possible worlds where the counterparts might be copper. Brandom's modal realism, with respect to the elimination of possibilities, resembles more to Stalnaker's modal actualism in which the actuals are what they are through the elimination of possibilities, although Brandom is quite indifferent to the distinction between modal realism and modal actualism.

To conclude, Brandom's interpretation of Hegel, and respectively of Lewis, might not satisfy those who are strictly committed to the agenda of Hegel or Lewis. Brandom's interpretation may well be thought of as the reconciliation with some serious sacrifices to the substantial commitments in Hegel and Lewis. It is indisputably clear that Hegel does not favour the idea of doing philosophy with primitive notions and principles. On the other hand, the ideas Brandom attributes to Lewis belong to the reception of modal realism, particularly to the modal actualist view. I doubt that the modal realist would agree with the picture of Lewis Brandom presents. Brandom's project might be convincing if it is thought on its own, namely not as an interpretation of Hegel and Lewis. No doubt that Brandom's project of the

reconciliation of two distinct traditions of philosophy is worth considering as an independent enterprise, although one should be careful in considering Brandom's interpretation as a guidebook to Hegel and Lewis.

7.1.3. Conclusion

Both Redding and Brandom provide a Hegelian modal theory without appealing to a comprehensive examination of Hegel's treatment of modality. While Redding achieves his version of Hegelian actualism by relating Hegel's notion of possibility to Hegel's treatment of judgement, Brandom takes a very different approach by drawing on Hegel's phenomenology and suggesting a modal metaphysical thesis that presents Hegel's understanding of the world as thoroughly modal. Both interpretations fail to present a satisfactorily sufficient case for considering Hegelian insight into the context of contemporary modal metaphysics since thoroughly appreciating Hegel's insight in individual modal concepts remains under the shadow of grand interpretations of a sort of Hegelian *modalism*.

These grand interpretations leave many questions behind when it comes to the compatibility of their modalist claims with Hegel's *Logic* in general, particularly the non-modal categories of Hegel's *Logic*, such as the objects that *mechanically* determine themselves, the being that *qualitatively* determines itself and so on. The modal determinations in Hegel's *Logic* cannot sufficiently account for these determinations since modally determined being is logically and categorically *insignificant* in being qualitatively and *insufficient* in being mechanically determined. Hegel's world involves various determinations for being and an interpretation canonizing an aspect of the world such as modality undermines the other aspects, which the world *also* exhibits itself. Without sacrificing the multiplicity of categories of the *Logic*, and to avoid undermining the potency of non-modal categories in expressing the world as it is, my suggestion is to humbly leave aside a grand

modalist thesis but to focus on Hegel's treatment of modality and the insight it could bring to contemporary modal metaphysics in terms of the nature of modal concepts. One may argue that for Hegel, everything is in some respect modally determined. Although there are indeed categories in Hegel's *Logic* that are not modal at all (such as those of quality and quantity), it is surely also the case that all objects when conceived in the most concrete way—as mechanical, chemical or organic—are in fact determined modally in some respect since they include, *without being reducible to*, modal determinations. However, this does not mean that there are no differences between Hegel and Brandom or Redding since it remains the case that Hegel does not understand the world fundamentally or primarily in modal terms. For Hegel, modality is just one aspect of the world; and although it is an aspect of all things when they are conceived in the most concrete way, it does not belong to all the other aspects of those things. For instance, we can understand what it means for natural objects to have *quantity* without reference to *modality*, even if such objects nonetheless exhibit contingency. For Brandom, by contrast, the mere fact of having quantity already involves explicitly modal relations of MI and MC. By appropriately identifying what modality is in Hegel's *Logic*, namely, as we discussed in 3.2., modality is the determination of actuality, we avoid undermining the logical development of non-modal categories of the *Logic* and at the same time, bring to the surface insightful ideas about modal concepts that tell us about the world *insofar* as it is modally articulated.

7.2. Re-Considering Hegel in Contemporary Modal Metaphysics

Redding's and Brandom's ideas of reconciliation between Hegel and figures in contemporary modal metaphysics does not capture Hegel's insights into modal concepts. The immensely significant aspect of Hegel's treatment is the way in which he unfolds the logical determinations of each modal concept through their own relationship with each other. Unfortunately, this immanent derivation of modal concepts and the particular significance

each modal concept gains throughout their derivations remain overlooked in Redding's and Brandom's modalist reading of Hegel. This section highlights Hegel's two arguments, one on possibility and another on actuality as against the reception of possibility and actuality in modal realism and modal actualism. I will argue that without having in mind an idea of reconciliation between Hegel and the figures in contemporary modal metaphysics, relating Hegel to the given positions turns Hegel's treatment into a fruitful critique of the understanding of certain modal notions. In the comparative reading between Lewis and Hegel, the section will reveal the latent idea of actuality before the possibilities in Lewis as the explicit presupposition of possibility with the help of Hegel's analysis of possibility. Lewisian possibility, as possible worlds, generates a problem of assuming a notion of actuality, whereas embracing the conceptual development of possibility in Hegel's treatment, namely embracing the idea that possibility comes after actuality, enables us to see this not as a problem but as what possibility indeed is. On the other hand, while the problem of possibility does not persist in modal actualism, actuality is considered in a very loose sense, similar to existence, which leads to another problem that undermines the categorical difference between actuality and existence, hence their respective determinations. These critical insights from Hegel's treatment of modality not only show how the idea of reconciliation is prone to face substantial difficulties, but they also open up the possibility of a new modal actualism, which is completely detached from the possible worlds discourse.

7.2.1. Possibility as a Metaphysical Primitive Concept

As discussed in 1.5., Lewisian modal realism suggests a presupposition of possibility as a primitive at the core of the possible worlds discourse. As Shalkowski states, there have to be two pre-conditions—a) each individual in a world is possible and b) the set of possible individuals are exhaustive—for worlds to be possible. Shalkowski's main charge against modal realism is the reductive explanation of possibility through possible worlds, which

Lewis takes to be non-modal. These pre-conditions, however, point out either that the reductive analysis is circular, which is to say worlds conceived as possible already imply that they are modal, or that the very notion of possible worlds functions arbitrarily as possibility. In order to escape Shalkowski's charge, I presented two arguments supporting modal realism in 1.5.. First, modal realism operates over two diversely functioning notions of possibility: (a) possibility as enabling condition for worlds and (b) possibility as being otherwise. While (a) states that possibility as a primitive notion enables the worlds to be, (b) indicates that worlds as possibles make explicit various modal statuses of actuals. Although with these two notions of possibility, the modal realist might overcome Shalkowski's charge of circularity, the two notions of possibility remain an assumption.

1.5. proceeded to find another way to have the least problematic way-out, which is, as I suggested, to take the notion of indexical actuality as primitive. For Lewis, each world—albeit conceived as a possibility for other worlds—is in itself indexically actual. For instance, our world is actual only for us since we are in causal relation to the individuals of this world, but for other worlds, our world is merely a possibility, an alternative to their actuality. As discussed, worlds are isolated and contain their own inner casual relation that cannot be extended over worlds. That is, there is *no* inter-world casual relation or casual relations of individuals belonging to different worlds. The only trans-worldly relation we can establish is the counterfactual relation, which express the actual to be other than what it is in the vast array of worlds. With the notion of indexical actuality, we can derive possibility as the worlds that are other to our actual world while preserving their status to be actual in themselves. Although regarding worlds in this way satisfies the modal realist claim that possible worlds are as actual as our own world, it takes away the foundational claim that possible worlds as possibilities are primitive notions.

By primitive notion, we should understand a metaphysical foundation, which enables the theory to make explicit the other components. In modal realism, possible worlds as a primitive notion take the role of making explicit modal notions. Modal notions are reduced to the counterpart relation among worlds. Lewis, by placing worlds at the core of modal realism, aims to encompass the wide range of possibilities as the foundation of everything that is actual. However, as shown, there are only two (problematic) ways to regard possibility as primitive: a) the account of possibility has to be circular, i.e., non-modal worlds make explicit possibility and possibility makes explicit worlds as possible, and b) the account of possibility has to be *assumed* to be primitive non-modal enabling condition for worlds to express the possibility of being otherwise.

It is an impossible task to save modal realism without revising its major claim about possibility because what I believe is that the very notion of possibility is not compatible with being a primitive notion. The problem is not *how* we construct the notion of possibility as a primitive, but rather is the very notion of possibility itself. For this reason, explaining possibility as worlds, as the modal realist suggests, does not do any good in revealing the very conceptual fabric of possibility that does not allow it to be primitive. To put it another way: Lewis does not examine what possibility as such is, but considers only its ontological status—i.e. the idea that it consists in worlds that embody alternatives for any one world. We need an immanent analysis to reveal what possibility is without appealing to anything external to itself. At this point, Hegel's treatment of possibility becomes strikingly significant.

Hegel understands possibility as the reflectedness of actuality. As discussed in 4.2., the reflectedness expresses two aspects of possibility. Firstly, it implies that possibility is the negative of actuality—i.e., it is simply *not* what the actual is. Secondly, possibility is what it is only in relation to the actual. Although the reflective characteristic of possibility is present

in its three forms (formal, real and absolute) as explicated in Hegel's treatment, Hegel most explicitly talks about reflectivity in formal possibility. This is because the formal determinations of possibility constitute what possibility merely is, which is supposed to mean that possibility is what it is without any reference to an other. However, possibility, in its purest sense as mere possibility, finds itself expressing a relation to an actual. In this sense, possibility is always a possibility *of* something.

However, Hegel is still insistent to reveal possibility as such, namely, the possibility without reference to an other, but this consideration ends up generating impossibility. For instance, when we consider the possibility of A, we no longer talk about A as something actual but mere possibility that also involves its opposite non-A. A and non-A as merely possible inevitably express themselves as impossible since there is nothing in mere possibility that could turn what A or non-A into actual.

Hegel's treatment suggests two complementary results: a) possibility, even in its purest sense, is in relation to the actual, and b) possibility through its own determinations—when it is truly grasped—becomes impossibility. These results mean that possibility always presupposes an actual before itself in order to operate as being otherwise. Even in the most ridiculously imaginative sense of possibility, which may be found in the possible worlds discourse, there lies a reference to an actual item. Possibility must be, not just the possibility of an actual, but actual possibility—which means that possibility itself cannot be a primitive, foundational notion (in the sense either of enabling conditions or of the possibility of being otherwise). Considering Lewis' examples, talking donkeys and philosophizing cats both express the reflectedness of something actual, reflectedness in the sense that it is abstracted from what is actual and remains something negative to the actual. Ignoring this reference to actuality, such as donkeys and cats in a familiar form to us (non-talking and non-philosophizing), generate a vast array of possibility that involves various qualities that

contradict each other. Actuality for this reason is a central term for possibility to both operate as being otherwise and to be what it is without falling into impossibility.

Hegel's analysis of possibility enables us to notice the presupposition in Lewis' account about worlds. Worlds for Lewis are possible; however, as shown in 1.5., this notion of possibility, or speaking in general, any type of possibility, even the most imaginative ones, requires actuality as a presupposition for itself. Bringing Hegel's insight into possibility to the discussion over the primitiveness of possibility in modal realism allows us to formulate two criticisms of Lewis. The first criticism to note, considering possibility in a Hegelian fashion, enables us to see the problem in Lewis' possible worlds as the placement of possibility as a primitive notion. Although it is clear at the outset of modal realism that possible worlds as a primitive notion is already an ungrounded assumption, the conceptual work to ground possibility requires modal realism to work with a notion of actuality. Even if Lewis does not acknowledge this himself, by understanding actuality as indexical, the modal realist preserves each world as possible in relation to other worlds and as actual in itself. To my understanding, possibility is never supposed to be thought of as a primitive notion since its dependency on actuality is manifest even in the form we thought as a primitive notion. Possibility, even in the hands of a possibilist agenda, expresses itself as secondary to the actual. One might argue that possibility as the possibility *of* an actual can still precede the actual since there is nothing in this idea that denotes the idea of priority of actuality over possibility. In Hegel, possibility as the possibility *of* an actual results from the two consecutive ideas: a) possibility is derived from actuality and b) possibility must itself be an *actual possibility* in order for it to be. For this reason, the possibility *of* an actual implies that possibility comes after the actual. If possibility is to be understood as the ability of being otherwise, it must presuppose something actual before itself.

The second criticism is about the function of possibility, namely, the ability of possibility to express the actual to be otherwise. One of the reasons why Lewis chooses possibility as a primitive notion in modal realism is the fact that possibility grants a wide array of states for actuals to be in a way different from what they are. That is, if everything is conceived as possible on the foundational level, as Lewis suggests, then there is a metaphysical explanation for everything that is other than what they are in our actual world. Lewis accounts for being otherwise through the counterpart relations among possible worlds. That is to say, to conceive of something to be otherwise than what it actually is requires the presence of its counterparts in other worlds. To be otherwise, hence, expresses the possibility but the operative notion here is not the possibility itself but counterparts. Without the notion of counterpart, Lewisian possibility cannot itself grant us the idea of being otherwise. Considering Hegel's insight here, we also come to see that it is not the notion of mere possibility that grants on its own the individual to be otherwise, but possibility, if and only if considered as the possibility of an actuality, operates as being otherwise. This reveals in Lewis that even if Lewis says that possible worlds, in virtue of being possible, are primitive explanatory notions for things that can be otherwise, possible worlds as the domain of possibilities cannot indicate the ability of being otherwise without presupposing that which they are the possibility of or that which is the actual world. So it means that Lewis has to presuppose not just counterparts, but counterparts that are *themselves* actual worlds.

Briefly, possibility comes to be problematic in modal realism due to its being improperly identified and placed as a primitive. As seen in Hegel's treatment, the closest conceptual determination for possibility to be thought of as a primitive, namely without a relation to an actuality, is *mere* possibility, which expresses what is possible as impossible. Regarding this within the Lewisian framework, without the notion of actuality, let it be

indexical or not, worlds in themselves generate a manifold of contradictory possibilities hence impossibilities. Though worlds themselves are not full of impossibilities but the counterpart relation of a world to another amounts to involving impossibilities if none of the worlds in the counterpart relation is actual. Although Lewis does not appreciate or admit the fact that actuality plays a major role even in modal realism, Hegel's insight into the notion of possibility reveals the significance of actuality in possibility. As shown in 1.5. and elaborated here, for modal realism to overcome the criticism, there remain two options: a) to accept and highlight the fact that modal realism is based on a primitive notion that is already being assumed, hence not proven, and b) to revise the account of possible worlds as not primitive but secondary to the actual world we live in.

7.2.2. Actuality and Existence

In 3.1.2., I argued that Hegel considers actuality as a domain for modally determinate being. The claim suggests that only actual being becomes modally determinate and that modalities are the determinations of actual being. Hegel's treatment of modality begins with the immediate concept of actuality. Actuality—albeit in its immediacy—differs from being as such and existence in terms of involving innerness and externality. Hegel understands innerness as possibility and externality as actuality. That is, at the outset of the concept of actuality, we have two determining moments rendering actuality distinct from being and existence. Although the distinction between actuality, being and existence is widely noted in the history of philosophy, the modal realist and actualist positions overlook the distinction between existence and actuality. As explained in 1.2., for Lewis, actuality is an indexical term that implies existence, and as explained in 2.1.1., Stalnaker considers actuality as existence. I argue that this overlooked distinction between actuality and existence might not be so worrisome for Lewis due to his indexical actuality, but for Stalnaker, the lack of

distinction leads him to categorically misidentify the determinations of actuality as properties. Hegel's insight into the concept of actuality becomes significant here.

Lewis' concept of actuality can be thought of with his notion of the world. The world is an isolated concrete totality of its causally related individuals. For Lewis, every world is actual in itself to its individuals. That is, actuality as a world is indexed to the individuals of the world. Given that Lewis conceives of actuality as existence, every world exists and actual in itself and exists as a possibility for other worlds. The conceptual equality between existence and actuality constitutes the existence of the plurality of worlds. A world, as actual, is non-modal but modal inducing when situated in a counterpart relation among other worlds. The problem of categorical misidentification of modal determinations stemming from the understanding of actuality as existence is absent in modal realism, since Lewis already believes that neither actuality nor worlds are modal.

The problem becomes noticeable in Stalnaker's account of modal actualism. For Stalnaker, the world we live in is the only actual world, contains possibilities as property relations of the actual things. Considering that for Stalnaker, actuality is no more or less than existence, the world we live in exists as the only existent world. While actual things of the world exist, their possibilities are explained by the term *instantiation*. Accordingly, the fact that things show certain properties means that they instantiate some of their possibilities to be the things that they are. The remaining possibilities are ruled out as uninstantiated by the instantiated properties. As I argued in 2.1.1., in contrast to Lewis, Stalnaker does not suggest reducing modality to property relations but understands property relations as modal. As I argued, this is mainly because he conceives actuality as existence. Hence, the determinations of things, namely properties, come to be conceived as modal determinations. However, this consideration could only be possible in the light of Hegel's treatment of existence and property. In 2.4.1., I argued that existence, for Hegel, accounts for things that are determined

through their properties. Accordingly, properties determine the thing to which they are attached. The very characteristic to identify being as a thing comes from its properties. Things without properties are things-in-themselves or implicit being. Properties for Hegel are independent of things and a thing can hold various properties according to the compatibility of its current properties the thing holds.

In 2.4.3., I suggested that for Hegel property relations do not amount to modal relations among things. This claim is explained throughout Chapter 4 with the examination of Hegel's concept of formal actuality. Actuality, for Hegel, is a type of being, distinct from existence, and determines itself through modalities, whereas existence takes the form of a thing and determines itself through the property relations in the thing. The modal question, such as whether something is actual or possible, is concerned with the domain of actuality. This categorisation may seem unnecessary given that once property relations are recognized as being modal, as Stalnaker suggests, it does not appear to be a problem. However, the distinction between actuality and existence designates limits for each concept and their determinations, thereby giving them an appropriate sense in which we can understand the nature of each concept. Without this distinction, we have no option but to assert the idea that property relations are modal, which cannot be anything more than a working assumption.

Hegel's insight into the concept of actuality enables us to reveal the categorical misidentification of modal determination in Stalnaker's account. This critical engagement with the closest figure to Hegel in contemporary modal metaphysics with respect to the similarities in commitments to a type of actualist thesis opens a new way in which we can improve and reconstitute the modal actual thesis on a sturdier footing.

7.2.3. Conclusion

The idea of reconciling Hegel with the figures of the modal metaphysics is an exciting project. However, as shown, this attempt brings about two problems: one regarding the interpretation of Hegel's *Logic* and another regarding the compatibility of Hegel's treatment of modality with the figures in the contemporary modal metaphysics. Redding and Brandom undertake an immensely difficult task to make explicit the significance of Hegel in a context that the Hegelian scholarship has never thought of. Their accomplishment in this task, unfortunately, comes with a cost of rendering the entire Logic as centred around the problems of modality. Hegel is not a modalist, who believes the world or being essentially manifests itself in its modal expressions. The *Logic* throughout various categories makes explicit each manifestation of being equally significant to the ways in which being determines itself. Given this major difficulty in Redding's and Brandom's interpretations of Hegel, rather than embracing the reconciliation of Hegel with the figures in the contemporary modal metaphysics, I suggested bringing Hegel's insight into the modal concepts of possibility and actuality to show a critical approach that can clear up a way in which we can derive a modal theory significant to the positions of contemporary modal metaphysics. Actuality and possibility have been regarded as the central notions in contemporary modal metaphysics. Revisiting these notions with Hegel's insight enables us to identify specific problems in modal realism and modal actualism. By situating Hegel's understanding of possibility and actuality in his modal treatment, I revealed the underlying problem of possibility in Lewis' modal realism and the categorical misidentification of modal determinations in Stalnaker's modal actualism. This is where Hegel's modal theory becomes significant.

7.3. Hegelian Actualism

The thesis suggests that Hegel's treatment of modality amounts to a type of actualism. With respect to Redding's interpretation, the thesis cannot be seen as standing in direct contrast to

Redding's main argument but could well be considered as a successor that strengthens the idea of modal actualism by re-considering Hegel's modal treatment without bringing in its implication in further categories, such as judgement, syllogism and mind. Unlike Redding's overarching interpretation of Hegel's idealism as a type of modal actualism, this thesis suggested a more limited and perhaps a humbler claim that Hegel's treatment of modality answers the fundamental questions about the concepts of modalities and explains precisely what they explicitly are. However, the suggested humbler approach naturally is at odds with Redding's subtle but present modalist thesis that Hegel's idealism as a whole is a type of modal actualism. Moving onto a more explicit type of modalism, Brandom suggests that determinate negation as the primitive notion in Hegel's system is essentially modal, which amounts to the modalist thesis that modality is fundamental to Hegel's understanding of the world. Brandom's claim is at odds with the presuppositionless reading of Hegel's *Logic* that I have been following through the exegesis of Hegel's treatment of modality. Given these disputable points in Redding and Brandom, I have also shown two major difficulties for the project of reconciliation between Hegel and Lewis-Stalnaker line of thought that leads me to come up with a way in which Hegel's modal treatment is considered as a critique of that line of thought.

In this section, I will suggest Hegel's modal metaphysics as a type of modal actualism without committing to a grand interpretation of Hegel's *Logic* or to the idea of reconciliation. I firstly present Hegel's treatment as a non-reductive and a non-modalist account of modality. Secondly, I will set out two problems my suggestion might face, the problem of circularity and the problem of the priority of actuality thesis. Finally, I conclude with an answer to an old question remaining pertinent over time: Why Hegel now?

7.3.1. Non-reductive and Non-modalist Accounts of Hegelian Modal Metaphysics

Hegel's treatment of modality shares the major claim of modal actualism. For Hegel, actuality is the primary modal notion from which all other modalities are derived. This claim extends to the claim that the world we live in is the only actual world. Throughout the development of formal, real and absolute modalities, we have seen that Hegel begins with the notion of actuality. This points out a metaphysical thesis that actuality is prior to any other modalities. For Hegel, the priority of actuality is not a presupposition or an assumption. Rather it is proven through the determinations of possibility that refer to actuality negatively as something prior to itself, namely possibility is always the possibility of an actual. The development of the *Logic* leads first to actuality and then to the idea that possibility is a moment of actuality. Hegel's proof for the priority of actuality thesis implies two significant ideas. Firstly, it designates that what is modally determinate is actuality first, and secondly, it proves that possibility and respectively contingency and necessity, derived from the transition between actuality and possibility, are the immanent determinations of actuality.

Put otherwise, Hegel's concept of actuality expresses a twofold nature. Actuality is merely a modal concept that expresses being as actual, and being manifested as actual is also open to further modal determinations of possibility, contingency and necessity. That is, being, which proves itself to be actual, is a modally determinate being. While actuality determines itself through modalities, modalities reciprocally determine the ways in which the actual manifests itself. An actual being can take the forms of actuality, possibility, contingency and necessity. This grants us a simpler account of modal metaphysics that makes explicit modalities as the immanent determinations of actuality. Hegel's account is plainer than the foundationalist accounts of contemporary modal metaphysics since the domain of actuality is the domain of modality, which does not appeal to a non-modal term, domain or foundation.

In Chapter 1 and 2, I have demonstrated that the contemporary modal theories suggest a reductive account of modality[120], which appeals to non-modal explanatory terms such as possible worlds, property relations, or essence, to make explicit modal determinations of things. As suggested in 1.5. and 2.1., the reductive accounts cannot give a clear and distinct account of modality due to the fact that their accounts appeal to a modally unexplainable domain. The contrary position would not necessarily amount to a circular account. As presented in the exegesis of Hegel's treatment of modality, without appealing to a non-modal foundation or explanatory term and without simply presupposing modal determinations, the nature of modality can be made explicit.

Although I call Hegel's account a form of modal actualism, this modal actualism has to be a non-modalist account of actualism, meaning that it does not place modality as the foundational determination for everything that there is. With the non-modalist view, we can identify the limits of modality and admit the various other metaphysical categories in their explanatory function for the world that presents itself in various ways. Accordingly, modal concepts can only make explicit the world that modally presents itself while remaining indifferent to the categories that are not modal, such as qualitative determinations, property relations, causality, mechanism and so on. Understanding Hegel in this way enables us to eschew one of the problematic suggestions, such as Brandom's, that modality is an essential feature of Hegel's world or that material incompatibility as a modal notion is a metaphysical primitive in Hegel's system.

7.3.2. Possible Objections to the Hegelian Modal Metaphysics

Although the account of Hegel I suggested avoids the problems highlighted in contemporary modal metaphysics and its reception in Hegel scholarship, it may have certain weaknesses. I

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[120] It is important to note that Redding and Brandom does not follow a reductive approach. Here by the contemporary modal theories, the reference is made to modal realism, actualism and essentialism.

will consider two possible questions in order to strengthen the actualist thesis in Hegel. One of which is about why we begin with actuality—i.e., why actuality is a minimally determinate modal notion—, and the other is, as Lewis points out, the pertaining question for any actualist thesis, namely why the actual world is the only world.

Hegel introduces the concept of actuality concept in two distinct categories of the *Logic* before the logic of modality. As discussed in 3.1., the concept of actuality is explicitly present as the result of the logical development of the inner and outer and the absolute. Hegel's treatment of modality begins with the concept of actuality, which expresses itself as the unity of the inner and outer. The categories prior to actuality provide a sense in which we can entertain a notion of actuality such as the absolute unity of the inner and outer. However, this determination does not express actuality as being modally determinate. In other words, actuality, as the unity of inner and outer or the absolute, does not signify a modal characteristic. Modal categories are the determinate forms of actuality, but actuality as the unity of the inner and outer, and then as the absolute, is not yet determinate. For this reason, the response to the question why Hegel's treatment of modality begins with actuality has to lie in the introduction of possibility and actuality as moments within actuality. As discussed in 4.2., actuality is not existence since it involves its innerness within itself, whereas existence stands external to the innerness (or essence). This innerness is possibility in actuality. However, the conceptual shift from innerness to possibility is later proven as a reflected negative moment in Hegel's analysis of formal possibility. Possibility as being non-actual is present in actuality. This provides not only the determinations of possibility such as the negativity of actuality but also what modally determinate actuality is, namely contingency and/or necessity. Briefly, the reciprocal proof for why we begin with the concept of actuality in Hegel's modal treatment lies in the very fact that actuality *modally* determines itself.

On the other hand, like any actualist thesis, Hegel's modal metaphysics is also prone to the question as to why our actual world is especially different in being actual than other worlds. For instance, Lewis' notion of indexical actuality is the result of this critical engagement with the privileged notion of actuality understood as our world alone. It seems that there are no strong reasons, except the theological ones, to accept that our world as the only actual world is special and is ontologically different from other worlds. Particularly following Leibniz, the actual world is the one that God created among an infinite number of possible worlds. Although Hegel never explicitly argues for the world as the only actual world alone, his understanding of actuality and possibility leads us to the view that actuality is the only world alone. There can be no other worlds as possible worlds since possibilities are contained within actuality. It is correct to say that Hegel follows the traditional view seen in Spinoza and Leibniz that the world is actual. Although Spinoza thinks that possibilities are deficiencies in the intellect, thereby omitting the presence of possibilities in the actual world, Hegel opens up room for possibilities as the negativity of the actuals, i.e., anything is not actual while preserving their presence in actuality as negativity. Unlike Leibniz whose conception of possibilities are grounded in an infinite number of possible worlds as the non-existent (hence unactual) but real essences in God, the Hegelian response to the question lies in the conceptual determinations of actuality and possibility.

The question of why our world is the only actual world is motivated by the view of the plurality of worlds. Once we accept that there are multiple worlds existing lesser than or on par with our actual world, we might begin to question why we understand our world as the only actual world. Hegel's account of formal possibility shows that possibility without a reference to actuality is impossibility. So without at least one actual world from which other worlds are conceived as possible, possibilities (or worlds in this case) turn into impossibilities. As I suggested, Hegel's concept of actuality in his modal treatment is

twofold: a) actuality as a domain in which modalities are conceived as the determinations of actual beings, a) actuality as itself a modality, which determines being to be a modal (actual) being. I suggest that actuality as a domain can be interpreted as a world in which actual beings are in determinate relations to each other, transforming themselves modally.[121] When understood this way, the twofold concept of actuality renders explicit why our world is actual without the presence of infinitely many possible worlds. Every being that takes place in this domain is an actual being to begin with. Their relation to other actual beings amounts to modal determinations, as discussed in 5.2, where we see that the really actual being is actual on its own but possible when it is taken up as a moment in another actual being. The relation of an actual as the possibility of another actual renders the latter contingent while the inclusion of the former in the latter turns the latter into a necessary being relative to the former.

To summarize, for Hegel, all modality is derived from actuality itself. So we do not need to posit different worlds to explain possibility and the consequent modal categories. Moreover, insofar as modality does involve relations between entities, these entities are themselves different actualities within actuality as such, and not parts of different actual worlds.

7.3.3. Why Hegel Now?

Around fifty years ago, Bernstein (1977) asked the question of 'why Hegel now?' in order to account for the rising interest in Hegel during the 1970s. The question could not be more relevant today considering the surge in scholarly work on Hegel's modal metaphysics. The question itself suggests contextualizing Hegel's work in a framework, regardless of it being a contemporary or a historical context. *Why Hegel now?* in the contemporary modal

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[121] This structure of the world as modally presenting itself is more explicit in Hegel's treatment of real modalities.

metaphysics deserves attention due to the promising conceptual departure from the contemporary understanding of our modal concepts.

Hegel's *Logic* is not meant to be a critical treatise of the antecedent and successor philosophical ideas since this requires the *Logic* to presuppose its content as various philosophical positions and its purpose as critiquing those philosophical positions. To understand the *Logic* from the start, as a critique, is to challenge the idea of the presuppositionless nature of the *Logic*. However, Hegel's *Logic* can be regarded as a potent guidebook for metaphysical categories with which we can reveal problems of various philosophical accounts. In my view, the *Logic* functions as a way of critiquing historical or contemporary philosophical ideas. This thesis should be regarded as revealing the power of Hegel's critique without jettisoning the presuppositionless science of Hegel, which is one of the most remarkable contributions to philosophy. Only if Hegel's *Logic* is acknowledged as the presuppositionless science—i.e., that it is not meant to be a critique—and studied in this fashion, does it reveal itself in various contexts as the critique of certain philosophical positions and concepts.

Considering the rising interest in modal metaphysics within Hegel scholarship, it is more significant than ever to bring Hegel's treatment of modality to the surface in a fashion that highlights the significance of Hegel's insights into modal concepts in relation to the contemporary understanding of modality. The inspiring interpretations of Redding and Brandom, however, do not do enough justice to the intricate details of Hegel's treatment. These details, shown through the derivation of modal concepts, do not merely suggest a reconciliatory path that bridges the Hegelian tradition with the contemporary analytic one. More importantly, what rises in these details is a potential critique that enables us to recognize problems in the theories of the contemporary modal metaphysics, such as the problem of primitive possibility and missing but crucial distinction between actuality and

existence. Perhaps more than being a mere critique, the engagement with Hegel's treatment of modality promisingly anticipates a groundwork for fully-fledged actualism, which involves a comprehensive treatise on the nature of modal concepts, and at the same time carrying a less metaphysical burden due to its foundation-free logic in the analysis of the world that modally presents itself.

CONCLUSION

The thesis examined Hegel's treatment of modality in the light of a debate on the nature of modality in contemporary modal metaphysics. The thesis suggests that considering Hegel's insights in the contemporary debate brings about a fruitful engagement with various understandings of the concepts of possible worlds, essence, property, and their relation to modal metaphysics. The thesis presented Hegel's insights as grounding a critical engagement with the figures in the debate as well as providing an analysis of the nature of modality without appealing to a non-modal foundation to which modal concepts are reduced.

The thesis identified that the foundationalist elements in contemporary modal metaphysics appear in the forms of possible worlds, property relations, and essence. The theories of modal realism, actualism and essentialism regard the notions of possible worlds, property, and essence, respectively, as the explanatory non-modal ground for modal notions. The examination of modal realism, actualism, and essentialism concluded that each theory amounts to foundationalism, which explains modality from the perspective of an external foundation to modality. In the thesis, these theories are refuted on a different basis depending on the difficulty they face in virtue of their designated foundations.

In the examination of modal realism, I showed that modal realism regards the idea of possible worlds as a primitive notion that grounds the relation of counterparts among worlds to reveal the nature of modality. The modal realist suggests that the existence of the plurality of worlds grants the least restricted domain for possibilities to be conceived as existing. At first sight, the modal realist account appears to provide a metaphysical basis for possibilities and hence makes explicit modal determinations without appealing to a model of possible worlds. I argued, however, that modal realism suffers from a difficulty that determines the discourse of possible worlds either to be grounded in an unproven assumption or to be circular. This difficulty stems from the fact that the plurality of worlds should either be a

mere assumption without any prior condition grounding their existence or be conceived alongside a modal condition grounding worlds in possibility, namely, the worlds which establish alternative possibilities for another world, must themselves be grounded in possibility but in the possibility of *being what they are*, not the possibility of being *otherwise*. The modal realist either has to accept the existence of the plurality of (possible) worlds as a mere assumption or has to ground it in a notion of possibility that grants us worlds as possible without implying the main significance of possibility, namely, being otherwise.

Given that a mere assumption at the core of the modal realist framework obviously impinges on the plausibility of the theory, I disregarded this option. Instead, I put forward two separate suggestions for the modal realist to avoid the difficulty stemming from the notion of primitive possibility: 1) considering possibility as (a) an enabling condition for worlds and (b) as being otherwise and 2) taking actuality to be a primitive notion. While (a) allows us to regard possibility as a primitive notion (enabling condition) for worlds to be and avoids the circularity of being grounded in the very possibility (being otherwise) that they establish, (b) suggests that possible worlds as possibilities are the source of modal qualities of actuals. These two notions of possibility are non-complementary since there is not enough conceptual tool for us to necessitate these two conceptions of possibility in the framework of possible worlds. Hence this suggestion fails to designate possibility as a primitive modal concept. Although when they are taken as unjustified assumptions, these enable the modal realist to avoid circularity, but the result would be no different from the modal realist's problematic assumption of the existence of possible worlds. The second and stronger suggestion is to regard actuality as a primitive notion instead of possibility. Although the notion of primitive actuality might allow us to regard worlds as actual before revealing them as possible in a counterpart relation, this challenges the modal realist foundational claim that possible worlds as possibilities are primitive notions. I concluded that the modal realist

metaphysics is not satisfactory at understanding the nature of modality due to this given difficulty stemming from its foundational assumption about the existence of possible worlds.

The thesis traced the reception of modal realism and examined modal actualism and essentialism as fully-fledged alternatives to the modal realist metaphysics. Stalnaker's modal actualism takes possible worlds to be mere possibilities of things in the actual world. While modal actualism does not refute the idea of possible worlds in general, it turns possible worlds into representations of the possibilities. The idea of possible worlds enables us to represent the possibilities that belong to this world. The worlds are present as the properties of things in the actual world. While modal actualism avoids the problem stemming from the primitive notion of possibility as seen in modal realism, modal actualism reveals its foundationalist commitments by conflating modality with a property. Modal actualism suggests conceiving of modality as a type of property relation by equating the nature of modality to that of property. On the other hand, modal essentialism replaces the framework of possible worlds with essence metaphysics in which modality is explained by essence. The modal essentialist conceives essence as the ground of modalities. In comparison to modal realism and actualism, modal essentialism suggests that the existence of worlds and properties already preconditions that they have essences since the serious essentialism that Lowe puts forward regards essence as preceding existence. Although neither Stalnaker nor Lowe identifies their theories as reductive, modal actualism and essentialism designate a non-modal foundational notion—property and essence—in order to explain modality. I suggested that these post-Lewisian accounts in contemporary modal metaphysics show the persisting traits of reduction—despite the difference in their reducing foundational notions. I argued that the reducing foundation is prone to limiting and relating modality to the vocabulary of property relations and essence.

As opposed to the reductive explanation of modality, the thesis examined modality *qua* modality in order to understand the nature of modality. Hegel's treatment of essence and property gains an immense significance to refute the claims about property and essence as modal-yielding notions. The thesis presented Hegel's treatment of essence and property as a negative account, which shows that essence and property *cannot* have a modal signification when they are examined in their own domain. That is, essence and property do not themselves involve and imply modal determinations but only an external consideration could attribute a modal signification to these concepts. According to Hegel, essence issues from being as the negativity of being. However, essence as the negativity of being relates itself to being. So essence *qua* essence for Hegel is not mere negativity but reflection that involves being as an immediacy and negativity as its mediation. Essence as reflection then is the minimal determination for essence to be understood *qua* essence. *Pace* modal essentialism, Hegel's idea of essence shows that essence as such does not imply or ground modal determinations. On the other hand, the thesis presented Hegel's idea of property in order to show that property, when understood *qua* property, does not imply modal determinations in things. A thing that holds a certain property does not render possible other properties that the thing does not hold because other properties are not excluded on the basis of the compatibility of the thing with a certain set of properties. Properties are the only constitutive elements in *things*. This means that a thing has no nature apart from its properties and the properties it does not hold are not the possibilities for the thing to be otherwise. More importantly, Hegel's treatment of property drastically differs from modal actualism since for Hegel, properties are determinations of *things*, not of *actuals*, hence property is categorically distinct from modality in virtue of what it is the determination of. This amounts to different conceptions of actuality between Hegel and Stalnaker.

While the negative account explained why essence and property as such do not account for the nature of modality, the positive account in this thesis explained how we should understand modality *qua* modality by examining Hegel's treatment of modality. The perspective from which I presented Hegel's treatment of modality rests on two claims obtained from Hegel's treatment itself: (a) modalities are derived from actuality, and (b) modalities are determinations of actuality. These claims amount to the view that the domain of modality is identical to the domain of actuality. In the light of this perspective, I argued that the only being that is modally determined is actuality.

Hegel's treatment of formal modality starts with the minimal determinations for being that is called actual. For Hegel, actuality involves possibility as its moment. This possibility distinguishes the actual being from being as such and existence. Hegel does not conceive of actuality as a form of existence, but actuality is rather another type of being that involves distinct determinations from being and existence, which are called modalities. I argued that Hegel suggests possibility is derived from actuality as its inner negativity, namely something that is not actual in actuality. I suggested a major claim in Hegel's analysis of formal possibility that formal possibility is always a possibility *of* actuality, and that the derivation of possibility presupposes an actuality. Actuality determines itself through possibility and in its determination, it proves itself to be contingent. An actual determined by possibility becomes a possible actual, whereas possibility becomes an actual possibility. Contingency is the name for the unity of actuality and possibility, a type of unity in which actuality and possibility retain their distinction, whereas necessity is the name for the unity in which actuality proves itself to be identical to itself in its relation to possibility. I argued that formal modalities and their derivation from actuality show that modalities are the determinations of actuality without appealing to a non-modal notion.

Hegel's treatment of real modality is concerned with the relation between self-subsisting actuals. The actuality that proves itself to be self-identical with itself is a self-subsisting actuality. In the relation of a self-subsisting actuality to another, an actual turns itself into the possibility of another actuality, which Hegel calls real possibility. That is, real actuality is an actuality on its own but a possibility of another actuality. Contingency is the unity of real actuality and possibility, whereas real necessity is the unity through identity without their differences. Real actuality by involving its real possibilities within itself becomes that which cannot be otherwise, or really necessary. These determinations of modal categories prove that each modal notion is a determination of actuality derived from one another without appealing to a non-modal notion.

In the examination of Hegel's treatment of absolute modality, I argued that absolute actuality determines itself to be indeterminate about whether it is a possibility or an actuality. This indeterminate state in absolute actuality engenders contingency. Although considered from the perspective of contingency, possibility and actuality seem distinct from one another, they are not different from each other since absolute actuality is the total inclusion of possibility within itself and possibility in this respect is no other than actuality. Their coincidence with one another engenders absolute necessity as their identical unity. Absolute actuality determines itself as a necessary being in its negation, and in this determination, it finds something identical to itself in contingency.

The three consequent chapters examining Hegel's treatment of modality showed that the underlying promise in Hegel's modal metaphysics is the very derivation of modal concepts, which encourages us to re-consider what modal concepts signify when they are analysed from a minimally determinate point, actuality as immediacy. In this derivation, we came to see two consistent ideas present in all three modal categories: (a) actuality is prior to possibility and (b) modalities derived from actuality are the determinations of actuality.

In the light of the examination of Hegel's treatment of modality, the thesis provided a discussion of Redding's and Brandom's interpretations of Hegel, whose aim is to bridge Hegel and Lewis-Stalnaker. The thesis identified that both interpretations fail to present an adequate reading of Hegel that reveals his insights into the context of contemporary modal metaphysics. Rather, their grand interpretations overlook the details of Hegel's account of modality, which differs significantly from Lewisian modal realism and Stalnaker's version of modal actualism in respect to the notions of possibility and actuality. The thesis showed that Hegel's understanding of possibility and actuality enables us to see the underlying problem in Lewisian possible worlds as primitive possibilities and Stalnaker's categorical misidentification of modal determinations.

The account I provided in this thesis considers Hegel's insights as critical remarks in the context of contemporary modal metaphysics. The thesis is supposed to be considered as a groundwork for a future Hegelian modal metaphysical position. The thesis therefore only outlines parameters, which constitute a solid framework in which Hegel's treatment might be presented as a fully-fledged theory on the aspects of the world that present themselves through modalities. The projection from these critical remarks will lead to a new actualist position which avoids the pitfalls of reduction and foundationalism in the understanding of the nature of modality and explains the aspects of the world that modally present themselves.

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